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Two Case Studies of the University Strategic Planning Process

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by

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Dr. Stephen Sherblom, Dissertation Chair	4-25-14 Date
Dr. Michael Marzano, Committee Member	4-25-14 Date
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Declaration of Originality

I do hereby declare and attest to the fact that this is an original study based solely upon my own scholarly work here at Lindenwood University and that I have not submitted it for any other college or university course or degree here or elsewhere.

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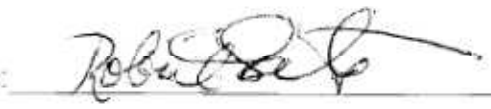
Signature:  Date: 4-25-14

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Abstract

This is a study of how the quality of a university strategic plan can be assessed on the basis of content validated rubrics. It further explores of the dynamics of how the choice of a planning process, i.e. inclusive or non-inclusive, can be affected by strategic intent, change capacity and leadership style of the organization's President.

As the definition of a quality strategic plan document is established by the study, the next problem the study addresses is the gap in higher education literature about the import of clear strategic intent, i.e. the focus on what the organization is trying to achieve. Therefore, two research questions evolve and are addressed in the study: (1) What are the factors that drive the choice of a strategic planning process? (2) Does the process choice affect the quality of the final plan document?

The first phase of research surveyed 16 presidents of prestigious universities. These participants content validated a Comprehensive Quality Matrix. In the second sampling process, faculty and staff from one Midwestern urban college (Site A) and another university in the same city (Site B) were engaged for focus groups and interviews as the beta sites. This second phase explores the assumption that faculty and staff are more inclined to accept and support change if they are viewed as beneficiaries of and collaborators in that change.

Conclusively, the research was a mixed study in that Phase I was quantitative in nature whereas Phase II was qualitative. A review of findings from the research reveals that criteria for a high-quality strategic plan document can indeed be defined. The researcher developed a Comprehensive Quality Matrix, whose content was validated by experts using a statistically significant standard method. The researcher also identified

certain factors that affect the choice of a planning process (inclusive or exclusive). The major elements were strategic intent and culture management, while the minor elements were organizational capacity and organizational learning. Leader style and orientation were found to further impact process choice. Task-oriented leaders tend to be more exclusive in their planning processes, whereas relational leaders tend to be more inclusive.

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Chapter One: Introduction

Institutions of higher education worldwide are challenged to remain relevant in the midst of emerging 21st century demands. In the new digitalized, globalized society, higher education institutions face new uncharted paths, guided by the growing importance of information literacy and the need for a prudent, effective, and efficient use of emerging knowledge. However, to rise to the challenge of societal change and to achieve sustainable competitive advantages, many institutions of higher learning have explored repositioning their organizations by reconsidering their values and revising their practices and curricula. In the future, businesses, governments, and individuals may very well look to colleges and universities for examples of how to work for a brighter tomorrow by building on the progress of the past.

Perhaps the most significant factor in societal change is demand for a particular good or service. When it comes to education, there appears from an international perspective to be a shortage of post-secondary institutions capable of meeting the evolving needs of traditional learners and the growing demands of non-traditional learners. However, when viewed from a national perspective, a quite different picture emerges. Some institutions in the U.S. are struggling with declining enrollment, while others are thriving.

The central focus of current debates on the changes in higher education is the issue of access, that is, the availability of college or university education to the population at large (Murphy, 2002). This issue has different implications in various kinds of educational institutions. Institutions of higher education that are predominantly campus-based have the ability to expand beyond traditional access barriers through the

implementation of digitally enhanced online learning, while “mega-universities” are restructuring programs and services around student-faculty interactions in live, partially online, and online formats (Guri-Rosenblit, 2005). In some countries, including the U.S., for-profit colleges and universities are gaining market share to meet the growing needs of non-traditional, working adult students (Breneman, Pusser, & Turner, 2006). Online-only programs and strategic consortia are also emerging. All of these things reflect the new reality that universities and colleges are in the midst of dynamic change.

In almost any institutional environment, the term "leadership" is touted so frequently that its real significance is obscured by the functionality of the leader’s ability to solve problems and perform tasks. In higher education, the definition of leadership seems even less clear, as institutions struggle to address issues such as the management of volatile enrollments, the advent of digital technologies, and new regulatory and accreditation standards. The core issues tend to redefine even the institutions philosophy of higher education itself. So, what then is the hallmark of leadership in the 21st century? How does that new definition adapt to the field of higher education?

As 21st century realities push post-secondary institutions in a new direction, leaders in higher education face new major trends such as laws and regulations governing online learning (Newman, Couturier, & Scurry, 2004), the dynamic nature of missions and values, the need to nurture creativity within an environment of standardization, new and emerging technologies, the pressure on new graduates to find jobs, and the necessity for collaboration among various members of the educational community.

Accreditation Requirements and Federal Regulations for Online Learning

As educational leaders implement online learning opportunities into their existing programming, consideration of federal regulations and accreditation compliance requirements comes into focus. Leaders benefit from having access to standardized ways of assessing the quality of online learning, such as through the application of Bloom's taxonomy (Halawi, McCarthy, & Pires, 2009), which will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Two.

Dynamic Nature of Vision, Mission, and Values

Leaders within academe today seem possess the ability not only to inspire cultural transformation, but also to promulgate it skillfully to various stakeholders. This recommendation presupposes that university executives have a genuine and ongoing interaction with those stakeholders. The dialogue appears the competing forces of tradition and change can determine his or her effectiveness.

Nurturing Creativity in an Environment of Standardization

In addition to inspiring cultural transformations through vision, mission, and values, university executives may explore processes to determine if creativity and innovation are still at the heart of higher education. Just as they are at the heart of private enterprise; indeed, the very strength of the world economy depends upon creativity and innovation (Wilkes, Yip, & Simmons, 2011). Thus, academic leaders balance to upend tradition, while managing the integral relationships between information management, experiential assets, ingenuity, and employment opportunities. Standardization and creativity are not necessarily diametrically opposed. The challenge for education leaders is to find the optimal mix of both.

Adoption of New and Emerging Technologies

It behooves 21st century educational leaders to establish and maintain core competencies in many new technologies and be particularly skilled in using these technologies in learning applications. At the same time, it is important that they also ensure that technology itself does not become an impediment to learning. For example, i-phones in the classroom can be a great help to the student in having instant access to time saving solutions to problems and questions. However, social media addiction can be a huge distraction to even the most studious individual who has a device in his or her presence in the classroom.

The Focus of Higher Education Leadership

Educational leaders today envision revisiting traditional practices of post-secondary education. Institutions of higher learning focus on the collaborative and cross-disciplinary approaches to learning and establish multifaceted, genuine learning experiences that transcend traditional curriculum and knowledge assessments (Wallace, 2007). Being awarded a college degree may not only signify one's advanced learning but also may indicate one's preparedness to make meaningful contributions to society. Enlightened university executives realize that being educated and being ready for the changing workplace are not mutually exclusive characteristics. Institutions that produce graduates who cannot find jobs perhaps should reevaluate their missions and methods.

Collaboration

Finally**,** educational leaders of today establish new models for decision-making that is inclusive, intuitive, participative, and collaborative so that fresh ideas can be nurtured. Decision-makers can benefit from studying models like the Analytical

Hierarchical Process (AHP), which gives a format for analyzing competing options according to differently weighted criteria and thus making complex decisions with relative efficiency (Bolster, Janjigian, & Trahan, 1995).

Statement of the Problem

In order to address the emerging challenges described above, universities and colleges may now consider repositioning themselves, through comprehensive strategic planning, according to the new coordinates of quality education. This repositioning can be done if institutions strive to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage, which is the key to survival in the 21st century. Many 21st-century institutions of higher learning have fallen out of strategic alignment with the new coordinates of quality education described above. If universities and colleges are to continue to be the catalyst for addressing the needs of society, these institutions view repositioning themselves as an opportunity to ensure linear alignment with appropriate goals and missions. These institutions will surely encounter a plethora of significant challenges that will lead them to adapt a corporate repositioning plan to the university setting, in order to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage over other institutions.

