Research Article

Analyzing institutional environment of University of Sindh, Jamshoro: A SWOT analysis

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Abstract

The key aim of the study is to investigate the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) of the University of Sindh (US) institutional environments'. Total 180 samples were collected through multistage stratified sampling technique from the students (108 males, 72 females) of the University of Sindh alumni. A questionnaire is designed from the literature on the subject of the institutional environments and SWOT Analysis. Moreover, the questionnaire divided into two sections. First section includes University of Sindh alumni member's personal and professional information where second section contains SWOT variables data. Furthermore, the result is emergent which implied significant variation in the ideas of the respondents. Students of law department and Islamic studies department had variation in their ideas about the university environment strengths, and opportunities and it validate the study. Similarly, male and female alumni members have significant variation in their ideas about strengths and

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opportunities of university. And non significant variations found in ideas of male and female students about weakness and threats of university.

Keywords: *Institutional environment, strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats*

Introduction

Strategic management is described as a procedure of outlining organization vision of a prudent assessment of its internal and external situation. Strategic management is a comprehensive technique which includes strategic planning as well as consequent steps, such as, methods of execution and evaluation. Strategic management consists of four components: examination of both internal and external surroundings, policy design, implementation, evaluation and control (Wheelen & Hunger 1995). SWOT analysis is the most important aspect of strategic planning which is used for the examining institutional environments. Originally the SWOT analysis was setup in the year 1960s by the Weihrich's effort (Christensen et al., 1978; Weihrich 1982). Furthermore, this analysis became most effective instrument for key planning. Mostly this techniques is used for examining the different circumstances, guarantee highly developed plans that can help to assert these circumstances. This technique is used to analyze the performance of educational organizations and various other fields.

According to Thamrin & Pamungkas (2017), in higher education institutes, the SWOT analysis has an enormous reputation in developing strategic planning, proposals, and study programs. Besides, the study suggests that more experts are needed to get more compressive outcomes and reduce biased findings. In the Pakistani context, employing SWOT analysis, Ahmed et al. (2017) found significant differences in participants' opinions. The critical difference was found among the views of laws and Islamic studies faculty members' pertain to institutional environment in terms of strengths and opportunities. Besides, the opinions were not different for university weaknesses and threats of both male and female faculty members. On the other hand, the opinions of male and female faculty members were quite different about strengths and university opportunities. Likewise, the investigation of Dyson (2004) supported the SWOT analysis as an established and valuable method, which helps design the strategies and policies.

Besides, for universities, SWOT has a significant role in overall process level and resource-based planning.

Strategic management has curved into the potential modes to deal with hierarchical administration in the innovatory period, while the globe has practiced existent social, constitutional, monetary, modern and demographic variations. Similarly, educational institutions employed SWOT analysis to check up their inner and outer environment to identify their characters and inefficiency. SWOT analysis is the renowned technique to estimate the existing circumstances of an organization to formulate the effective imminent planning and making rational decisions (Ansoff, 1965; Mintzberg et al., 1998).

Education is the backbone for the development of nation and it helps society members to achieve success in every field of life. In this innovative planet, higher educational institutions are working in a well-organized manner to meet the needs of 21st century. Moreover, educational institutions are resisting more modification and the enhancing the tempo of progress for the management and their activities in the twenty first century. In this way, universities in Pakistan launched innovative courses to develop strategic planning in the country [Lakhan et al., 2021a]. Particularly, we promote the competition of shifting organizations for which we shall have to modernize worker now (Stace & Dumphy).

Developed states carried out splendid efforts to broaden the capacity and structure of higher education by increasing their significance in the lack of ecological analysis and going on with financial constraints (World Bank, 2000). Therefore, the educational institutes, such as universities, and colleges are applying the method of strategic development for the improvement of institutes and develop strategic planning to reduce number of jobless through skills and modern knowledge (Lakhan et al., 2021b)

High education could not place estranged from this global phenomenon. In earlier century, the educational section has recognized that development is necessary to keep up

its own receptiveness to rapidly emergent environment (Kriemadis, 1997). However, Cameron (1983) articulated that the outcome of educational organizations based on modern structure of administrative and institutional assessment. To obtain success in this confronting environment, institutional legends needs to discover their individuality, and reduce their inadequacies, and develop the new techniques to create more chances and decrease the effect of intimidations. One fundamental and practicable course required to investigate the strength, weakness of educational institutions under SWOT analysis, a distinctive part of crucial and tactical policy (Schneider & Meyer, 1991).

