COMPARATIVE STUDY ON QUALITY ASSURANCE (QA) AND BALANCED SCORECARD SYSTEMS IN SRI LANKAN UNIVERSITIES: SPECIAL FOCUS ON MANAGEMENT FACULTIES

W.M.R.B .Weerasooriya

Faculty of Management Studies, Department of Business Management,Rajarata University of Sri Lanka, Mihintale

Introduction

Universities are public institutions. They hold and must conscientiously exercise, and be seen to exercise, their responsibility for quality and standards. Higher education is a 'public good' and is of crucial importance to the health, wealth and well-being of society and the economyin Sri Lanka. University accountability for quality and standards is a key factor in promoting and safeguarding public confidence in Sri Lankan higher education.

The literature on quality assurance in higher education argues that schemes for quality assurance are often based on one of two fundamentally opposed approaches. Any successful scheme needs to expertly combine the two approaches or to carefully negotiate between the two (Elton, 1988; Pollit, 1987; van Vught and Westerheijden, 1994; Vroeijensteijn and Ackerman, 1990; Vroeijensteijn,1994). Erika Martens and Michael Prosser Volume 6 · Number 1 · 1998 · 28–36 On the one hand, there is the approach which emphasises the intrinsic characteristics of the institution, the confidential, self-directed improvement of quality through trusting peers and self-evaluation, but which runs the risk of being unreliable, impressionistic and uneven. On the other hand, there is the approach which emphasises the extrinsic characteristics of a higher education institution, insisting on external managerial control, comparable, statistical data and public reporting, but which runs the risk of losing the trust and commitment of the participants and thereby becoming ineffectual (Elton, 1988; Pollit, 1987; van Vught and Westerheijden, 1994).

Methodology

This study attempts to compare QA system and BSC in the Sri Lankan Universities. The population selected for this study of the Management Faculties in the entire university system in Sri Lanka. The questionnaires distributed to the Head of the departments of the management faculties in each university to study the BSC (CP: Customer Perspective, IBPP: Internal Business Process Perspective, LGP: Learning, Growth Perspective, FP: Financial Perspective and MS: Mission and Strategy)   and Secondary date apply for the study of QA system in Sri Lanka.

Hypothesis for the BSC system are:
H1. LGP has a positive influence on the IBPP.
H2. IBPP has a positive influence on the FP.
H3. IBPP has a positive influence on the CP.
H4. CP has a positive influence on the MS.
H5. FP has a positive influence on the MS.

Definition of Measurements: In order to measure the BSC perspectives for the departments of the management faculties in this study, statements formulated on a 5 point Likert scale were similarly evaluated with the SPSS statistical package.

Reliability and Correlation: An exploratory study to test the reliability of the instrument of the proposed BSC framework in Management faculties. Table 1.1 displays the result that consists of the reliability values. Table 1.2 represented that the correlation between each hypothesis and all of them are accepted.

Table 1.1 Internal reliability of the Performance Indicators in Sri Lankan Universities

Performance Indicators Criterion	Reliability
Customer Perspective	0.894
Internal Business Process Perspective	0.841
Learning and Growth Perspectives	0.879
Financial Perspectives	0.808
Mission and Strategies	0.723

Table 1.2 Correlation of the each hypothesis

Hypotheses	Accepted or rejected decisions	Values
H1	Accept	0.642
H2	Accept	0.570
H3	Accept	0.643
H4	Accept	0.573
H5	Accept	0.222

Table 1.3 Relationship between QA activities and BSC perspectives

Quality Assurance Activity	BSC Perspective
Curriculum Design, Content and Review	LGP
Teaching, Learning and Assessment Methods	IBPP
Quality of Students, Including Student's Performance and Progression	CP
Extent of Student's Feedback (Qualitative and Quantitative)	CP
Postgraduate Studies	LGP
Peer Evaluation	CP
Skills Development	LGP
Academic Guidance and Counseling	CP

Discussion and Conclusion

Most of the management faculties completed their evaluation and QAA. As per the study the BSC perspectives are interrelated with the most of the components with QAA evaluation criteria (Table 1.3). According to the highest average score for measurement of universities was recorded under the LGP (3.7115) and recorded the lowest average under the FP (2.5470). The University of Colombo, University of Kelaniya, University of Jaffna, University of Ruhuna and University of Sabaragamuwa are scored highest mean value for the LGP. The University of Sri Jayawardenepura, Vavuniya Campus, University of South Eastern and University of Wayamba are recorded highest mean value for CP. The University of Eastern and University of Rajarata are scored highest mean value for IBPP. By evaluating the result no one have given priority to the FP.

As per the grade given by the QAA the management faculties in each university. These activities are mainly concentrating to academic excellence and development. Further

recommended that universities should take action to upgrade B and C grades to good grade A, because these are the most important activities in the higher educational institute development.

- Academics should conduct regular surveys among stakeholders (Alumni, employers and students) to ensure that they provide relevant, quality instruction.
- Develop community based extra activities.

Internal Business process Perspective:
- Develop students teaching, learning and other activities (including infrastructure facilities and teaching equipments)
- Encourage to develop management information system

Learning and Growth Perspective:
- Encourage to develop academic and management staff development
- In order to promote curriculum innovation, research and creativity to play a significant role in development

References

Harman, G. (1996),Quality assessment with national institutional rankings and performance funding: The Australian Experiment, 1993-1995. Higher Education Quarterly, 50 (4), 295-311.

Kaplan, R. S. and Norton, D. P.(1992), The balanced scorecard - measures that drive performance. *Harvard Business Review*, 70(1), 71-79.

Ramsden, P. (1991). A performance indicator of teaching quality in higher education: the course experience questionnaire. Studies in Higher Education, 16, 129-50.

Van Vught, F.A. and Westerheijden D.F. (1994), Towards a general model of quality assessment in higher education. Higher Education, 28, 355-71.

Vroeijensteijn, A.I. (1994), Improvement and Accountability: Navigating between Scylla and Charybdis, Higher Education Policy Series 30, Jessica Kingsley, London.

Vroeijensteijn, A.I. and Acherman, H.A. (1990). Control orientated versus improvement orientated quality assessment in Goedebruure, L.C.J., Maassen,

P.A.M. and Westerheijden, D.F. (Eds), Peer Review and Performance Indicators: Quality Assessment in British and Dutch Higher Education, Lemma, Utrecht