In the 21st century, achieving a sustainable competitive advantage is a multi-faceted endeavor. It requires the removal of boundaries between academia and the public at large, the redesigning and personalizing of student support services, and the incorporation of learning technologies into strategic thinking and planning. As to the removal of boundaries between academia and the public at large, colleges and universities endeavor to proactively develop strategies that accomplish this, all while continuing to protect the foundational mores and history associated with inalienable

academic freedom, independent thinking, and intellectual inquisitiveness of the academic staff.

When it comes to redesigning and personalizing student support services, academic leaders have begun to recognize the necessity of this. Leaders in academe are increasingly realizing that to maintain public approval and participation, some institutions have increased their focus on customized programs and services that meet students where they are, with respect to location, financial costs, and academic expectations. As this strategy is implemented, student support services such as admissions, advising, registration, and placement can be repositioned to deliver flexible accommodations and services initiated and controlled by student governments. These concierge student initiatives are essential to the quality of the organization and the education it provides, as perceived by students, the university's end user consumer.

Finally, progressive higher education institutions are now incorporating learning technologies into their strategic planning and setting of institutional priorities, just as they currently integrate the planning of facilities, administrative processes, library support, and student services. Teaching technology perhaps should no longer be delegated entirely to the IT department; rather, a more comprehensive line of authority is needed from top leadership. Such cross-institutional integration will require broad participation on the part of faculty and staff in order to be sustainable, and thus, it will require a significant commitment on the part of institutional leaders.

Research Questions

In the present study, the principle investigator presents an analysis of two universities with different strategic planning processes. The purpose of this project was to

understand the two distinct planning processes and the different plans to which each process led, as well as to contrast the two plans in terms of a comprehensive quality matrix (CQM). This CQM was designed to evaluate university strategic plans in context. The matrix only assessed the quality of the plan documents themselves, not their implementation. The researcher did not attempt to make predictions regarding how well or poorly a given plan would be implemented, nor of the plan's probability of success. This mixed methods research study was guided by the following questions:

RQ 1. What are the factors that drive the choices involved in designing a strategic planning process?

RQ 2. Does the process choice affect the quality of the plan document?

The purpose of this two-phase project was to seek answers to those research questions. Diagnostically, we ask whether the quality of a university's strategic plan document may be impacted by the planning process and more introspectively, if the process chosen (i.e. inclusive or exclusive) is characterized by engagement or non-engagement of the faculty and staff. Moreover, a clear strategic intent on the part of university leader(s) may also be significantly important to corporate strategy development and cultural transformation as is the choice of a planning process. The first phase of this project involved a content validity panel, which aided the researcher in evaluating and revising the instrument, and the second phase involved interviews with faculty at each institution as well as analysis of each institution's written strategic plan.

Hypotheses to guide the quantitative portion of the research were:

H_1 - There will be no consistency (difference) between raters.

H_2 - There will be no content validity (difference in alignment).

H_3 - There will be a difference in proportional representation of categorical factors between study sites for each group: % male, % private tuition, relative ratio of research-to-liberal arts/other.

H_4 - In comparison of characteristics between the study sites, there will be a mean difference in continuous measures between groups.

H_5 - There will be a difference in proportion of representation between sample validation respondents and overall sample, for the characteristics of gender and institution type.

H_6 - There will be a difference in proportion of representation between sample validation respondents and overall sample, for the characteristics of average tuition and average enrollment.

H_7 - Likert ratings for all three surveyed domains were different between the two study sites.

Importance of the Study

For colleges and universities, strategic planning is the key to collectively and cooperatively gaining control of their future and the destiny of their organizations. However, it should also be recognized that, when analyzing the differing approaches to the institutional planning process, there are multiple layers of complexity. This study will explore two specific primary complexities, *strategic intent* and *capacity building*. Strategic intent is the guiding focus of an organization or its leadership, through which all major decisions are evaluated in context (Hamel & Prahalad, 2005a). This is the overarching theme that directs the organizational purpose, as defined by the leader(s) (Hamel & Prahalad). In that context, if the organization as a whole is not in sync with the

strategic intent of the leader(s), the organization must have, or acquire through personnel changes, the capacity to change in order to meet or exceed the requirements of the strategic intent of the leader(s). This change capacity is also called capacity building, which, along with strategic intent, is a primary complexity that this study will take into account.

This study embraces the conventional wisdom (Brancato, 2003) that faculty and staff involvement in the university strategic planning process is beneficial. However, the primary complexities of strategic intent and organizational capacity for change have a direct bearing on one of the research questions. Further, a secondary complexity of culture management is explored to determine its effect on long-term sustainability of competitive advantage (Oden, 1997). Culture management will be addressed with three assumptions in mind.

Specifically, the change process starts with people who have disproportionate influence in the university. These stakeholders can be identified through qualitative brand research investigation. Secondly, a pro-active approach should be utilized to help faculty and staff to understand why change is necessary. This particular group of stakeholders is critical to establishing the proper inertia for positive movement within the organization. Then thirdly, the change model should prioritize ‘high yield’ activities, i.e. should redistribute resources toward those activities that result in larger changes. Vision casting exercises can be a good source of raw data to make data-based decisions regarding expenditure of effort and resources.

There is a gap in higher education literature about the necessity of institutions having clear strategic intent. Without a focus on what the organization is trying to

achieve in light of a clearly stated mission and vision, leaders are forced to rely only on precedent as they make decisions about the future, which may impede efforts at culture management.

Purpose of the Study

New societal challenges in the 21st century include sustaining natural resources; making adequate provisions for an aging population; accommodating new generations of college-educated, middle-class working adults; and establishing a new set of ethical standards in the face of emerging digital technologies and a global economy (Murphy, 2002). These challenges impact higher education to the extent that society looks to such institutions to provide leadership in addressing these issues. The response of higher education institutions reflects three areas of focus (Murphy):

1. Ensure that graduates have the skills to be productive citizens in the new digital and global economy.
2. Close the achievement gap between the advantaged and the disadvantaged.
3. Affirm the values that have made American education great, namely creativity and innovation, by resisting the pressure to focus on standardized test scores.

Adaptively, strategic planning has become the process used to translate these objectives into and operations plan. Interestingly, the strategic plans of the two institutions presented in this study both reflect, in broad terms, these three overarching strategic objectives; however they differ significantly in approach to the planning process.

In perspective, higher education institutions in the past have been on the vanguard of societal evolution. However, recent changes in governmental strategy, perhaps due to the financial crisis, make one wonder about the future. The uncertainty is exacerbated by

the issues related to the new technology-based economy, which has sequestered certain work positions traditionally associated with a middle-class, non-degreed work force. A college degree now means what a high school diploma did some years ago (Titus, 2009). What is needed now is a comprehensive approach to university corporate repositioning. This concept was born out of linear business models, but it can be tailored to universities and colleges. For the past 50 years, institutional research and learning assessments have led the way in American educational systems. However, in the 21st century, the landscape of academe has drastically changed, so that the ability to reposition oneself is now a key criterion for success, along with research and assessment.

Perhaps the best way to describe the act of institutional repositioning is to make an analogy to the sport of archery. In archery, the archer aims to shoot an arrow into the eye of the target. However, if the archer is not aiming his arrow in the linear direction of the target, it is virtually impossible for the arrow to hit the target, never mind for the arrow to hit the bull's-eye of the target. Therefore, in order score a bull's-eye, any archer, no matter how skilled, must reposition himself to be in correct linear alignment with the target. The reality is that, for colleges and universities, shifts in coordinates have compromised these institutions' ability to predict consistently the future success, innovation, and contribution of its graduates to society. Thus, the linear alignment of colleges and universities—that is, their focus and strategies— must shift if these institutions are to continue to exist.

University corporate repositioning calls for the following: (1) the assessment of critical issues by key stakeholders in an effort to determine the university's capacity for change, and (2) the establishment of milestones and strategies for achieving a sustainable

competitive advantage. While this section has mentioned three-part approach to repositioning, this study as a whole will focus on a particular aspect of repositioning, namely the development of a strategic plan.

Techniques for University Preliminary Self-Assessment

Qualitative Brand Research

This method of research involves exploring the perceptions of customers, in this case, students, parents, and other stakeholders. The purpose was to gain insight into the true feelings and attitudes that the stakeholders had about the institutional brand. Identity was observed from several perspectives. Though varying, all perceptions were analyzed for validity. Researchers such as Grover & Vriens, (2006), commonly use many different qualitative techniques to identify brand equity:

- Random association: “What comes to mind when you think about . . .?”
- Projective techniques: “What are your true attitudes and opinions about . . .?”
- Personification techniques: “If ___ were a person, how would you describe him or her?”