Education sector is facing a lot of challenges in Pakistan, especially there is significant lacks in planning system. Hence, to enhance the performance of educational sector, there is dire need to bring advance changes in strategic planning process. SWOT analysis is most important techniques for strategic planning and it is widely applied in determining the outcome of strategic planning. In the same way, SWOT analysis has unique characteristics to determine the strength, weaknesses, threats and opportunities in strategic planning (Kotler, 2000).

This article will employ SWOT analysis techniques to investigate the gaps in higher educational institutions. Further, this article will provide significant implications for improving the strategic development process. The outcome of the study would present important data for the betterment of the strategic planning.

Objectives of the study

The objective of this study was to identify the institutional environments through SWOT analysis at University of Sindh. The study has the following objectives.

1. To investigate the inner and outer institutional environments of University of Sindh. Pakistan.
2. To determine the strengths of University of Sindh.

3. To find out the weaknesses of University of Sindh.
4. To discover the opportunities in University of Sindh.
5. To find out the threats encountered by University of Sindh.

Method

Design

This study utilized the multistage stratified random sampling technique to collect 180 samples from University of Sindh students in the year 2021. Survey questionnaire is a fundamental and famous research instrument in social sciences research for collecting data on respondent's qualities such as comprehension, experiences, perceptions, and their attitude (Bulmer, 2004). This study utilizes Falk, (2011) technique to collect data through pre-developed questionnaire. The survey questionnaire divided into two components. The first component present demographic data (department, gender, students rank), whereas the second component depend upon information concerning SWOT analysis to identify the outlooks of participants. Furthermore, Likert-type scale was employed to categorize the responses such as strongly agree, agree, to some extent, disagree and strongly disagree. Reliability indicator (Cronbach's Alpha) of the survey questionnaire was 0.89 which is significant.

Data analysis

For data collection, the survey questionnaire was circulated among the university students. The respondents were counseled carefully to fill questionnaire. Finally, the survey questionnaire was circulated among students on large level through WhatsApp and Email. In conclusion, 115 and 65 samples were received in the month of February and March 2021 respectively. However, the response rate of the participants was lower than the predicted in the four departments.

Furthermore, for data analysis Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to get aimed objectives. As per nature of research questions, descriptive statistics technique was utilized to tabulate frequencies, mean, standard deviation. For inferential statistics, and sample t-test were performed.

Table 1

Demography of respondents

Students ranks	Frequency	Percentage
1st year	90	50.00
2nd year	42	23.33
3rd year	32	17.78
4th year	16	8.89
Total	180	100.0

Table 1 explains the demography of respondents. Further it explains the different level of students which were included in data collection. Total sample comprises of 90 first year students, 42 second year students, 32 third year students, and 16 fourth year students respectively.

Table 2

Rate of responses of students regarding potential strengths of university

S.No.	Statement	Mean	Std. Dev.
1	University educational program includes curriculum and co-curriculum program for their students.	3.38	1.23
2	Syllabus of university presents commitment and knowledge for the students.	3.00	0.99
3	University offers opportunities to their students to study in a foreign country.	3.12	1.00
4	University provides research-based learning atmosphere.	2.00	0.87
5	University offers services for recreational activities.	3.68	1.03

6	University has several certified curriculum	2.97	0.93
7	The environment of university's campus is peaceful, safe and sound.	3.56	0.89
8	University has significant effect on the education, economics, and cultural activities of different communities.	3.22	1.03
9	University provides the good facilities, and well-prepared buildings and grounds.	3.66	0.91
10	Undergraduate and graduate programs enrollment continues to increase gradually.	2.88	0.34
11	Teaching and learning environment of university is efficient and encouraging.	3.07	0.82
12	University's staff is qualified and talented.	2.88	1.09
13	University has a positive reputation in the external community.	3.15	0.83
14	University has a variety of disciplines and method of thought and inquisition.	3.11	0.10
15	A faculty member teaches the many of classes, and there is a good interaction between teachers and students.	3.24	1.02
16	Teaching, non-teaching staff and students of university have more sense of society.	3.03	0.82
17	The employees of university have provoked devotion to institution, place and co-worker.	3.07	1.34
18	University is an efficiently sound and well-organized institution.	3.25	0.81

