Strategy Development and Deployment in Higher Education Institutions

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ABSTRACT

 Strategy development in higher educational institution ensures quality and improvement of efficiency in functioning. This paper discusses the development and deployment of strategies in higher educational institutions with specific reference to Srinivas Institute of Management Studies. This paper also include the strategies to be deployed by the institution to ensure adequate information and feedback to be made available to the top management and the stake holders, review the activities of the institution and encourage and support involvement of the staff in improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the institutional processes.

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Introduction

The leadership provides clear vision and mission to the higher education institution. The functions of the institution and its academic and administrative units are governed by the principles of participation and transparency. Formulation of development objectives, directives and guidelines with specific plans for implementation by aligning the academic and administrative aspects improves the overall quality of the Institutional provisions [1-2]. Strategy development in higher educational institution ensures quality and improvement of efficiency in functioning. The important areas of strategy development are quality strategy, faculty empowerment strategy, financial management and resource mobilization strategy. A formally stated quality policy is an important part of quality improvement strategy. The quality policy which is the pivot if quality strategy is developed by taking into consideration the leadership vision, student progression, expectations of the society and welfare of the employees. The faculty empowerment strategy is evolved out of problem identification, training, retraining and motivation. Financial management and resource mobilization strategies are adopted through budgeting and internal & external audit [3-4].

This paper discusses the development and deployment of strategies in higher educational institutions with specific reference to Srinivas Institute of management studies. This paper also include the strategies to be deployed by the institution to ensure adequate information and feedback to be made available to the top management and the stake holders, review the activities of the institution and encourage and support involvement of the staff in improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the institutional processes.

Institution's Quality Policy

The institution has its own quality policy. The quality policy is as follows: "We, at Srinivas Institute of Management Studies (SIMS), Mangalore, strive to deliver comprehensive, continually enhanced, global quality professional education through an established quality management system complimented by the synergistic interaction of the stakeholders concerned." We strive to communicate this policy to all the persons at all levels, so that this policy becomes working reality within the organization. The quality policy has following features :

• The quality policy is developed by taking into consideration the management policy, student progress, expectations of the society and the welfare of the employees.

• The quality policy is communicated to each and every stakeholder through various channels of communication like college prospectus, college calander, and teaching plan booklets. The quality policy has been displayed on every floor of the institution to communicate it to all who visit the institute and in the institutional website.

• The quality policy is deployed by ensuring quality in all the activities and events conducted in the Institute. Quality is also ensured, maintained and given utmost importance in imparting higher education in management, computer science, social work and commerce subjects.

• The Quality Policy is also maintained in the functioning of the library and information centre, computer labs, infrastructure, administration, examination, student information system and placements.

For all the activities that take place in the Institute, review of the progress is done at every stage to ensure the quality policy. On the completion of the activity, all the committee members will review the entire event by taking feedback from the participants, experts and internal staff members. Flaws if any identified, will be rectified for future with modifications and new methods.

Institute's Perspective Plan for Development

SIMS perspective plan is aligned with the vision and mission statement. Srinivas Institute of Management Studies strategic plan presents a clear, compelling path to a future of greater institutional distinction. The plan begins with statements of institutional mission, vision, and core values, followed by an articulation of key strategic issues.

Perspective for Students

The various aspects considered perspective for students in the plan are as follows:

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To develop an admission process which would attract the best students in large numbers with a variety of background such as gender, linguistic, religious, cultural, sociao-economic and nationality.

• To impart quality education to the students enrolled through effective teaching/training methods suited to the needs of the students and maintain a team of highly motivated and competent teachers.

• To transform the students in to better performers so as to achieve the best out of each student, that will make them quality professionals to handle multi-faceted jobs.

Perspective for Faculty :

The various aspects considered perspective for faculty in the plan are as follows:

• To identify and attract talented professionals who would take challenges and provide leadership to equip an emerging generation with clear sense of direction.

• To provide appropriate orientation to the existing and newly absorbed faculty, so as to enable them handle difficult situation in the easiest way and be devoted in the task of imparting education to the students.