Vision-Casting

Most universities understand vision-casting to be the process of asking the question, “Who do we want to be?” However, newer theories suggest that this is the wrong question. The right question might perhaps be “Who should we be?” This is indeed a very different question, one that assumes the role of driving force behind leader vision-casting (Dale, 2005). The leadership paradigm can be enthusiastic, energetic, and hopeful. There are five other components of leadership that may facilitate the ability to cast a vision: (a) moral compass, (b) flexibility, (c) collaboration, (d) building capacity,

and (e) synthesis cohesion. Vision-casting is not just about asking the right question; it also involves transferring the right answer to stakeholders.

Strategic Planning

Strategic Planning for colleges and universities is a proactive way of dealing with the fluidity, unpredictability, and complexity of academe. The ability to predict the future needs of an institution with some degree of accuracy is a factor that now ranks on par with the quality of the faculty's teaching and research. As is generally accepted in the field, the components of a strategic plan can be divided into several basic steps (Kaufman, 1992):

- Step 1. Mission, Vision, and Values: Establishing and revisiting the university's mission, its reason for existence, is a useful technique and a sort of wedge for entering the planning process.
- Step 2. Stakeholder Identification, Engagement, and Participation: Formal and informal conversations with interested parties produce invaluable insight into critical issues as seen from various perspectives.
- Step 3. Environmental Scan: Foresight-oriented assessments of the institution look at cultural issues, resource concerns, potential calamites, "what if" scenarios, and leadership issues that may directly impact strategic intent; at the same time, these scans can detect opportunities created by adversity.
- Step 4. Expectations: A series of goals are established to set the direction for the institution's collective efforts; the goals have measurable benchmarks and timeframes.

- Step 5. Targeted Activities: These activities are specific, objective ways that expectations can be achieved through data-based decision-making.
- Step 6. Plan Development: This process is the qualitative designing of expectations and targeted activities that can be useful in guiding daily operations and projecting future planning. Quantitative metrics are used for evaluation purposes.
- Step 7. Results, Achievements, and Assessments: Outcome-based analysis against pre-selected expectations, with intermittent re-evaluation for correction or redesign.

Facilities Master Planning

The era of the 800-square-foot, teacher-centered, traditional classroom is long gone. Contemporary education facilities planners (Leather & Marinho, 2009) recognize three distinct student work functions that should have their own design and physical space: computer work, collaboration activities, and project development activities. The signature characteristic of 21st century architectural design is that of students at work in a learning lab. Modern learning labs have several design characteristics: (a) primary student work areas, (b) presentation spaces, (c) large-group spaces, (d) multipurpose learning spaces, (e) specialty labs, and (f) movable furniture.

Culture Transformation

Culture transformation, or culture management, is a dynamic process whereby the institution changes and adapts to external and/or internal forces. Changing a university's culture is one of the most difficult leadership challenges for executives and trustees today. It is generally believed that culture change comes last, at the end of a process of

introspection and action, rather than first. Research shows that universities that are successful in sustaining competitive market advantage through culture management share some common characteristics:

1. Top executives must commit the time needed for transformation. Change may happen quickly, but usually the process is slow.
2. Guiding principles and values translate into behaviors and standards. This is necessary to make qualitative change.
3. The desired behaviors and standards must be modeled by top executives. Inappropriate behaviors must be confronted, and discipline must be administered with consistency and fairness.
4. Engagement of all stakeholders in future culture transformation is crucial at every step in the change process. Although time consuming, small-group meetings are invaluable for buy-in and future support of the planning process.

Pacing is necessary to prevent taking on too much change at one time. The organization cannot be changed all at once, so it is best to start with areas or departments where small victories can be achieved.

Description of the Strategic Planning Process

Although the entire three-phase process of university corporate repositioning has been described to provide context, the focus of this study is limited to the strategic planning component, and more specifically, to the quality of the plan document itself and the factors that impact its quality. As mentioned in the previous section, planning is an organizational management activity that unites stakeholders in a common effort and affords an opportunity for all concerned parties to come together around common

expectations and desired outcomes.

Strategic planning is an effort by leadership to involve all stakeholders in a unified plan that directs operational activities. It charts the course for data-based decision-making and focuses on outcomes and results. Further, strategic plans help institutions, whether colleges, universities, or a business large or small, to be both proactive and effectively reactive to environmental factors.

A strategic plan is a written document that summarizes and translates operating plans into a futuristic narrative. The plan should have specific expectations and timelines for task accomplishment (Kaufman, 1992). A good plan should have quantifiable benchmarks, so that users of the plan will know when the expectations of the plan have been met. Whereas most plans are unique to the particular institutions for which they are written, the multiple categories of quality measurement can generally be simplified into three broad planning steps.

First, through some technique for gaining insight, such as qualitative brand research, a university identifies itself and establishes its mission, vision, and values. After this has been accomplished, the institution embarks on internal and external assessments as the second stage. In the third stage, action steps are initiated that transform expectations into reality, in the form of strategies, goals, objectives, and tactics. Finally, assessment, evaluation, and rerouting are retrospectively overlaid on all three parts of the process. This final review is sometimes referred to as the “gap analysis” – a study of the variance between the expected and actual outcomes (Dubois & Dubois, 2012).

Limitations

Qualitative research has become increasingly prevalent in recent years, offering a viable alternative to quantitative research for researchers who are interested in issues that have typically been the purview of the liberal arts. With quantitative research focusing on numerically or mathematically measurable differences among study groups, qualitative research frequently seeks more subjective data regarding a particular "research question, phenomenon, or group of people" (Peshkin, 1997). Despite gaining credibility, qualitative research nevertheless has some limitations that are worthy of note. Specifically, according to Peshkin, qualitative research can present challenges in terms of generalizable results, validity, broader implications, and reliability. One perhaps major limitation of the study was the sample size of the completed survey responses, utilized in Part I. Of the 100 surveys sent out, only 16 completed responses were returned. Although the PI was pleased with that response rate which met the minimum requirements for validity, a case could be made that perhaps the sample size was too small.

Validity

To audiences who are accustomed to reviewing quantitative research, qualitative research may appear to have less credibility in its approach, methods, and conclusions. As such, the concept of validity in qualitative research implies truth and certainty of findings. The truthfulness of findings is weighed by asking whether the research findings have painted an accurate picture of reality. The certainty of the findings is weighed by asking whether they are confirmed by the objective facts.

Moreover, qualitative researchers use the method of triangulation to establish validity in their studies by analyzing a research question from multiple perspectives

(Patton & Patton, 2002). According to Patton and Patton, many qualitative researchers assume incorrectly that the purpose of triangulation is to achieve consistency across data sources or techniques. In fact, variation and inconsistency could actually give strength to the variant approaches. In Patton's perspective, these inconsistencies should not necessarily be viewed as dilutions of the evidence; rather, they may be seen as pointing to deeper meaning in the data. In this study, three types of triangulation are employed:

1. Data triangulation: In part I of the research, executives of the Top 100 universities, according to *Forbes* (Howard, 2013), were surveyed. In this way, data were gathered from multiple sources.
2. Methodological triangulation: Consistent with the analysis of the data from part I, this study looked at the data from two perspectives, Likert Scale ranking and the Hierarchical Analytical Process (AHP). Also, content validation and inter-rater reliability methods were utilized. Further, chi-squared test and the Mann Whitney test were employed. In addition, the basis for the development of a standard for the calculation of response rates by the American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR) (2000) was utilized, as well.
3. Environmental triangulation: As surveys in part I were sent to university executives in various locations across the country, we are able to see whether there were any significant regional differences with respect to survey responses. (Patton, 2002)

Generalizable Results

Another potential limitation of qualitative research involves the ability to generalize results to other populations or research groups. As qualitative research is typically exploratory in nature and frequently designed around the particulars of one population, it becomes challenging to extend findings from a qualitative study to larger populations or to make generalizable assumptions. In this study, the results may be applicable to primary and secondary education executives in addition to post-secondary education executives; however, this study draws no conclusions for these other populations.

