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Strategic Management Methods And Techniques For Improving The Quality Of Educational Institutions

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Abstract

Strategic management is a systematic process through which an organization determines its direction, formulates courses of action, implements programs, and evaluates results. In educational institutions, this process helps translate a school's vision and mission into programs that respond to learners' needs, environmental developments, and community expectations. This article examines methods and techniques applicable to strategic management in educational institutions and explains how they may contribute to organizational quality improvement. It employs a narrative literature-review approach based on the books, journal articles, conference proceedings, and scholarly works cited in the source paper, particularly those addressing strategic management, environmental analysis, quality management, and school administration. The discussion is organized thematically into three areas: strategy formulation and control methods, implementation techniques, and effectiveness evaluation. The review indicates that internal and external environmental scanning, SWOT and PESTEL analyses, resource and capability analysis, and strategy formulation provide a basis for setting institutional priorities. Implementation may be strengthened through School-Based Management, Total Quality Management, benchmarking, and Management by Objectives. Their effectiveness needs to be assessed periodically using

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measurable indicators, stakeholder participation, and follow-up improvement actions. The article argues that quality improvement does not result from applying a single management tool in isolation; rather, it depends on the integration of analysis, participation, implementation, and continuous evaluation.

Keywords: strategic management; educational institutions; SWOT analysis; educational quality; strategy evaluation

INTRODUCTION

Educational institutions operate in a constantly changing environment. Policy changes, developments in information technology, social dynamics, workplace demands, and increasing public expectations of educational services require schools and madrasas (Islamic schools) to be adaptable. Educational institutions cannot simply carry out routine activities; they must ensure that all programs are directed toward achieving their vision, mission, and long-term goals. In this context, strategic management is a crucial approach for linking organizational conditions with planned decisions and actions.

Strategic management is generally understood as a series of activities involving the formulation, implementation, and evaluation of cross-functional decisions to achieve organizational goals (David, 2018). Therefore, strategy is not simply a planning document. It should serve as a guideline for allocating resources, developing organizational capacity, directing member behavior, and measuring outcomes. This perspective is relevant for educational institutions because the success of school programs is influenced by the integration of leadership, educators and education staff, curriculum, funding, facilities, infrastructure, and community relations.

In practice, some educational institutions still face a gap between planning documents and implementation. Strategic plans may be developed to meet administrative needs, but they are not always used as a reference for day-to-day decision-making. When needs analysis is inadequate, programs risk falling short of priority issues. Similarly, strategies that lack division of responsibilities, resource support, performance indicators, and regular evaluation will struggle to produce accountable change. Khatami and Arifin (2022) position strategic management as a crucial component of managing Islamic educational institutions.

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Strategic management literature provides a number of tools to help organizations understand their environment. PESTEL analysis is used to map political, economic, social, technological, environmental, and legal factors. SWOT analysis links internal strengths and weaknesses with external opportunities and threats. Meanwhile, the resource and capability approach emphasizes the importance of an organization's ability to develop and reorganize its resources as the environment changes. These tools can help schools avoid decisions based solely on assumptions or habits.

During the implementation phase, the School-Based Management (SBM) approach allows schools to manage programs according to local characteristics and needs. Total Quality Management (TQM) emphasizes continuous improvement and the involvement of all organizational members. Benchmarking opens opportunities to learn from the practices of other organizations, while Management by Objectives (MBO) links organizational goals with measurable work targets. Each technique has a different focus, so the choice must consider the institution's capacity, culture, and needs.

The study in the source paper has described the methods of environmental analysis, SWOT, formulation, implementation, and evaluation of strategies as well as techniques of MBS, TQM, benchmarking, and MBO. However, the description is still fragmented and does not fully show the operational relationship between the analysis methods, the choice of implementation techniques, and the measurement of success in the context of educational institutions. This article synthesizes these elements into a single, interrelated strategic management flow. The discussion focuses on the questions: (1) what methods can be used to formulate and control educational institution strategies; (2) what techniques can support strategy implementation; and (3) how is the effectiveness of the strategy evaluated to encourage quality improvement?

The purpose of this article is to explain the integration of strategic management methods and techniques relevant to educational institutions. The article's contribution is conceptual and practical, providing a framework that school leaders and stakeholders can use to examine their institutions' conditions, set priorities, implement programs, and refine strategies based on evaluation results.