Table 2 shows the two columns which present the mean and standard deviation of rate of responses regarding the strengths of university. The high mean of first statement (M=3.68, SD=1.03) indicates that majority of students are satisfied with university associated with services for recreational activities for students. Similarly, the mean of other statements is also high. It indicates that as per university students, strengths of university is linked with well-maintained buildings and attractive grounds, campus is peaceful, safe and sound, educational programs offer opportunities of curriculum and co-curriculum activities, University is an efficiently sound and well-organized institution, A faculty member teaches the many of classes, and there is a good interaction between teachers and students. Moreover, the statements explain the strengths of university such as, university has significant effect on the regional culture and education, university has a

positive reputation in the external community, it also offers opportunities to their students to study in a foreign country, university has a variety of disciplines and method of thought and inquisition and the employees of university have provoked devotion to institution, place and co-worker. Students statements confirm that they are agree with the strengths of University of Sindh.

Table 3

Responses of students regarding potential weaknesses of university

S.No.	Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	There is lack in university's good governance, check and balance.	3.03	1.89
2	Majority of students have inadequate time and strength for their educational activities owing to job and family commitments.	2.89	0.09
3	University has incompatible educational counseling formation and outdated curriculum.	3.00	1.23
4	Dispersion of data by organization should be resistant and streamlined.	2.98	1.23
5	University gaps adequate fiscal support for faculty scholarship	3.10	1.10
6	University charge high tuition fee than other public institutions of the country.	2.99	0.89
7	Time consuming activities limit the faculty member's dedication in teaching.	3.09	0.80
8	Time demands on faculty automatically limit skilled development, and training efforts.	3.55	1.07
9	Management confirms that office environment is not adequate due to lack of secretarial staff and rising issues in office and data system.	3.30	0.99
10	University has insufficient sources for employment, retention and counseling of students.	2.77	1.13
11	Influence of political agents in management, students and faculty members.	3.26	1.46

12	There is a strong gap in mission, vision, and identity of university.	3.07	1.70
13	University is weak in identifying market requirements.	2.88	1.99
14	University has aimless line of research development and unproductive association with industry.	3.15	1.84
15	Inappropriate/maltreatment of resources and facilities.	3.19	1.88
16	Lack of funds is key constraint in execution of plans.	3.74	1.70

Table 3 Demonstrate the mean and standard deviation of rate of responses regarding the weaknesses of university. The high mean of statement no 16 (M=3.74, SD=1.70) indicates that majority of students agree with lack of funds is key obstacle in execution of plans in university associated with services for recreational activities for students. Similarly, the mean of other statements is higher than three. It indicates that as per university students, weaknesses of university are linked with faculty members professional development, and training. Students thought that office environment is not adequate due to lack of secretarial staff and rising issues in office and data system. Influence of political agents in management, students and faculty members. Inappropriate/ maltreatment of resources and facilities. University has aimless line of research development and unproductive association with industry. In conclusion the students of Sindh University confirmed that the main weakness of university is shortage of finances which present in institutions.

Table 4

 Responses of students regarding potential opportunities of university

S.No.	Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	The environment of the university is very important portray.	3.92	1.38

2	Conferences and discussions among scholars create more opportunities for institutions.	3.20	0.99
3	University's location provides new avenues to develop and shore up the academic programs.	3.09	1.43
4	More accessible location of university provides more advantages in the enrollment.	3.00	0.93
5	University could deliberate on incredibleness with an emphasis on areas in which the foundation should be widened.	3.20	1.90
6	A scholar practice utilizing the best practices from all over the country could be urbanized.	3.29	0.93
7	Mutual techniques could carry on the characters of different people, strengthened by asset and skilled employees, more feasible direction will help to spend more time for novel work.	3.07	0.83
8	Multimedia had changed the mode of teaching and creates new ways of knowledge.	3.67	1.07
9	Through multimedia, instructions are delivered and signify important chances to widen the new effective modes of teaching and learning.	3.49	0.83
10	Technology could significantly help out to meet the educational requirements of place-bound students.	2.89	0.48
11	University might present the graduate understudy enlistments, and which won't critically manipulate undergrad principle.	3.10	1.24
12	Turning in a pioneer in interdisciplinary and synchronized information	3.03	0.99
13	Comprehensive role of university resolving crisis and disaster (natural, men made).	2.89	1.03
14	Premeditated and valid operation and execution appraisal, principally of learning outcomes, could improve capability and efficiency.	3.20	1.83
15	Increasing admission standards could improve the regular academic competence in understudy body, carry improved maintenance.	3.29	0.23
16	There is increasing significance in various nations such as Nigeria and Sudan for Pakistani culture, hard works could facilitate the students from these countries.	3.30	1.00