Broader Implications

Qualitative research has another limitation regarding the broadness of implications. Qualitative research is often so specific to one situation that it is not generalizable; therefore, it is challenging if not impossible to make broad, overarching claims based on the outcomes of a particular qualitative research study. Still, the present researcher suggests that the present study could have broader implications for healthcare administrators, specifically in hospitals. The same process used with university executives in this study could be applied to determine whether hospital executives could perform content validation for a comprehensive quality matrix for a strategic plan document for a healthcare organization. However, this study draws no conclusions regarding broader implications.

Reliability

In addition to concerns about generalizability of results and broader implications, qualitative research also raises the concern of reliability: specifically, the question of

whether the study can be replicated and provide consistent results. Because qualitative research is heavily dependent upon the investigator's knowledge and interpretation, there is a concern that another investigator, attempting to replicate the qualitative study, may not be able achieve consistent results. For example, the second investigator may pose interview questions in a different way or may make different decisions when interpreting data. Such variations can dramatically alter the study's outcome and can certainly make data interpretation inconsistent, even if the second investigator uses the same research approach as the first. In this study, the chief reliability concern is that this research has not been replicated by any other researchers.

Definition of Terms

The following is a list of terms that may be unfamiliar to the reader of this study.

Strategic Intent: The driving force that informs and shapes how an organization defines itself through mission, vision, and strategic advantage (Hamel & Prahalad, 2005a).

Strategic Plan: A document that outlines a company or organization's long-term goals and then indicates the best approach for achieving improved process output within a specified period of time (Cope, 1981a).

Strategic Planning Process: The three dimensions of activities that ultimately evolve into the creation of a strategic plan document. Specifically, the dimensions are height (systemic scan), width (external scan), and depth (internal scan) (Georgantzas & Acar, 1995)

Organizational Change Capacity: The planned development of, or increase in, knowledge, output rate, management, skills, and other capabilities of an organization through acquisition, incentives, technology, and/or training (Sanchez & Heene, 1997).

Sustainable Competitive Advantage: An organizational asset that involves the ability to communicate, over a period of time, a greater perceived value to a target market than one's competitors can provide. This can be achieved through many methods, including offering a better-quality product or service, lowering prices, and increasing marketing efforts. This favorable position is maintained over the long term, and it can help boost a company's image in the marketplace, its valuation, and its future earning potential (Porter, 2004).

Delimitations

Delimitations are boundaries that are set by the researcher in order to control the range of a study. Delimitations are determined prior to the start of research so as to minimize the time and resources expended in particular activities that may prove to be unnecessary and irrelevant to the theme of the study. The boundaries in this study are the participants, instruments, and geographical location.

Participants

The number and type of participants involved in a qualitative study constitute a delimitation, whether they are subjects or observers. This delimitation is a central consideration in qualitative research, which aims to uncover and examine various aspects of human relations within certain cultures or environments. The process used to locate and recruit participants in a qualitative study is important for controlling bias and for efficiently obtaining a representative sample. This study involved 20 total participants.

All of the participants were subjects, in as much as there were no observers other that the primary investigator in art II of the research. This study was conducted in two parts, with different participants in each part.

Part I. University Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) and Strategic Planning Officers (SPOs) engaged in a qualitative survey, relating to the strength of the CQM as a plan document template. This group included university CEOs, university SPOs, and university faculty who were knowledgeable in the relevant area.

Part II. Faculty and staff at Site A and Site B engaged in focus groups and interviews to determine how strategic intent and organizational capacity impact the strategic planning process. This group included CEOs, cabinet members, department heads, and others.

Instruments

In most scholarly research, standardized procedures and techniques are followed to ensure consistent quality and outcome. In qualitative research, such as the present study, common instruments include questionnaires, surveys, interviews, and focus groups. This study used all of these instruments.

For part I of the study, the researcher used Survey Monkey to send university CEOs and SPOs at leading educational institutions a qualitative survey regarding the CQM template for them to review for content validity. These participants were randomly selected from institutions listed in the Top 100 Colleges, as compiled by *Forbes*, (Howard, 2013). The Consent Form for part I was incorporated into this survey.

For part II of the study, site-based research was conducted. Staff and key faculty of sites A and B, as described in 11c, were asked by the researcher to participate in

voluntary, confidential interviews, focus groups, and surveys. A site-based procedure for locating, selecting, and recruiting participants was utilized. Specifically, all university department heads were asked to participate. Other key staff and thought leaders were invited to participate as well. Site-based participant recruitment recognizes that faculty and staff on the campus level are more likely to internalize change and to support its implementation if they are involved in the planning than if they are not. The consent form labeled part II was used in the site-based interviews at both sites A and B.

Geographic Placement

For purposes of convenience, a qualitative research study may focus on a select area, in which case investigators may seek to examine diverse cultures and communities within that area. It is not uncommon for an investigator to focus on a particular geographical area. Part I of the research benefits from the participation of university executives located across the U.S. Part II, however, is limited to two small, urban, Midwestern institutions, one a university and the other a college, that are located in the same city.

Assumptions

Assumptions can be defined as the biases, both subjective and objective, that an investigator brings to a research project. Qualitative researchers have the prerogative to not divorce themselves from their own personal beliefs. In fact, it is permissible to incorporate those beliefs into the research. Investigators who choose qualitative research implicitly accept its underlying philosophical assumptions regarding ontology (the nature of reality) and epistemology (what knowledge is possible, and by what means). Other assumptions made by the qualitative researcher are axiological (based on the researcher's

own personal values) and methodological (having to do with the means by which research is best conducted). Creswell, Hanson, Clark, and Morales (2007) described the following four categories of philosophical assumptions which are relevant to this study:

Ontological (what is real): This type of assumption concerns the scope of reality and what it looks like. Qualitative investigators tend to ascribe to the concept of "multiple realities," in which several views of reality are identified through triangulation based on differing perspectives and data sources. While this study had 20 survey participants, no conclusions were drawn with regard to the nature of reality or multiple realities. It is noted however, that consistency was observed in rater responses to survey questionnaires.

Epistemological (knowledge confirmation): Some investigators assert the value of close association with the participants being studied. Accordingly, subjective data is collected based on individual opinions from research surveys conducted in the field. Part II of the research for this study involves subjective evidence; however, the content validation surveys of part I do not involve subjective interpretation.

Axiological (personal values as reflected in research): Qualitative researchers ethically should make full disclosure in the study regarding any of their personal values that may impact the study. Personal values of the researcher were made known in the data collection portion of this study, although these values have not been factored into the interpretation of the data.

Methodology (methods used): Researchers in qualitative studies often utilize methods that are "convenient" with respect to the researcher's knowledge and skill in collecting and analyzing the data. However, the methodology can also be impacted by the input of other researchers on the team. This study reflects the experience of the researcher

only and will not have the benefit, positive or negative, of other researchers' involvement.

Summary

It is possible for a university to develop a high-quality strategic plan document that can guide its work toward a better future. Moreover, it is possible to measure the quality and impact of a strategic plan document in a rigorous manner. Measures of quality can be validated and assessed through the use of a 'score card' such as the one developed in the present study. The primary researcher for this study has developed a Comprehensive Quality Matrix (CQM) to be used in assessing university strategic plan documents. The matrix assesses these documents in terms of how well they account for the following aspects of strategic planning: Qualitative Brand Research, Vision-Casting, Strategic Planning, Facilities Master Planning, and Culture Transformation. Budget-tracking and accreditation standards are incorporated into the Strategic Planning category.

These categories for measurement will be discussed in detail in Chapter Three; however, it should be noted that strategic intent, the driving force that motivates a leader in directing an organization, may play a significant role in determining which planning model a leader chooses for developing his or her organization's plan. Although the planning process choices are many, for the purposes of this study, the process choices will be limited to two options: inclusive or exclusive faculty participation in the identification of the strategic plan's objectives.

Contributions of the Present Study to Existing Research

In the current era's digital and global economy, the importance of strategic planning to institutions of higher learning cannot be overemphasized. As the direct correlation between societal success and knowledge management becomes more and more evident, foresight and futures orientation are of paramount significance. Although nearly 20 years old, the statements of Taylor and Schmidtlein (1995) still resonate today: "At its best, strategic planning should provide opportunities for organizations … to evaluate themselves regularly, question the assumptions that guide their operations, and create an atmosphere throughout [the university] that fosters continuous innovation, collaboration, and outward vision."

