

SOME ASPECTS OF
MANAGEMENT
IN DISTANCE LEARNING

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Some Aspects of Management in Distance Learning

Edited by Adams Onuka

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Chapter Four

STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT EVALUATION MODEL

Adams Onuka

Institute of Education, University of Ibadan, Nigeria

Introduction

Strategic Management Evaluation Model is based on the assumption that models are very seemingly effective means of defining an evaluation as they normally provide framework for carrying out, not only evaluation but also of developing and implementing the management plans and programmes, thus simultaneously providing a common paradigm for both the management and evaluation processes (Onuka, 2009). There are several models for each of these two processes; management does some times use evaluation models such as Programme/project Evaluation and Review Technique (PERT). Both management and evaluation, even though the latter is a component of the former, do employ the same statistical or mathematical tools/programming to analysis the data or processes involved.

Definitions/concepts of models

Model can be viewed as a specific conceptual framework or paradigm which guides the systematic development of a management mission or used to guide an evaluation process. They are some that are referred to in management parlance as quantitative analysis/model/technique. Examples of these are the Network Analysis which includes the critical path analysis/method that assists one to choose from the alternative planning routes that optimizes the proposed plan in terms of cost and time taken to reach

objective/desired destination. According to Aluko, Gbadamosi, Osuagwu & Umukoro (1998), there two models for the business environment namely: interactive business environment model and the input output model. They posit that these models are useful tools for explaining the interaction between a business and its environment. Another business/management model is referred to as Programme Planning and Budgeting System (PPBS)

Some management and evaluation models

Some of the management and evaluation models include: Decision Trees Model, which is a tree like planning that has various branches as does a tree used to assist in the determination of the most feasible alternative planning 'route' to be chosen from among various possible planning 'routes' that could lead to the realization of the some objectives in different ways.

We also the network model which include the critical path method (CPM); there is also the Games theory Business model, the queuing models, the PERT, the PPBS among others, all of which are used to facilitate business decisions whether with regard to planning or budgeting or organisation, or implementation or any other business component. There are equally others like mathematical or linear programming technique in planning or budgeting. Among the models for evaluation, such as context, input, process, product (CIPP), the countenance of education model popularly referred to as antecedents, transactions and outcomes (ATO), the input-output model, input-process-output model which can equated to the management input-transformation-product or output model. The main distinction between these models and this one is the fact that SMEM is more eclectic in nature than others and that it is a comprehensive dual model that can be simultaneously used for purely management decision and for management evaluation.

The use of models in management and evaluation

The main use of models in both management and evaluation is that they provide ways of taking effective management decisions as well

as facilitate management action evaluation based purely on management principles and practice, in order to provide feedback on such actions for the purpose of replication, revision or for jettisoning of such actions that found *unuseful* in the particular circumstance. In other words: models whether in management or in evaluation are decisions/actions facilitators.

Development of Strategic Management Evaluation Model

• Assumptions

1. Forecasting and planning issue out of policy and programme
 2. Forecasting is the same as estimating which permeates every component of the management process beginning immediately after a policy has been formulated and transformed into a programme. Planning begins the process, but not before the elements of the planning process itself are estimated or forecasted, hence we can infer that forecasting goes simultaneously with planning, though it is placed first in this model before planning, because forecasting needs to be first made before authentic plan can formulated. Planning is based on action, time and other resources needed to achieve corporate objectives. Forecasting is based on studying relevant past and current trends and analyzing them, and then using the results to estimate what is likely to happen in the future because planning for which forecasting is a basic tool is mainly futuristic. Forecasting uses such statistical/mathematical techniques such as trend analysis and growth rates. Forecasting is a combination of hindsight (thorough knowledge of the past, insight (deep knowledge and understanding of the present trend) and finally foresight (the ability to use past and current trends to predictive almost surely the future).
- Planning involves estimating what should be done, how it should be done, who should do it and when it should be done, what it does require to done, how many and what category of persons

should do what and when?, what objective is to be achieved for having it done? It also envisages in how many stages, how to garner or harness these various things together in order to utilize them to achieve its objective among other things. Planning utilises some management planning models for its purpose. These include: Project Evaluation and Review Technique (PERT), Critical path method/analysis (CPM), decision trees etc.