RESEARCH METHODS

Type and Design of Study

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This article uses a qualitative approach through a narrative literature review. This literature review was chosen because the purpose of this paper is to describe, compare, and synthesize strategic management concepts and techniques discussed in scientific sources, rather than to test relationships between variables through field data collection. The study material comes from the paper "Methods and Techniques in Strategic Management of Educational Institutions" compiled in 2025, specifically the sources listed in the citations and bibliography.

Sources and Procedures for Collecting Materials

The study materials include strategic management books, journal articles, proceedings, and other scientific works listed in the source text. The review was conducted by grouping the materials based on the following themes: basic concepts of strategic management; environmental analysis; SWOT analysis; strategy formulation, implementation, and evaluation; and MBS, TQM, benchmarking, and MBO techniques. Relevant information was then summarized and compared to identify relationships between concepts. Because this review relies on the bibliography provided in the paper, the article does not claim to have conducted a systematic search of all scientific databases.

Analysis Techniques

The analysis was conducted descriptively and thematically. First, key concepts and definitions were identified from the cited sources. Second, each method and technique was grouped according to its function within the strategic management cycle. Third, the relationship between the results of the environmental analysis, strategy determination, implementation, and evaluation was interpreted within the context of educational institutions. Fourth, a synthesis was presented as a conceptual framework and practical implications. This study did not use respondents, survey instruments, or statistical testing. Therefore, the conclusions are limited to a synthesis of the literature and are not intended to provide empirical evidence of the effectiveness of a technique in a specific school.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Strategic Management in the Context of Educational Institutions

Strategic management is an ongoing process that connects organizational direction setting, strategy selection, implementation, and evaluation. David (2018) emphasizes three main functions: strategy formulation, implementation, and evaluation. These three functions form a cycle. Formulation without implementation produces only plans; implementation without

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strategic direction risks becoming a collection of unsupportive activities; and implementation without evaluation makes it difficult for the organization to determine whether resources have produced the desired changes.

In educational institutions, strategic objectives need to be derived from the educational mandate, the school's vision and mission, student needs, and community conditions. Institutional excellence is not solely measured through competition, as in business organizations, but also through the quality of learning services, equal opportunities, program relevance, accountable governance, and public trust. Therefore, the concept of competitive advantage needs to be translated proportionally into the institution's ability to provide quality and sustainable educational services.

Strategic management also requires educational leaders to integrate various management areas. Decisions about teacher competency development, for example, must be linked to curriculum and learning needs. Procurement of digital resources must be accompanied by human resource readiness and a plan for their utilization. Similarly, partnership programs with parents and the community must have clear objectives, responsibilities, and measures of success. This integration helps prevent programs from operating in silos.

Analysis Methods and Strategy Formulation

Internal and External Environmental Analysis

Environmental analysis is the first step in identifying factors that influence an institution's sustainability and performance. The external environment includes government policies, socioeconomic conditions, technological developments, demographic changes, community needs, and legal provisions. PESTEL analysis can be used to systematically organize these factors. For schools, changes in curriculum policy include political and legal factors; family economic capacity is a socioeconomic context; and the availability of digital networks and devices relates to technological factors.

Internal environmental analysis aims to map the institution's resources and capabilities, such as educator competency, leadership, work culture, funding, infrastructure, information systems, and partnerships. The dynamic capabilities perspective emphasizes the need for organizations to be able to update and combine their resources to stay relevant to environmental changes. Therefore, schools need not simply record the number of assets or educators but also assess the extent to which these resources can be utilized to achieve educational priorities.

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Environmental analysis should utilize verifiable data. Data on learning outcomes, attendance, supervision results, facility conditions, parent participation, and feedback from the school community can serve as diagnostic tools. Using data helps leaders distinguish symptoms from root causes. For example, low student engagement isn't always caused by student motivation; the cause could be related to learning strategies, classroom climate, family support, or the availability of learning resources.

SWOT Analysis and Prioritization

A SWOT analysis groups internal factors into strengths and weaknesses, and external factors into opportunities and threats. In educational institutions, strengths might include competent teachers, a collaborative culture, or school committee support. Weaknesses might include limited resources, uneven digital competency, or weak evaluation documentation. Opportunities can stem from partnerships, government programs, and technological developments, while threats might include social change, limited funding, or disparities in access.