This study will address the question of whether the engagement of university faculty and staff in the process of developing a college or university's strategic plan correlates with the improved efficacy of the plan. This study will not consider long-term outcomes or try to determine whether long-term strategic plan objectives are achieved. Rather, this study will only evaluate the quality and metrics of the plan itself. The study will link "wild card" variables, such as synergy, strategic intent, and common beliefs, as potential "game changers" that extend beyond the quality of the plan itself.

Finding the best means of developing the university strategic planning process requires an ongoing effort due to the dynamic nature of academe. Further research is needed in three broad areas of focus: (a) strategic thinking, (b) strategic theories, and (c) development of the plan itself. The first two areas involve the technical arguments of the concept, relating to support for and defense of the initiative. This is of importance because, as an example, "buy in" from faculty and staff is presumed to be essential for

the overall success of a strategic plan. The reality is that obtaining consensus for a university strategic plan from all of the various stakeholders, particularly faculty and staff, presents unique challenges. Academe is unique in that faculty and staff members are highly educated, and as such, most are critical thinkers. Each one will process the university's critical issues from his or her own unique perspective. Although consensus is quite possible, generally it requires a laborious and challenging effort to achieve, with this group of stakeholders. Clearly, though, research needs to continue in order to discover the best practices and most effective strategies for university and college planning, particularly now, in an era that is increasingly appearing to be the post-public era of higher education funding.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

History of Modern Organizational Strategic Planning

The concept of strategic planning is not new to business and industry or academe; however, the various factor that affect the choice of a planning process is relatively new ground for academic research. Chapter Two, through a narrative literature review, will trace the history of strategy planning from its origins in Greek mythology, through its military applications and ultimately in its present day use in almost every area of endeavor where precision in decision making is crucial. Strategic planning will be analyzed from its basic components and key concepts. New techniques and emerging concepts will also be explored along with validity testing.

The word ‘strategy’ derives from the Greek noun *strategos* and verb *stratego*. The noun *strategos* means “general” or “leader” in a military context, while the verb *stratego* refers to the act of planning (Strategy, n.d.). Historically, the concept of strategy has been studied mostly in military and political contexts (Bracker, 1980). However, for modern management and organizational theorists such as Drucker (1974), strategic planning is as relevant to business contexts as to military and political ones.

In the past, researchers have referred to strategic planning as the act of establishing foundational goals corresponding to one’s philosophy and values and making plans to realize these ideas through action steps; these efforts are meant to generate organizational success (Steiner & Miner, 1977). From an institutional point of view, strategic planning can be seen as an all-inclusive process that begins with a vision statement that communicates a blend of capacity and potential.

In 1981, Cope identified nine characteristics of strategic planning:

- It is usually regarded as a function of CEOs.
- It is usually undertaken with an organization-wide perspective that cuts across departments and functions.
- It emphasizes conditions of the environment, matching opportunity with environmental realities in an effort to achieve expected outcomes.
- It involves an iterative, continuous learning process.
- It is a process focused more on "doing the right thing" than on "doing things right." In other words, emphasis is on effectiveness rather than on correctness.
- It is a process that relies on synergistic interactions, under the assumption that, figuratively speaking, 2 + 2 = 5.
- It involves asking the organization, "Why do we exist?"
- It is closely embedded in the fundamental principles of the institution and its competencies.
- It emphasizes change, review, and re-examination; it is not static. (p. 3)

Three Distinct Era Strategic Planning

The development of strategic planning in the 20th century can be divided into three distinct eras: 1950s, 1970s, and 1990s. In the 1950s, strategic planning was thought to be mainly for large corporations operating within a for-profit business paradigm. Eventually, university schools of business and managerial research companies began to incorporate strategic planning into their marketing efforts. Today, management theorists consider strategic planning to be an indispensable tool in the process of ensuring organizational effectiveness. Future generations will judge the value of strategic planning

efforts in terms of their ability to direct organizational change in a manner that coheres with the realities of the new global and digital economy.

The business policy model of the 1950s, as described by management theorist Drucker (1974), asked whether (a) we are in the right business and (b) the business we are in is a good match for our collective organizational skill set. By the following decade, other researchers had defined strategic planning as the process by which an organization adapts to changes in the environment, a process that involves the distribution of assets and resources in order to attain desired outcomes (Helper & Sako, 2010). Soon after this definition was formulated Andrews (1987) and Ansoff (1965) expanded it by describing strategic planning as the chess game of defining a business in its present position or creating a plan to reposition that business to achieve competitive advantage.

In the 1970's, the rise of marketing reshaped managerial perspectives. Cultural changes, the rising impact of mass media, and increasingly sophisticated and educated consumers led to the reinvention of marketing as a discipline, with strategic planning as an integral component. Although the baseline trends of demographics and economics continued to play a role in organizations' planning efforts, scholars have debated how important the distinction is between what a company wants to be versus the present state of the company. However, there is no disagreement on the importance of the interrelationship between marketing and strategic planning.

The 1990s brought the realization of an ideal first alluded to by Drucker (1954) in the 1950s: that is, management theorists began to evaluate strategic planning efforts chiefly according to the criterion of effectiveness. While this approach seems logical on its face, it is actually quite problematic due to the difficulty of accurately and consistently

defining which benchmarks ought to be used in evaluating effectiveness. The following benchmarks have been proposed:

- Accomplishment of goals in the long- and short-term (Georgopolus & Tanenbaum, 1957)
- Acquisition of resources (Yutchman & Seashore 1967); that is, human and financial capital
- Health of the organization (Argyris, 1964); for example, smooth internal operations
- Satisfaction of stakeholders (Keeley, 1978) such as employees and customers

Sequentially, it is clear that the field of knowledge regarding the planning process has matured over the years.

Long-Range Planning Versus Strategic Planning

The shift that most sharply defines the evolution of the strategic planning process in recent years is the transition from a concept of so-called 'long-range planning' to what is now called 'strategic planning.' Strategic planning is concerned with an organization's context, that is, with where the organization is in relationship to the larger marketplace and, now, to the global economy. Cope (1981a) compared long-range and strategic planning as follows:

> Long-range planning implicitly assumed a closed-window system, within which institutional five- and ten-year blueprints could be constructed. Strategic planning depicts an environment in which institutions are fluid and ever-changing. . . Long-range planning used to be the final blueprint. Strategic planning now, however, highlights the continuum of ongoing change and redefinition. (p. 4)

In another researcher's (Cope, 1981b) comparison of long-range planning with strategic planning, he concluded that "long-range tended toward SWOT [Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats] analysis, using metrical models of asset distribution, and toward becoming a separate in-house department or function. Strategic planning, [however,] looks circumspectly at all surroundings: those within our control and those that are not" (p. 7). Also identified a list of contrasting attributes of long-range planning and strategic planning, summarized as follows:

Table 1.

Comparison of Conventional Long-Range Planning and Strategic Planning

Attribute	Long-range Planning	Strategic Planning
Perspective	Internal	External
System view	Closed	Open
Data	Quantitative	Qualitative
Function	Separate office	Participative integration
Process	Deductive	Inductive
Basis	Science	Art
Result	Blueprint	Process
Result	Plan	Stream of decisions
Result	Decisions for future	Today's decisions in future

Cope (1981a) offered a synthesis of the attributes in Table 1, which Fenny (1981) had identified, suggesting that the process of environmental scanning is essential to the success of comprehensive planning. It follows, then, that successful strategic planning requires surveying the marketplace for new trends and developments that affect business and industry.

Successful strategic planning also requires that the individual strategists possess *strategic intent,* that is, a keen sense of the goals toward which they are working. Moreover, according to Cope (1981a), skilled strategists must function in a planning environment where three pivotal dimensions are considered: time, that is, having the right plan for the right time; horizontal integration, that is, the relationships among various departments within the institution; and finally, vertical integration, that is, among the different levels or layers within the organization.

Strategic Planning in Higher Education

Cope (1981a) suggested the following functional definition of strategic planning for the context of academe: “Strategic planning is an institution-wide, foresight/future-, participative process that develops in statements of institutional priorities, which match internal and external strengths against activities beneficial to the community” (p. 8).