3. Budgeting is translating each of the planning element estimate in terms of monetary values and time horizon. Financial analytical tools and growth rates are utilised for analysis
4. Organising the elements the plan in order to implement the plan effectively and efficiently is the next stage of this management cum evaluation model. Organisation includes: putting together the human and material resources with which to execute the plan, organising the activities and their order/sequence of execution. This is where/when recruitment is carried out, resources sourced, posting of staff to the relevant unit or department is done as well as putting things in their proper perspective in readiness for action that will bring about the realization of the programme objective(s).
5. Implementation of the plan for the accomplishing the plan objectives. This is the stage where the requisite actions are carried out to ensure that plan matches or almost surely matches programme outcome.
6. Monitoring and Evaluation is the process of ensuring that implementation is on course according to plan, and to also discover what is going right or wrong with the process of planning, budgeting, organising, implementation and even other things involved in the management process as well as suggest ways of correcting or improving the process. In other words, M & E examines whether every aspect of the management process is being carried out according to plan and where deviation exists, remedy is recommended after a thorough

analysis using appropriate management (statistical/mathematical) tools/techniques. It is noteworthy that monitoring and evaluation is carried out as on-going process (formative) as each component is formulated/executed and as expost at the end of each activity and/or all activities. The former is for programme management immediate improvement and the latter for programme revision or innovation.

7. Feedback resulting from evaluation analysis is then given for the purpose of improving the entire management process. Here evaluation reports are scrutinised, analysed and discussed and decision then taken for implementation for either programme improvement or revision or even jettisoning.

- **Model Components.**

The components of the model synchronise with the Onuka's function definition of management (2006), which outlines management components as: *forecasting, planning, budgeting, organisation, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation and feedback mechanism*

STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT EVALUATION MODEL in tabular form

Component	Characteristics/ Elements	Data Required	Analytical tool(s)	Remarks
Forecasting	Hindsight, Insight, foresight i.e. Trends analysis for predicting/projecting for the future	Records, financial status, Curricula, quality of student input and output, employers' perception of the quality of educational output etc	Relevant statistical tools, Management modeling tools, financial ratios as may be required	***
Planning	There is the need for hindsight, insight and foresight to enable proper and effective planning,	*	**	***
Budgeting	There is the need for hindsight, insight and foresight to enable proper and effective planning,	These activities and the required personnel are put in place in chronological and sequential order in preparation for implementation	**	***
Organising				
Implementation	This is the process of executing or carrying out these activities for the realisation of organisational objectives	Work done and how it was Done	**	***

M & E	Here, we monitor and gather information for analysis, and then examine their results in order to evaluation and	*	**	****
Feedback	Results are feedback into the system for programme revision or improvement	*	***	****
Revision	Suggestions for revision are implemented		***	*****

Source: Developed and applied by this author at a Training Programme on Strategic Educational Institution Management at Strategic Management Centre, Ajah, Lagos, 18 April, 2009.

Legends

- * The evaluator(s) and the client(s) decide on what constitute the elements of the component to be included for evaluation
- ** Appropriate analytical tools should be employed
- *** Remarks include findings and recommendations
- **** Aggregate finding(s)
- ***** This indicates the final recommendation for revision of the process

Analytical Tools Utilisable in the model

The analytical tools utilisable in the model could be either qualitative or quantitative statistical tools or both as well as management/mathematical programming and modeling tools that may be employed to analyse data in the model. They include: Linear programming, financial estimates and ratios, growth rates, trend analysis, Project Evaluation Review Technique (PERT), Critical Path Method/analysis (CPM/A), and Programme Planning and Budgeting System are among the network analytical tools which can be used for forecasting, budgeting, evaluation etc. in management decision making process and the subsequent implementation.

According to Owolabi (2006) and Musazi (2006), models have demonstrative uses as well as creative uses. Thus, in management, the use of models is both illustrative and demonstrative of theory and practice and is also creative. In other words, both theory and practice converge in the use of models in the management process. An example of a mathematical modeling is: If the product of the product of two and the square of an unknown quantity is added to the product of three and that unknown quantity, the result is twenty i.e. $2x^2 + 3x=20$. Owolabi further opines that mathematical models promote the use of quantitative methods in the decision making process. Mathematical models enable the manager to plan effectively by quantifying the parameters of interests. Enrolment by can represented as follows as in the model given below: $E_{(g,t)} + K_{(g,t,t-1)} \times E_{(g,t,t-1)}$, this implies that enrolment in a class is a progression rate in the class below in the previous year, multiplied by the number enrolled in that lower class the previous year. The essence of this is to optimize efficiency.