• To transform the faculty in to highly productive, efficient and effective in executing the responsibilities of their job with fullest satisfaction to them as well as to the students, parents and stake holders.

Perspective of Courses :

The various aspects considered perspective for courses in the plan are as follows:

• Vertical and horizontal expansion of courses in all realms of knowledge pertaining to the areas of interest of the institution, the students and the community at large.

• To maintain high standards in the subjects offered through various courses, which would be in the best interest of the institution, students and stake holders.

• By way of enriching the courses and adding new and relevant courses, it is expected that more students will be attracted, quality professionals will be created, greater recognition and reputation for the institution is obtained and the community will be satisfied.

Perspective for Infrastructure Development :

The various aspects considered perspective for infrastructure development in the plan are as follows:

• To create better and appropriate infrastructure suited to the anticipated situation, emerging out of the increased intake and expansion of courses.

• To make the best use of the infrastructure created through optimum utilization, continuous maintenance, and sustainable efficiency.

• To accommodate the multiplying needs resulting from expansion, diversification, and anticipated improvements.

Perspective for Employers :

The various aspects considered perspective for infrastructure development in the plan are as follows :

• Creating enhanced opportunity, improving employer interest, catering to the diverse needs of the industry so as to achieve harmony between institution and job market.

• Ensuring a regular supply of talented and trained professionals who would provide leadership and handle challenging assignments emerging out of developing needs and changing technology.

• Collect regular feedback from the employers and utilize to dovetail the curriculum, supplement knowledge gaps through skill building and valuation.

Internal Organizational Structure and Decision Making Processes

The Institution has a well-defined de-centralised organisational structure to coordinate the academic and administrative functions. The organizational structure chart is shown in fig. 1.
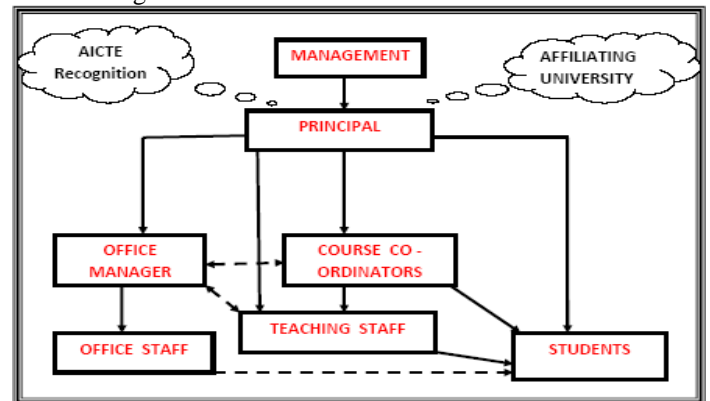
Figure 1. Organizational chart

The organizational structure consists of statutory bodies like the Governing Council, Academic Advisory body etc. The Principal is the academic head of the Institution. He provides leadership and guidance in planning, organizing and execution of all programmes with the active support and participation of the staff members. He plays a pivotal role in the Governing Council and Academic Advisory Body and all the other statutory and non-statutory committees.

On the basis of the requirements the Principal of the Institution takes the decision in administrative matters in consultation with the Management. The decision will then be communicated at two levels:

1. To the Course co-ordinators of the various departments and through them to the Faculty members of the departments.

2. To the Office Manager through him/her to all the members of non-teaching staff.

In academic matters, the Principal consults the co-ordinators and the Faculty for taking decisions. In matters related to student discipline, the Principal directly intervenes the situations and interact with the students before taking decisions.

Quality Improvement Strategies of the Institution

Teaching & Learning

Teaching :

• The teaching staff will prepare the Session wise teaching plan, Study material, time table and lesson plan before the commencement of the semester to ensure a systematic, effective and efficient teaching mechanism.

• Faculty members maintain a session wise Teachers Dairy which contains the date, period of class taken, topic covered, and the techniques used in the class.