Various researchers, including Cope (1981b), Collier (1980), and Millet (1978), have investigated business-oriented planning strategies in higher education settings and have independently concluded that these strategies are in fact applicable to academe. It must be pointed out, however, that universities and colleges do in fact have unique characteristics that make them substantially different from other types of business. According to Cohen and March (1974), “In academe, faculty and staff are viewed as individuals who make independent decisions. Faculty determines the parameters of instruction. Politicians decide levels of support. Neither collaboration nor control is practiced” (pp. 33-34). This statement reflects the disconnect that existed in the past, and to a certain extent still now, between operators of universities and funders of universities.

Universities and colleges have diverse objectives, so it is rarely possible for all the various stake-holders to reach complete consensus. The academic prowess of the faculty and staff makes the process of decision-making more complex than in other kinds of institutions. What may be a routine decision in a typical business becomes more complicated in a university or college setting. Cohen and March (1974) cited the following reasons for the complexity of decision-making in colleges and universities: politics, incremental scope of implementation, narrow policy latitude, qualitative evaluation tools, an inherently participative style, broad constituencies, and unclear lines of authority. Despite these characteristics of institutions of higher learning, though, strategic planning has been utilized in this context for some time.

Admittedly, according to Schendel and Hatten (1972), the higher education community has been somewhat slow to embrace strategic planning; however, these researchers also affirm its applicability to university and college settings. They explained the applicability of strategic planning to higher education in terms of its adaptability: "Strategic planning is adaptive planning and [is] suited to coping with changes, whereas long-range planning is inertial and implicitly assumes a future that will duplicate the past" (p. 207). Strategic planning is better suited to complex higher education institutions than is long-range planning.

Higher education institutions have now fully embraced the practice of strategic planning. Some institutions have full-time staff members to perform the on-going duties associated with strategic planning, while other institutions employ outside consultants. Whatever the case, academic institutions must compete in the marketplace just like any other enterprise. As such, in order to achieve sustainable competitive advantage,

universities and colleges must avail themselves of recent advances in management best practices, which indicate that strategic planning is a major corporate function. According to Benjamin and Carroll (1998), strategy can be perceived as a vehicle for advancing position in the marketplace.

The Necessity of Strategic Planning in Institutions of Higher Learning

Benjamin and Carroll (1998) stated that colleges and universities that do not re-examine their missions, visions, and values should expect challenges in the current environment of academia because of supply and demand. The survivors most likely will be those institutions that are able to produce more results with fewer resources. According to Fathi and Wilson (2009), educational leaders must be willing to accept bold new risks (p. 96) as part of the landscape of a changing academic environment that is re-defining post-secondary education. In this new environment, the ability to use rubrics to evaluate strategic plans will be a core competency of successful colleges and universities. A few basic reasons for this new paradigm include the following: new technology, more adult learners, the digital and global economy, and the new value placed on innovation and creativity (Okpara, 2013).

The Basic Components of the Strategic Planning Process

Fathi and Wilson (2009) have identified steps in institutional strategic planning as follows:

Mission, vision, and values

The entering wedge to planning for the future is to establish the university's mission and vision. Such elements of corporate purpose should have identifiable

parameters, because subsequent activities in additional planning steps will lose precision without them (Fathi & Wilson, 2009).

SWOT and five forces

internal and external analysis of the operating environment is the next crucial step. Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis and the Five Forces Model (an analysis of social, economic, demographic, technological and political factors) are the leading analytic tools in current use (Thompson, Strickland & Gamble, 2008)

Gap analysis

Gap analysis has been defined as the variance between the institutions current achievements measured against the expected and desired outcomes (Thompson & Strickland, 2008).

Benchmarking

Alternatively, the management literature illustrates benchmarking as another tool to contrast one institution against another. Benchmarking has application with “best practices” and in side-by-side comparison of university ratings and rankings by third parties (Dess, Lumpkin, & Eisner, 2008, p. 368).

Priorities and programming

According to Thompson and Strickland (2008) institutions should re-evaluate strategic plans every three years and make whatever changes or mid-course corrections to keep the university or college on track to achievement of corporate goals.

All of these things individually and collectively make up the mosaic of activities that plot the course for tomorrow and guide the activities of today.

Key Concepts or Variables in Strategic Planning

In a study of two Italian universities, researchers Bronzetti, Mazzota, and Nardo (2012) identified two macro strategic planning dimensions. The variables take the form of *process* dimension (techniques) and *substance* dimension (content). These researchers grouped into the process dimension, the following activities:

Process dimension

- Documents are presented to obtain greater level of transparency
- Stakeholder(s) participation throughout the entire process is sought
- Process clarification is repeated for clarity
- Synchronization with other planning and financial documents increases validity and quality
- Collaboration of support institutions in plan development adds impact
- Obtaining concurrence from individual board members advances corporate agenda

The substance dimension includes these activities:

Substance dimension

- Plan formalization of mission, vision and values of the university community
- SWOT analysis to determine stakeholder expectations and strategies
- Assurance that strategic plans are philosophically consistent with values and culture of the organization
- Target definition
- Identification of liable parties

- Benchmark analysis
- Monitoring
- Evaluation of results and dynamics

Process and substance define the “how” and “what” of strategic planning. Although the terms process and substance are somewhat generic, its application in higher education seems to be consistent and valuable.

Process Dimension By-Products

Blastein (2012) described the *process dimension* (the techniques or ‘how’ of the process) of strategic planning to have impact on either creating a pathway to employee self-empowerment or the converse, a failed plan due to lack of support or involvement from top management, an equal and opposite anticipated reaction.

The *substance dimension* (the content or ‘what’ of the process), alluded to previously has the relational opportunity to significant negative impact on the efficacy of the plan, if the right questions are not asked at the beginning of the process (Collins & Porras, 2012). Specific reference is made to the work of Blastein (2012), where key questions are asked in a corporate context:

1. Who are we?
2. Where do we want to go?
3. How and when are we going to get there?

According to Phelan (2002), the failure of universities and colleges to embrace strategic planning principles can impair the university’s ability to respond appropriately to its environment. Most universities do some form of yearly planning, too often however, in response to unanticipated events. Phelan further opined that under these

conditions, university mission statements are useful only to embellish catalogues more so than to guide strategic actions.

New Techniques for University Strategic Planning

In a rapidly changing global society, where the digital technology has changed the landscape of academe, universities' are challenged to keep pace as well as predict the future, as far as possible. To that end, several new techniques have emerged as ways to navigate in the 21st century: (a) Uncertainty and complexity (b) Scenario-planning and (c) Strategic foresight.

Uncertainty and complexity

Few would disagree, that universities today function in an environment that is both uncertain and complex. Add to that the intricacies of a global context, and what emerges is a new world order for higher education. Both threats and opportunities will be part and parcel of the future that higher education leaders and strategic planners must face. Munck and McConnell (2009) proposed that educational leaders practice what they call 'strategic foresight', a technique used to plan for uncertainty and complexity through creativity and innovative thinking. Nowotny, Scott, and Gibbons (2001) argued that too many universities have difficulty in responding quickly and accurately to future demands because they have rigid infrastructures that make change inherently challenging. Flexibility within the university is the key to processing uncertainty and complexity; however, the main mission of producing thought leaders must not be diminished. Whether large or small, all institutions of higher learning face the same issues of relevancy in the 21st century. Gridley and Inayatullah (2002) have identified four critical areas to which university strategic planners must give targeted attention when plotting

their institutions' futures: globalism, multiculturalism, digital technology, and politicization.

As the new world order of "virtualization" has hardly taken root, it is quite clear that futures-oriented thinking in universities is paramount in order to fully comprehend the impact of a changing world. According to Va□limaa, Stensaker, and Sarrico (2012), 21st century institutions of higher learning find themselves in an environment of multiple and complex variables. In this environment, plans, systems and procedures that worked well in the past are antiquated today (Valimaa et al, 2012).

Scenario-planning

In the conducting of analyses, the use of foresight/futures strategies such as scenario planning is not an attempt to prognosticate or predict the future. Rather, these strategies offer a way of anticipating what could happen in the implementation of a strategic planning model (Munck & McConnell, 2009). Munck and McConnell suggested that educational leaders should identify internal and external situations which may have an impact on both present and future plans. Qualitative in nature, foresight/futures strategies approach the planning process as both a science and a creative art that requires an element of artistic intuition.

