

Risk Based Thinking and Contingency Modeling in Leadership and Administration for Quality Management in Higher Education

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ABSTRACT

Risk based thinking is the core aspect to avoid or reduce the undesired effects and promote continual improvement for any organization, especially in the field of higher education. Preventive action becomes an automatic process when a management system is risk-based. The contingency approach to management will make fruitful results once it is considered as more explicit and builds it into strategic plan of the management system with upfront planning with the help of business models. In the strategic plan of any organization, leadership and administration plays an important role. By identifying the context related risks, leaders can analyze the opportunities in terms of impact and feasibility and plan towards prioritizing the risks to act on. In this direction, the need for a business model which focuses on efficient process-based approach towards risk prioritization, thereby prevention and avoidance is proposed, which demonstrates management their leadership, and commitment to the quality management of higher education.

KEYWORDS

Administration, Contingency Models, Higher Education, Leadership, Process Approach, Quality Management, Risk Based Thinking

INTRODUCTION

Quality assurance in higher education is required to provide public confidence in higher education. So, there should be mechanisms for reviewing and monitoring for upholding academic standards which are necessary to achieve the stated objectives of any organization. Since 1990 academic quality assurance has become an established component of higher education management. The Academic Audit Unit was succeeded by the higher education Quality Council in 1992, and then by Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) in 1997. Both organizations maintained institutional audit as the primary mechanism for reviewing institutional quality systems and procedures (Jackson, 2015). It is certain that most of higher education institutions will have many cycles of internal/external audit, with changes adapted and refined in the methodology and process with each cycle. But what have to be ensured that whether these auditing meets the purpose of sustainability in quality education or not. This paper proposes a risk based proactive process-oriented approach for sustainable quality in higher education which can be embedded within organizational practice so that impact of introducing new systems and procedures time to time can be predicted. The expected outcomes of this approach are strong record of delivery of quality higher education and a low risk of future non-compliance with the changing demands of its stakeholders.

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TYPES OF RISKS AND ANALYSIS OF RISKS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

There are many risks associated with quality of higher education. Classifying them into various categories such as risks associated with leadership skill of management and administration, human resources, infrastructure, academic affairs, financial etc. can give specific focus on each of them effectively.

The following are the risk factors can be addressed in each of the above category.

Leadership Skill of Management and Administration

Good management is essential to provide efficient and sustainable services to the public in an appropriate way provided if it can have synchronized management of key resources for service provision such as human resources, infrastructure, academic matters, finances etc together at the point of service delivery. This can also be augmented with behavior like interaction with public (customer) and taking action based on assessment of public satisfaction. The effectiveness of this process depends on how proactively they are taking initiative on strategic planning and implementation. Internal control which ensures the reasonable assurance to meet the objectives of organization in compliance with applicable laws and regulations are very much necessary.

Risk management can be viewed in different perspectives such as ‘managing the downside’ or ‘considering risk as an opportunity to improve’. But the balanced view by minimizing risks, controlling uncertainties and managing opportunities will contribute towards better outcome.

Human Resources

The well qualified human resources are important asset for sustainable quality of Higher education. The impact of several key challenges will accelerate the need for Human Resources to be more flexible, produce on demand employment analytics for senior leaders and respond quickly to meet the needs of the organization and its employees.

There are four global areas that will affect human resources in higher education in future:

- **Talent Management:** Focuses on Recruitment, Retention and Engagement. Continuing with a passive model of recruitment based on recommendations and contacts will result in less qualified candidates. Human Resources must adapt to a more aggressive recruitment effort to develop contacts and methods to find talent by leveraging and recruiting talented passed out graduates. Efforts are required to develop a comprehensive compensation and benefits strategy, professional development, wellness and other needs of employees through their life cycle at an organization. It also to be ensured that whether the employee performance and expectations are aligned with organizational goals.
- **Diversity and Inclusion:** Inclusion of wide variety of talented employees are required in order to enrich future citizens with abundant knowledge
- **Fiscal Challenges:** Financial status of organizations play an important role in managing fiscal challenges to Human Resources to develop interventions to use technology as a competitive advantage to improve efficiency, communication and overall delivery of services in Higher Education.
- **Compliance:** In the next 5 to 10 years, compliance will continue to dominate the forefront of Human Resource professional’s minds. In addition to the regulations set by statutory bodies such AICTE, DTE, UGC and respective universities, Regulatory bodies such as NAAC, NBA & ISO continue to add in compliance requirements for enhanced assessments of student learning outcomes, improved efficiency standards for Colleges and Universities in order to ensure efficiency standards are met. There is also a need to create better channels of communication and embracing collaboration across various disciplines at all organizational levels.

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