• To enhance the quality of teaching, regular Faculty Training Programmes and Faculty Development Programmes are conducted.

• Faculty members are also encouraged to attend Faculty Development Programmes conducted by other institutions.

• The faculty members are encouraged to organize and take part in such events.

Learning :

• The institute organizes Student Development Programmes to equip the students to meet the challenges in their career.

• Value Addition programmes like "Value Added Chapters" in each and every subject of the course, Certificate programmes and Skill Development Programmes are offered to the

students to bridge the gap between the university syllabus and industry requirements.

• Regular industrial visits and industry-academia interactions are organised so as to get the practical exposure about the functioning of the organisation.

• Apart from the career building activities the institute also conducts Personality Development Programmes and Soft skill building Programmes in the beginning of every semester to develop their overall personality.

Research & Development

• The faculty members are encouraged to write articles for publication in journals and to present papers inNational and International Conferences.

• The institution extends the support required to take up projects in which both faculty and students are involved.

• The institute identified several research centres based on the area of expertise and faculty members are made in-charge for such centres.

• The college conducts national level conferences and workshops every year to encourage faculty members and students to present and publish papers.

Community Engagement

• **SIRRA :** The college has its own NGO called Srinivas Rural Re-construction agency (SIRRA) which is engaged in community programs such Awareness Programmes, Health Camps, Blood donation camp, BPL surveys etc.

• **Forum Activities** : As a part of corporate social responsibility, MBA students are involved in Community Engagement activities through their forums. The activities like old cloth distribution to the poor, Fruits distribution in hospitals and humanitarian relief activities.

• **NSS :** The college has a unit of National service Scheme under the Mangalore University which regularly conducts road cleaning, tree planting etc. in association with the community.

• **Regular field work of MSW** : The MSW Students are placed for the regular field work in NGO's were they associate in the social work activities in the community.

• **Faculty Forum :** The faculty members contribute to express their social commitment by donating low cost and necessary items to Govt. Schools and such other public organizations.

• **Social Service Cell :** MCA students organize computer literacy programs for school children from the neighbouring community.

• **Village Adoption :** The college has adopted Bolar village community and 15 MSW students are placed for regular field work and co-ordination of social work activities.

• **Red Cross Activities** : The college recently started a unit of the Red-Cross and 100 students have become volunteers.

Human Resource Management

A. Good support is extended by the Institution to the faculty members in taking research and consulting activities and presenting the research papers in various National & International Conferences and articles to be published in the journals.

B. Opportunities are provided to coordinate and organize various programmes such as National and International Conferences, Students Conferences, Professional Development Programmes, Seminars, Workshops, etc.

C. Training and development programmes are also organized regularly for the professional development of the faculty and other staff.

D. The college encourages the faculty members to pursue further studies, particularly research leading to Ph.D. so that their quality in teaching and guiding is improved.

Industry Interaction

Industry-academia interaction will be conducted on a regular basis to update the students regarding the latest developments in the corporate enterprises. Students are also taken to the industry to interact with the experts.

• The students of the college are taken for industrial visit regularly.

• Industrial experts are invited for Guest Lectures for the students.

• Research projects are encouraged to be taken in consultation with the managers.

• Industrial Managers become co-guide in research projects.

• Additional industry exposure such as summer placement which provides for student exposure in industry beyond the curriculum during their summer holidays.

• The students are encouraged to present their Industry placement report in class presentations which are judged by the faculty.

Institutional Strategy to Ensure Adequate Information to Stake Holders

The Principal of the institution ensures that adequate information is provided to the Board of Management about the progress of the Institute through regular personal meetings. The university examination results will be analyzed and the same will be communicated to the top management. The members of the statutory bodies like Governing Council, Academic Advisory Body and Trustees participate in the review meet where the Principal and Coordinators of the departments present the various activities organised by the Institute.

In case of any events organised by the institute, various committees will be formed and regular review meetings will be held before the event, to get adequate information about the preparation for the same. After hosting the event, a report will be prepared and feedback will be collected from the participants to check and match with the plans made. A copy of the same will be sent to the management for their perusal.