SWOT analysis doesn't stop at listing factors. The mapping results must be translated into alternative strategies. SO strategies use strengths to capitalize on opportunities; WO strategies address weaknesses by capitalizing on opportunities; ST strategies use strengths to mitigate the impact of threats; and WT strategies mitigate weaknesses while avoiding threats. Salamah (2017) discusses the use of SWOT as a tool for identifying opportunities and challenges. In the school context, this analysis will be more useful if it includes weighting or prioritization criteria, such as urgency, impact on learning, resource feasibility, and risk.

Strategy Formulation

Strategy formulation includes affirming the vision, mission, medium- or long-term goals, program options, and achievement indicators. A good strategy should demonstrate a logical relationship between priority issues, objectives, activities, resources, and expected outcomes. Fajri and Aziz (2021) define strategic management as a process that requires alignment between organizational conditions and action options. In educational institutions, strategy formulation should involve the principal, teachers, education staff, committees, parents, and other relevant parties, according to their respective roles.

Stakeholder participation has two benefits. First, it enriches information, as each group has different experiences and needs. Second, it strengthens ownership of decisions, thus

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increasing the chances of implementation. However, participation needs to be managed to be more than a mere formality. Planning forums must provide sufficient information, a space for expressing opinions, a mechanism for determining priorities, and documentation of decisions.

Implementation of Strategy in Educational Institutions

School-Based Management

School-Based Management (SBM) is a management approach that provides greater autonomy to educational units to manage resources and programs according to local needs, while adhering to applicable policies and standards. School-Based Management (SBM) links strategic planning with decision-making at the school level. Aziz (2015) discusses SBM as an alternative way to improve the quality of madrasah education. Its implementation requires transparency, accountability, participation, and a clear division of responsibilities.

In implementation, schools can form working teams for each strategic priority. Each program needs to have targets, a schedule, budget requirements, a responsible person, process indicators, and outcome indicators. For example, a literacy improvement strategy cannot be achieved simply through book procurement; schools also need to develop reading schedules, strengthen teacher capacity, involve families, and monitor reading progress. Thus, school autonomy is directed toward achieving quality, not merely administrative freedom.

Total Quality Management

Total Quality Management is a management approach that places quality as the responsibility of all members of the organization and encourages continuous improvement. In education, the "customer" needs to be understood broadly, encompassing students, parents, the community, and stakeholders, without neglecting educational goals and the best interests of students. TQM encourages institutions to build a work culture oriented toward service, problem prevention, collaboration, and data utilization.

TQM implementation can be carried out through a cycle of planning, implementation, inspection, and follow-up improvements. Schools set service standards, monitor their implementation, gather feedback, and then improve processes that do not meet standards. Saragih et al. (2020) examined the relationship between TQM practices, supply chain management, operational capabilities, and company performance. Findings from a company context cannot be directly interpreted as evidence of TQM's effectiveness in schools, but they

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illustrate that process quality and organizational capabilities need to be managed in an integrated manner.

Benchmarking

Benchmarking is the process of comparing processes or work results with other organizations' practices that are considered effective to identify gaps and opportunities for improvement. In education, benchmarking can be done by comparing supervision practices, library management, student services, parent partnerships, or teacher development programs. The goal is not to copy the entire practices of other institutions, but rather to understand the principles that make those practices successful and adapt them to the school's own circumstances.

To avoid becoming a ceremonial exercise, benchmarking must begin with determining the aspects to be compared, selecting relevant comparators, gathering valid information, analyzing gaps, and developing an adaptation plan. Comparisons must also take into account differences in resources, student characteristics, and the social environment. Practices that are successful in one school may not be identically applicable in another.

Management by Objectives

Management by Objectives is an approach that links organizational goals with individual or unit work objectives. Objectives are formulated clearly, measurably, realistically, relevantly, and time-bound. In schools, the goal of improving learning quality can be translated into school-level, teacher workgroup, and individual objectives, as appropriate. Regular monitoring helps leaders and teachers identify progress and obstacles.