Table 4 illustrates the mean and standard deviation of rate of responses regarding the opportunities of university. The highest mean of first statement (M=3.92, SD=1.38)

pointed out that majority of students are agree that environment of the university is very important portray. In the same way, high mean value of other statements indicates that opportunities of university is connected with modern teaching methods such as multimedia had changed the mode of teaching and creates new ways of knowledge. According to students through multimedia, instructions are delivered and signify important chances to widen the new effective modes of teaching and learning. There is increasing significance in various nations such as Nigeria and Sudan for Pakistani Education; targeted efforts could facilitate the students from these countries. Increasing admission standards could improve the regular academic competence in understudy body, carry improved maintenance. A scholar practice utilizing the best practices from all over the country could be urbanized. Conferences and discussions among scholars create more opportunities for institutions. University could deliberate on incredibleness with an emphasis on areas in which the foundation should be widened. Conferences and discussions among scholars create more opportunities for institutions. Finally, the students of the different department of University of Sindh satisfied with the opportunities of the university. Moreover, students confirmed that owing to these opportunities University of Sindh has earned more reputation and it will become well-reputed organization in the world.

Table 5

Responses of students regarding potential threats of university

S.No.	Statement	Mean	Std. Dev.
1	Declining resources from the state and increasing dependence on educational cost income.	3.55	1.55
2	Declining financial requirement for students that will allow more people working to stay in school.	3.33	1.23
3	K-12 students are less equipped for university culture.	3.00	1.03
4	Quickly shifting learning atmosphere.	3.54	0.98
5	Cumbersome and complicated procedures of protected imperative endorsement for novel projects.	3.43	1.05
6	Growth of authoritative and management abilities necessary for consistence with (degenerate and irrationally) guidelines.	2.99	1.70

7	Lack of advancement and poignant outlook to the other university.	3.65	1.88
8	Reducing capability to compete for and hold top human resources.	3.29	1.78
9	University offer on-line educational services like other universities.	3.44	0.98
10	Reducing the enrollment of college students.	2.89	1.35
11	University's students as well as faculty members participate in political affairs.	3.76	1.41
12	University has unskilled and primitive management.	3.09	1.98
13	Fast development of private universities.	2.98	1.23
14	Turnover in government university.	3.11	1.96
15	Higher Education Commission is declining its identification.	3.45	1.83
16	University employees are receiving low salary from government.	3.67	1.92

Table 5, describes the mean and standard deviation of the threats of the university. The higher (M=3.76, SD=1.41) of the statement indicate that majority of students agree that university's students and faculty members participate in politics. Moreover, other statements high mean values which explain that the university has more threats such as university employees are receiving low salary from government. Lack of advancement and poignant outlook to the other university. Declining resources from the state and increasing dependence on educational cost income. Quickly changing learning environment. This table conclude that majority of students explain the more threats regarding Sindh university. Other most important threat explained by students is declining higher education commission recognition if higher education commission contributes efforts in organization development.

Table 6

Independent sample t-test for difference of SWOT of university on the basis of gender

Factors	Gender	N	M	SD	t-value	Sig.
Potential Strengths	Male	108	3.32	1.02	-2.190	0.383
	Female	72	2.99	0.99		
Potential weakness	Male	108	3.00	1.23	0.532	0.822
	Female	72	3.42	0.88		
Potential opportunities	Male	108	3.10	1.08	-3.240	0.192
	Female	72	2.98	0.83		
Potential threats	Male	108	3.782	0.12	0.829	0.823
	Female	72	3.28	1.33		

Table 6 present the statement among two groups. Furthermore, t-test was performed to evaluate the potential strength scores for both sexes. Significant variation scores between males (M=3.32, SD=1.02) and females students (M=2.99, SD=0.99), t-value (t = -2.190, p=383) respectively. In second row t- value was conducted to identify the weakness between male and female. T-value explain the non significant difference between both males (M=3.00, SD=1.23) and females (M=3.42, SD=0.88), t-value (t=0.532, p=0.822). In third row t-value was carry out to find out opportunities scores. T-value explain the significance variation between males (M= 3.10, SD=1.08) and females (M= 2.98, SD=0.83), t-value (t= -3.240, p=0.192). In the fourth row, t-value test applied to determine the threats between two groups. T-value test define the non significant variations in scores between males (M= 3.782, SD=0.12) and females (M= 3.28, SD=1.33), t-value (t=0.829, p=0.823). Finally, table 6 concludes that there was statistically significant variation in thoughts scores between both sex's males and females students of Sindh University about the institutional opportunities and strengths. There were nonsignificant variations in their perception scores between both gender (male and female) students of the Sindh University about the institutional environment weaknesses and threats.