Munck and McConnell (2009) identified scenario planning as the capstone of the futures perspective. Scenario planning is not a venture into the future, nor is it an exercise in virtual reality. Scenarios are in fact what military and governmental planners have used successfully for many years as an exceptionally effective paradigm for data-based decision making. This scenarios technique is applicable in uncertain and complex situations. A benefit of scenario planning is structure that it provides to thoughts about

possible future environments. Also, scenario planning gives design to realistic and coherent planning from the current reality to what may be the new world order of a digital and global community.

Scenario planning is concerned not so much about what *will* happen, but rather about what *could* happen, as a way of helping decision-makers to identify and prepare for unexpected developments. For example, few, if any leaders in the business world predicted the housing crisis of 2007 and the ensuing stock market crash of 2008. Likewise, few university boards of trustees and chief executive officers have embraced the realization that the post-public education era for higher education will most likely not be reversed in the face of staggering budget deficits and sequestration. Therefore, as one study puts it, "The 21st century institution of higher learning will most likely be futures-oriented" (Munck & McConnell, 2009 p. 36). Practitioners of educational leadership must have some formal mechanism, like foresight, in order to be able to "plan the unplannable" (p. 36) and push away from their traditional comfort zones. In so doing, 21st century higher education practitioners may well be able to avert disasters as well as exploit new opportunities.

It follows that this new paradigm should identify several "what if" situations for universities and colleges to consider. These scenarios are not necessarily appealing to think about, but it is necessary to plan for them. First, what if the devolution of higher education funding from governmental sources forced colleges and universities to engage in real marketplace competition for survival? Second, what if the university lost academic relevancy due to its delayed or non-existent response to changes called for by the new

digital and global environment, and what if this irrelevance resulted in precipitate decreases in enrollment?

Strategic Foresight

Without foresight and future scenarios, answers to these timely questions could elude many long-standing institutions, precipitating their demise. However, strategic foresight offers a new hope for university strategic planners. Foresight combines the traditional methods of strategic planning with an added dimension of integrating knowledge, or guesses, or even case scenarios about the future into the dynamic planning process. According to Munck and McConnell's (2009), foresight offered six opportunities for innovation:

- Educational innovation to facilitate flexible and creative learning
- Better health and well-being of improved data-based life styles
- Digital communication and information technology
- Conversion to "green" practices that protect and sustain the environment
- Opportunity to developing cultural diversity
- On-going "future scanning" to achieve and sustain competitive advantage.

Clearly, viable evidence demonstrates the usefulness of futures/foresight for discovering the 'present truth' for university strategic planners. This paradigm presents opportunities to see the full panorama of the new world order of the 21st century in higher education. The task of present educational leaders is to perfect tools, techniques, and software that will allow development of comprehensive 'what if' scenarios to address the uncertain and complex realities of a changing environment.

Gaps in our Knowledge of University Strategic Planning

Whereas much progress has been made in the area of anticipating and planning for change, still there remains gaps in our knowledge of the strategic planning process, in particular as it impacts universities. Two more significant gaps are inclusive of (a) methodology – i.e. proactive vs. reactive and (b) inconsistencies in various plan documents.

Proactive vs. reactive methodology

Just as the facilities master plan is an integral part of a strategic plan, information systems must also be taken into consideration by strategic planners. According to King (2001), most organizations conduct strategic planning and budget planning as two independent processes. However, this approach is problematic given the potential for methodological inconsistencies and/or shortcomings in the quest for knowledge in the strategic planning process. Just as outdated physical facilities can compromise the desired outcome that an educational institution can deliver, so too can the data-collection and retrieval component cause potential inconsistency or flaws to the desired outcome.

To that extent, King (2001) stated that the main difference among various planning methodologies involves the ways in which the data collection and retrieval component of the plan interface with the overarching corporate strategic plan construction. King grouped the major methodological inconsistencies or flaws into two categories. He defined these terms in the following manner:

- *Proactive:* methodology that involves two-way flows of information between the ISSP and the corporate strategic plan

- *Reactive*: methodology that involves primarily one-way flow of information between the ISSP and the corporate strategic plan. (p. 81)

Practically speaking, if the relationship between the ISSP and the corporate strategic plan is one-way and essentially "reporting" or "advising" in nature rather than interactive, the methodology is *reactive*. Here the ISSP reacts to what the corporate plan dictates. On the other hand, if the ISSP and the corporate planning process are done in tandem, with on-going two-way communication between the ISSP and the corporate strategic plan, the process is *proactive.* A study conducted by King (2001) demonstrated that, overall, the proactive integration of information systems throughout the corporate strategic planning process was associated with fewer implementation problems and better operating results. King's study also compared perceptions of internal operating proficiency among ISSP planners and corporate strategic planners. Five areas of perception were analyzed: financial results, market share, ROI, customer satisfaction, and staffing efficiencies. In this case, the results showed once again that the proactive planners outperformed the reactive planners, but this time in a degree that reflected statistical significance (King).

Inconsistencies in the Strategic Plan Document Itself

Another area of gap in knowledge is in how the actual university strategic planning document is constructed. It must be noted that researchers (Cutright, 2001b; Swenk, 2001) have indicated that the traditional linear business model assessment matrix for determining the quality of a document does not work well for institutions of higher learning. According to Leslie and Fretwell (1996), comprehensive planning embraces

multiple applications of data-based management systems operating both concurrently and independently.

Chaffee (1985) discussed three dimensions of the planning process: (1) a traditional business model, (2) a flexibility model, which conforms to the market, and (3) a future-oriented vision model. In an effort to enable consistency in how various strategic plan documents are evaluated, researchers Chance and Williams (2005) devised a rubric. The rubric is designed for assessments of whether a plan was adequate at the outset, not of whether the plan achieved its goals and objectives. In terms of structure, an assessable strategic plan should include the following sections:

1. Introduction
2. Organization's History and Profile
3. Executive Summary
4. Mission, Vision, and Value Statements
5. Summary of Core Strategies
6. Goals and Objectives
7. Implementation
8. Strategy for Evaluation of Outcomes
9. Strategy for Refining the Plan
10. Appendices
11. Holistic Assessment: Using a Modified Linear Business Model. (Chance & Williams, 2005, p. 49)

Emerging Concepts for Strategic Plan Development

In the academic discussion of how best to develop strategic plans in a university or college setting, two concepts are particularly important: first, the exchange of knowledge for the purpose of capacity building; and second, the cultivation of strategic intent, that is, a theme that can drive an institution's sustained efforts in a particular direction.

Capacity-building and Organizational Learning

In universities' efforts to maintain relevancy in the changing world, they must explore the insights and ideas that other communities can offer them. That is, they ought to practice *knowledge exchange,* an exercise that involves the partnering of academe with business and industry to create research-based solutions for social and industrial issues (Davis, 2009). According to Davis, the academic community has yet to fully embrace the notion of strategic partnerships in business and industry in part due to the more accepted tradition of achieving relevancy through the production of academic research and scholarship. One explanation for this practice could be the lucrative nature of grant-funded research and scholarship. Nevertheless, universities and colleges that do participate in knowledge-exchange activities tend to be more effective in research than their counterparts that do not. However, Szulanski, Doz, and Porac (2005) suggested that knowledge exchange is not easy to establish and maintain.

Strategic intent as a motivator

Another area where more research is needed is in the concept of *strategic intent*. According to Ice (2007), this is "the force that drives an institution or its leaders," and "the underpinning momentum that determines the context of managerial decisions" (p.

170). Transferring that concept to a university setting, engagement of faculty and staff around strategic goals gives guidance and framework for decisions and policy development. Alternatively, without clear strategic intent, universities default into making historical output the basis of today's input (Tregoe & Zimmerman, 1980).

Hamel and Prahalad (1989) likened strategic intent to an uncontrolled passion to prevail at every strata of managerial decision-making and to maintain that enthusiasm for an extended period of time, sufficient to achieve leadership in the industry. The concept of strategic intent was broadened by expanding its boundaries to include a more illustrative description: a pro-active approach to success through data-based decision-making.

> The (strategic intent) paradigm includes a proactive management process that promotes: directs the institutions attention on the virtue of success; empowers staff and faculty through clear enunciation of what he goal is; allowing individual and collective participation; maintaining high morale by creating new protocols as the institution responds to environmental change; and using strategic intent as a factor in data-based decision making. (Hamel & Prahalad, 1989, p. 67)

All of these characteristics of strategic intent point to the fact that competitive advantage is more than strong desire and insightful competitive analysis. All other things being equal, the organization or university that has strategic intent manifested as "resolution, stamina and inventiveness" (Hamel & Prahalad, 1989, p. 67) will ultimately outperform institutions that lack it.