The Principal of the Institution meets students twice a month to interact with them and to get the feedback about academics. Apart from meeting students personally, feedback is also obtained about the teaching process in a prescribed format at the end of each semester and Institutional feedback at the end of the course to know about their overall campus experience.

During the admission process, the committee members interact with parents and provide necessary information about the institute. The performance of the students will be intimated regularly to their parents through Student Information System.

The management supports and involves the staff in different events so as to improve the effectiveness and efficiency. Each and every staff in the institution will be responsible to attend to certain duties assigned by the Head of the Institution from time to time. Both Teaching and non-teaching members will be involved in different institutional process like Admissions, Recruitment of the staff, correspondence with University, Representatives in Governing body, organising different events in the institution like Conferences, fests, etc. Table 1 shows the resolutions taken by the Management Council in the last year and its status of implementation.

The affiliating university has provision for according the status of autonomy to an affiliating institution. NAAC

Accreditation is mandatory to obtain autonomy status. The institute is in the process of fulfilling the same.

Institution's Strategy to Analyze Grievances Stakeholder

The institution aims at maintaining good stakeholder relationship by maintaining an exclusive Grievances Redressal Cell to develop a responsive and accountable attitude among all the stakeholders. The mechanism to analyse the grievances are as follows:

Table 1. Status of resolutions taken by the Management Council in the last year

S. No.	Management Council Resolutions	Status of Implementation
1	Exploring Tie-Ups with many orgnizations for quality improvement of staff members.	Tie-up made with NITK STEP and first faculty development programme is launched.
2	To develop the infrastructure by adding Library management Software to libraries	An indigenously developed library management software is installed.
3	Use of Video lectures in Computer Science & Business Management Classes	NPTEL & other Open Courseware video lectures are introduced in Computer Science and Business Management classes as supplementary support.
4	To obtain NAAC Accreditation for the Institute	Work on NAAC Self Study report has begun.
5	To promote research facility for Faculty & Students	Membership for Mangalore University Library is obtained.
6	Value addition programs to be started to supplement knowledge gaps and enhance employability	About 25 Certification programmes have been introduced.
7	Stimulating Faculty in Research	About 25 Research areas identified were established as research centres under supervision of faculty members.
8	Hosting National Conferences in the Institute	Five National Conferences have been organized per year since 2013

• The grievances / complaints can be expressed to the members of the Grievances Redressal Cell as & when they come across such situations, either orally or in writing. The members segregate the grievance / complaint received on the basis of the nature of the grievance / complaint.

• The members of the cell formally meets to review all the cases, collect the related information, analyse, receive the opinion from other members and provide positive feedback to the stakeholder. If the feedback is not accepted by the stakeholder the grievance / complaint will be escalated to the Head of the Institute for final decision.

• Each case is documented and a record will be maintained.

Student Satisfaction Survey is an integral input factor for all policies of the institution. The institution has the mechanism for analysing student feedback on institutional performance as shown in table 2.

Table 2. Feedback mechanism for analysing student feedback on institutional performance

S. No.	Feedback Mechanism	Nature of Feedback	Outcome & Response
1	Student Body	Service & Utilization of Facility	Improved service
2	Suggestion Box	Complaints	Solved
3	Student Feedback Form	Teacher quality	Advise for improvement
4	College Website	Suggestions for improvements	Discussed & Reviewed
5	Academic Result	Teaching Effectiveness	Establish Accountability

Conclusion

1. Perspective plan document is an important component of the institution's strategy development and deployment process.

2. The institution has a well defined organizational structure with effective processes developed for all its major activities.

3. The institution has an effective feedback system involving all stakeholders.

4. The institution has a well defined Quality Policy and deployed with a systems perspective.

5. The institution has an action plan and schedules for its future development.

6. The institution has an effective Grievance Redressal Cell.

7. Management and monitoring of the affiliated colleges is effectively handled by the institution.

8. Student Satisfaction Survey is an integral input factor for all policies of the institution.

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