Discussion and conclusion

The students were made aware of their strengths regarding the institutional environment of the University of Sindh, Jamshoro. They supported the effectiveness of curriculum and design to transfer the knowledge. The curriculum is updated and contains the latest teaching modes and pedagogical flavors due to ISO certification of the university. The students reveal that the syllabus is the latest and designed to create commitment through knowledge delivery among the students. They happily show that the university has signed several MoUs with foreign universities and offers opportunities to go to foreign for learning and updating the international standard of the teaching. The university also provided a conducive research-based environment and opened a lot of research labs in natural sciences. The university also arranges the extra curriculum activities to entertain the students get mentally and physically fitness. The environment of the campus is healthy and peaceful. The university also develops close associations within the community in terms of cultural education. The students mentioned that the university offers well-developed buildings and playgrounds. Thus, the enrollment and interest of undergraduate and graduate students regarding university always seem to increase every year. In the respondents' perceptions, the university's teachers are highly qualified and transfer valuable theoretical and practical knowledge to the students. They always encourage and motivate the students to learn and successfully perform and serve the nation efficiently in the future.

The students reflected some concerns and weaknesses about the check and balance and good governance of the university. Many students reflected that they lack energy and time to fulfil their educational activities due to family commitment and jobs. Some students have mentioned that the course development is outdated and does not have enough financial support for faculty members' scholarships. The students showed concerns about the increase in tuition fees. Another weakness is as the students reveal the unavailability of proper training for career counselling. The university has inadequate resources for recruitment, maintenance and guiding of students. They provide the negative perceptions about the political involvement in administration,

faculty and students.

With regard to opportunities, the students feel the positivity of the natural environment and its surroundings. The location of the university welcomes opportunities and support in the different aspects to the students. The technology of multimedia provides the best ways for the students in understanding the diverse challenges of understanding and learning. Thoughtful and unpretentious utilization of implementation appraisal, predominantly of learning outcomes, could quick enhance effectiveness and practicality.

Concerning to threat, the students underlined their concerns about a decline in the assets of the university. The fall of university scholarship and the monetary facility would further restrict the students from staying at schools rather than university. The students would not be able to get admission to the university. The students also show the damage of available backing and moving attitudes toward the other university. The students' participation in politics would offer more damages to the education environment.

Consequently, these four assumptions of SWOT in the context of the present study are in line with several scholars like Valentin (2001), Dyson (2004), Ahmad et al. (2017), Thamrin and Pamungkas (2017) and Wang and Wang (2020). They investigated SWOT analysis in several contexts. The university has a good reputation in the external community due to the opening of several departments and conducive research culture. The interaction between teachers and students is amicable. Besides, the university's non-teaching stop is cooperative and hardworking towards improving the learning and administrative environment of the university. The university is failing to trace the marketing demand for making the employment opportunities of students. There is no interaction between the university and the industries for providing internships and opportunities to qualified students. The university also fails to utilize the funds and facilities allocated by the Sindh government and HEC. Sometimes, it lacks the funds, which creates disturbances in implementing plans and the university's development. The online standard of admission upsurge an expected capacity of education and

maintenance. In the last, countries like China, etc., also open great opportunities to students in higher education and jobs. The students feel the threat of outdated and old management systems. Due to these reasons, the students' enrolment has increased in private universities. Besides, the drain brain system in university is the most significant factor in losing the recognition of HEC. Finlay, a less pay is offered in the government university.

The conclusion of this study explains the significant difference in the perceptions of the students about the university of Sindh institutional environment strength and opportunities. Similarly, the perceptions between university of Sindh students about the institutions weaknesses and threats explain the non significant variations. The perception of respondents which belong to Islamic studies and law department had significant variation. The respondent of two departments (Islamic studies and law department) indicating disagreement with other faculties students regarding the SWOT of the university. Due to adaptation of new modern methods university of Sindh face various challenges in earning more reputation and making successful strategic planning. The SWOT analysis might be significant tool for university of Sindh to design excellent strategic planning. This study present significant implication for policy makers to plan strategically for achieving the target of the globalization and quality academic environment.

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