

Educational Leadership and Management

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EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

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CHAPTER 10

The Practices of Strategic Planning For School Excellence

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Abstract

In this present century, it is likely that school administration will continue to grow by interfacing with new and important domains such as planning and implementing appropriate program, developing goals, policies, and materials necessary to support the administration in order to achieve school excellence. It is quite agreed that school excellence is being achieved due to explicit strategy and committed administration. Surveying the practice of strategic planning for school excellence is a research that attempts to understand the concepts of strategic planning. It provides a process model for school managers to integrate into school development plans. This enhances the school manager's efforts in combining goals, policies and other administrative activities into an action plan. The purpose of this study is to investigate the extent of strategic planning practices in schools. This research is a quantitative in nature that employed Factor analysis in explaining five strategic planning factors for school excellence. Thus, findings from 81 respondents planning-team of sub business unit of International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM); International Islamic School (IIS) Malaysia would be of benefit to other Schools' managers, the stakeholders and as well as customers for school excellence.

Keywords: Strategic planning, Strategic analysis, Strategic choice, Strategic implementation, SWOT analysis, Strategic management, and School excellence

Introduction

The historical background of strategic planning can be traced back to the military organisation. There are a number of studies that have been conducted in this field of strategic planning. Most of them were carried out in different sectors like businesses, profit and non-profit organizations, and even other government agencies. They have provided some ideas on conceptual processes in strategic planning for the benefit of organizations. Strategic planning is a priority element and a managerial tool for top executives of an institution. This enhances the school management plan for the future as it tries to overcome challenges which may influence institution achievement. However, Schools could be categorized into non-profit and profit making establishments (Bryson, 2004). Non-profit schools are those that are financed by the government and do not necessarily give returns while profit making schools are either self-managed or involve share-holders. Nevertheless, Brunt, (1987) states that there is a considerable resistance to equate the schools activities with any other organizations. This is because institutions (especially profiteering institutions) have customers who are always demanding and hence, schools need to satisfy them because they determine the future of institution (Andreas, 2002). Thus, strategic planning is managerial tool that fit in dealing with any rising turbulent and other challenges confronting educational environment (Preedy, 1997).

Concepts of educational planning

Educational planning is an effective and efficient managerial procedure which brings change through cooperative, comprehensive, and continuous individual contributions. Hord et al (1987) point out that change in educational sector is considered as a process, not an event, and is accomplished first by individuals. Thus, Educational planning is of two concepts, which are identified by Ogunu (2001) as "education" and "planning". Education is a process that involves learning societal norms and traditions on a continuous basis in a well organised environment in order to be able to function effectively in the society. These are valuable aspects that are needed by the society for intellectual improvement.

Planning, on the other hand, is the process of preparing a set of decision for future actions directed at achieving goals by optimal means. Planning is a formalised process to produce explicit and an articulated result, in the form of an integrated system of decisions. Ogunu (2001) asserts that planning is the process of clarifying, identifying and analysing the organisational needs to achieve future targets either by Short term planning, Medium term planning, Long term planning, Micro level planning, Macro level planning, Fixed term planning, Rolling term planning, Operational planning, or Strategic planning. Moreover, Leonard et al. (2008) describe planning as the process of establishing objectives and choosing the most suitable means for achieving these objectives