MBO is more meaningful when goal setting occurs through dialogue, rather than one-way instructions. Feedback is necessary to ensure targets remain realistic and adaptable as conditions change. Too many or solely numerically focused goals can encourage behavior that focuses on indicators without considering the quality of the process. Therefore, quantitative indicators need to be complemented by qualitative evidence and professional reflection.

Evaluation and Control of Strategy Effectiveness

Evaluation is part of the strategic management cycle, assessing the alignment between objectives, implementation, and results. Evaluation should examine three key questions: whether

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the strategy remains relevant to the environment; whether implementation is proceeding according to plan and using resources responsibly; and whether the results are approaching the established objectives. Evaluations are conducted not only at the end of a period but also throughout implementation to identify deviations early.

Educational institution evaluation indicators should encompass input, process, output, and outcome aspects. Inputs can include the availability of educators, funding, and facilities. Processes include learning quality, supervision, classroom management, and administrative services. Outputs can include competency achievement and program completion, while outcomes include learning sustainability, community trust, and the program's long-term impact. Indicator selection should be aligned with strategic objectives and data availability.

The Balanced Scorecard can help organizations view performance from multiple perspectives, not just financial ones. In educational adaptation, this perspective can be translated into meeting the needs of students and parents, the effectiveness of internal processes, the capacity development of educators and education personnel, and resource management. The use of this framework must be aligned with the educational mission to ensure that indicators do not displace the primary learning objectives.

Evaluation results need to be followed by clear decisions: continuing effective strategies, correcting suboptimal implementation, reallocating resources, or terminating programs that are no longer relevant. Evaluation documentation also serves as an organizational memory so that lessons learned are not lost when leadership or personnel change. Open, improvement-oriented evaluations can strengthen accountability and foster a culture of learning.

Synthesis: Integration of Methods and Techniques

Based on the synthesis, strategic management methods and techniques have complementary functions. Environmental and SWOT analyses help institutions identify their position and prioritize issues. Strategy formulation translates the diagnosis into objectives and program choices. School-Based Management (SBM) provides participatory governance at the school level; TQM strengthens a culture of quality and process improvement; benchmarking provides an external learning resource; and MBO helps link strategic objectives to operational targets. Evaluation then provides feedback for the next planning cycle.

The framework can be summarized into five operational stages. First, the school collects and examines data on internal and external conditions. Second, the school agrees on priority

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issues and goals to be achieved. Third, the school selects programs and implementation techniques based on capacity and context. Fourth, implementation is monitored through agreed-upon indicators and regular communication forums. Fifth, the results are evaluated and used to refine the strategy. These five stages do not always proceed linearly; changes in the environment may require the school to revisit the analysis and priorities.

The practical implication is that the principal needs to act as both a director and a facilitator of collaboration. Teachers and other education staff need to be involved from problem identification to reflection on results. Committees and parents can contribute within their authority, particularly in program support and social oversight. The education office can provide guidance, facilitation, and program alignment. A clear division of roles prevents participation from becoming merely symbolic.

This study has limitations. First, the articles are compiled based on sources listed in the original paper, so it does not constitute a systematic review covering all relevant publications. Second, some bibliographic entries in the original manuscripts lack complete information, such as journal name, volume, number, page number, publisher, or DOI. Third, the discussion is conceptual and has not been tested through case studies or empirical data in educational institutions. Future research could test the applicability of this framework through multi-school case studies or management action research with measurable quality indicators.

CONCLUSION

Strategic management of educational institutions is an integrated cycle encompassing environmental analysis, strategy formulation, implementation, and evaluation and control. Internal-external environmental analysis, PESTEL, SWOT analysis, and resource analysis methods help schools understand their position and establish data-driven priorities. During the implementation phase, SBM, TQM, benchmarking, and MBO can be used according to the institution's needs and capacity. Strategy effectiveness needs to be periodically assessed through input, process, output, and outcome indicators, and followed up with improvements. Thus, quality improvement cannot be achieved simply by developing a strategic plan or adopting a specific technique. Success is more likely to be achieved when accurate analysis, stakeholder participation, shared responsibility, resource support, monitoring, and organizational learning are consistently implemented. Practically, educational institution leaders need to ensure that each program is linked to strategic objectives and has measurable evidence of achievement.

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