However, in many cases, evaluation models are paradigms or frameworks which provide logical and systematic procedure/guide for evaluating a programme/action and/or decision. Examples of

such evaluation models according to Umoru-Onuka (1996), include Stake's (1967/1973) Countenance Evaluation commonly called antecedents, transactions and outcomes (ATO) which views evaluation from the perspective of what has been on ground plus input to make up the antecedents component, transactions component refers to interaction/interplay among input, human capital and materials to produce the service of turning out graduates for the labour market, which is the function of distance learning; and the outcome or product in the context of distance learning is the knowledge and skills the learner garnered at the completion of his/her studies as well as his attitudinal change. There is also the Provous' Discrepancy Evaluation Model which seeks to determine the discrepancy between planned and actual outcome and perhaps the causes of the discrepancies so discovered and how these could be overcome; we also have the input, process and output model among others. The added value of this strategic management evaluation model is that it strategically evaluates the whole management process from pre-planning brain wave management thought to beyond completion of production to using feedback to revising the entire process for improvement. It is thus, creative and innovative management process evaluation paradigm, whereas the others are mainly concerned with the product or service. Nevertheless, one common thing to all of them is the fact that they are goal-based, setting out to determining goal/objective accomplishment. Again this particular model combines the elements of both conceptual framework and mathematical/statistical models. This is where its uniqueness lies. It is also both formative and summative in nature as it could be used progressively as programme develops and at the end of a segment of the programme as was the case with first strand of the pre-degree of Distance Learning Centre of the University of Ibadan, Nigeria, which became redesignated, in order to ensure "equity" of non-committal to providing admission for its products (at the expense of other

prospective students) by the university except through the Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examinations (UTME). The model assists the manager to constantly evaluate their actions and / or decisions at each stage of the management process, to ensure programme objective optimisation, efficiency and effectiveness of the manager as well as programme accountability and integrity.

Utilising the Model

Utilising the model entails the ability to scientifically gather the relevant information with regard to every component of this strategic management evaluation model. The management evaluator in carrying out the evaluation of the management progress of any process whether educational or industrial, must gather information about how information of each component were sourced when that component of the management process was being undertaken, how were these information/data analysed, by what means were they integrated to form a management process, examine whether the correct analytical tool was employed, whether the process was holistically considered, examine what went right or wrong at each stage of the process and how what went right or wrong at one stage affected the other stages? Review what should have been done that was not and vice-versa.

You use various but appropriate instruments to gather your information including observation techniques, questionnaires, attitude scales, rating scales, checklists etc. You have to understand these instruments and the techniques of using them before you can successfully can data with them. If you wish to evaluate a management in Distance Learning Institute/Centre, for instance, you have to decipher what constitute the management of developing, maintaining and improving the Institute/Centre; next find out who are the managers handling each function, find out whether the person possesses the appropriate and adequate skills

to perform the said function, did s/he do what was required of the person efficiently and effectively. If it was not properly carried out, why and who was responsible for the inadequacies so detected: the officer or the system? These and other relevant questions are critical to effectively utilising the model to creatively and innovatively improve a system or programme.

Conclusion

Strategic Management Evaluation Model is a paradigm/framework (a kind of paradigm shift in evaluation model) that enables the manager or his superior to progressively evaluate his managerial prowess and to use the resulting feedback provided by the application of the model to improve his management technique and/or style strategically, creatively and innovatively for systemic development, maintenance and improvement to keep it in the competitive market in which it is a player. It is also useful as a summative evaluation to the external evaluator of a management programme, be it in educational or industrial/commercial organisation by adaptation. It is equally an eclectically holist management evaluation model.

It is useful to the Open/Distance Learning Programme operator at whatever level, for self-improvement in his managerial endeavour as it is systematic and thus sequential and logical and indeed a systemic inbuilt evaluation model that is meant to assist in correcting discovered anomalies before they magnified. It thereby minimizes management errors and optimizes managerial effectiveness and efficiency in distance learning management as in management of other institutions and organisations. It can, therefore, be said to be an innovative managerial tool in managing distance learning programme, the learners and facilitators.

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