Testing the Validity of a Strategic Plan

There has long been a debate among management theorists regarding how to anticipate or even forecast events or situations where strategic planning will fail (Lengnick-Hall & Wolff, 1999). Dunnette (1990) proposed four tests to validate whether a strategy is likely to be effective:

- Goal consistency test: prevents the creation of conflicting objectives
- Frame test: distinguishes the important from the unimportant
- Competency test: utilizes skills and abilities to solve issues
- Workability test: indicates a reasonable expectation of efficacy

Lengnick-Hall and Wolff (1999) have determined that there are three distinct strategy theories, or *core logics,* that meet all four criteria: capability logic, guerrilla logic, and complexity logic. Depending on the situation, these three logics may be inconsistent with or contradictory of one another.

According to Barney and Rue (1995), capability logic presupposes that one university (organization) has the ability to outperform another if it has a strategic advantage with respect to creating, nurturing, and guarding human and natural resources. The underlying principle of capability logic is that reputation and facilities reflect the internal strength of a university or college.

D'Aventi (1994) submitted an alternative strategy theory that centers on a concept compared to over-stimulated market economy. In this hypercompetitive situation, one university will overshadow a competitor through intimidation by creating a bold initiative those un-levels the playing field and gives the impression of market leadership. The core premise of guerrilla logic is the execution of marketing tactics and strategies that keep

competition unprepared to respond quickly and effectively, such as being the recipient of a large research grant or having a championship athletic program.

A third strategic theory is that of complexity logic, wherein success is achieved through a dynamic combination of *competition* and *cooperation*. As McDaniels and Wall (1998) described it, traditional tables of organization are superimposed by informal skill-based clusters, which embrace innovation and creativity.

These three core logics, used in the validation of strategic plans, often conflict with one another. Lengnick and Wolff (1999) have surveyed the inconsistencies and compared the core logic of the various management theories. They identified seven areas where management theories differ significantly. These seven areas are market conditions, strategic intent, competitive advantage, imitability, time horizon, nature of relationships, and stakeholder focus. These differences suggest that validation may be situation specific i.e. - one core logic may be more appropriate for the situation than another.

Ineffective Strategic Planning

While little information has been documented on unsatisfactory research methods, there is a consensus that various factors, when not adequately accounted for, can lead to unsatisfactory research designs and flawed methods. According to Schmidtlein (1995), impairments to the planning process may occur if process details are more than required based on the scope of the project or if bureaucratic process is given more focus than comprehensive stakeholder inclusion. Another challenge facing strategic planners today, according to university Chief Executive Officers interviewed by Taylor (2013), is the urgency of involving all key stakeholders, including faculty and staff, in the strategic

planning process. Finally, financial challenges occur when the strategic plan is not tied into the operating budget.

In summary, we can trace the history of strategic planning beginning in the 1950's through the present and can identify three distinct eras or schools of thought, as a distinction can be made between long range and strategic planning. Accordingly, the history of strategic planning in universities can also be seen with respect to its presence and necessity in institutions of higher learning. Further, key concepts and basic components of university strategic planning have emerged pointing to new techniques, emerging concepts and validity testing, all of which create guidelines for ineffective planning.

Chapter Three: Methodology

The premise of this study was that it is feasible to determine through qualitative research how strategic intent informs the choice of a strategic planning process, and moreover, that it is possible to see how the process of choosing a plan can affect the quality of the plan document that is ultimately developed. This study constitutes a phenomenological inquiry; that is, it performs a subjective analysis centered on human perceptions and feelings (Coakes, Willis, & Clarke, 2002), however an alternative view perhaps could be created based on the perception that some of the tools used in the study negatively impacted subjectivity. According to researchers Bogan and Bicklen (1992), phenomenological research endeavors to interpret groups' and individuals' activities and conversations in specific situations. For the purposes of the present study, the phenomenological approach is used to investigate how the strategic intent of university CEOs and SPOs may directly influence the choice of a planning process, which they may perceive necessary and appropriate to achieve that goal. Observers notice that this may happen even to the extent of manipulation of the process in order to facilitate the goal.

This paper is a case study of two universities with distinct strategic planning processes. The goal of this study was to understand the different processes and plans that resulted, as well as to contrast both plans against a comprehensive quality matrix (CQM). This matrix has been designed to assess the quality of university strategic plans in terms of their own particular contexts.

This study will examine how university strategic plans can be assessed on the basis of rubrics. The concept of assessing the quality of a plan document using rubrics derives from the fields of business and industry; however adaptations for rubrics to be

used specifically for the plan document are not commonly used (Kaufman & Grise, 1995). Research by the University of Wisconsin (2005) indicated that several tools are available for evaluating business and industry strategic plans. However, most of those tools are based on linear business theories that are not appropriate for complex institutions like universities (Shahjahan, 2005). Traditional linear models have the limitation of not being able to measure or even address innovation and creativity, as the essential components of 21st century success. Moreover, because universities are complex and fluid, any measuring tool or instrument must be designed to be flexible and adaptable to change. Linear business models for strategic planning typically reflect 'predictability' that universities generally do not have, thus, standard linear business models for strategic plan documents do not mesh well with the actual character of universities.

This study proposes a new rubric that will be beta tested for use by universities and colleges. It will enable the evaluation of a plan document in several key areas. The instrument is based on models drawn from the business realm but adapts them for application in higher education. The PI designed a Comprehensive Quality Matrix (CQM) that addresses five aspects of strategic planning: (a) qualitative brand research, (b) vision-casting, (c) strategic plan process, (d) facilities master planning, and (e) culture transformation. These quality indicators are designed to promote the efficiency of the planning process. Barnetson (2001) suggested that quality indicators are important tools for comprehensive planning.

In addition to the five areas listed above, the model also allows for a supplemental focus area to examine the financial impact of the plan on the operation of the institution.

Plan quality measures related to finance include the following: (a) market share, (b) ROI/profit/surplus, (c) debt service ratios, and (d) net cash flow. A strategic plan must be integrated with the institution's annual operating budget.

The general design methodology used in this CQM was structured to give foundation to the overarching goal of corporate repositioning. The scope and focus of this study, however, was limited to the quality of the strategic plan document itself and did not address the question of whether the institutional goals and objectives were met under the conditions described in the plan document.

Qualitative factors affecting the quality of a strategic plan document include the strategic intent of the top leadership. Strategic intent, that is, the driving force that informs and shapes how an organization defines itself through mission, vision, and strategic advantage, may directly impact the *process* of plan development; for instance, it could influence whether key faculty and staff members are included in or excluded from the planning process. This study points out how the combined synergistic effects of strategic intent and the subsequent choice of a planning process do in fact impact the quality of the plan document.

Rice (1978) identified two leadership styles that impact strategic intent. Using Fiedler's (1964) leadership matrix as the basis, it is assumed that a leader's influence is based on particular management events in which two vectors collide: leader style and situation opportunity. This study presents two case studies where differing strategic intent translated into situational control scenarios where the choice of a planning process was affected.

Participants

According to Erlandson, Harris, Skipper, and Allen (1993), "Purposive and directed sampling through human instrumentation increases the range of data exposed and maximizes the researcher's ability to identify emerging themes that take account of contextual conditions and cultural norms" (p. 82). The present study involved the selection of two sets of participants: first, a sample of higher education CEOs and SPOs, and second, faculty and staff at two Midwestern urban universities that functioned as beta test sites. The recruitment of appropriate participants was an important step in accurately and efficiently obtaining a representative sample.

For the present study, the purposive sample of university CEOs and SPOs provided the foundation of the research because these participants peer-reviewed the Comprehensive Quality Matrix (CQM) prior to the beta testing of the CQM. These CEOs and SPOs from leading institutions were sent a survey for voluntary participation in a professional review of the CQM. In the second sampling process, faculty and staff from one Midwestern urban college (Site A) and another university in the same city (Site B) were engaged for focus groups and interviews. University CEOs and Strategic Planning Officers (SPOs) were engaged for qualitative surveys relating to the strength of the CQM for the plan document template. Key faculty and staff were asked to participate in voluntary, confidential interviews, focus groups, and surveys. A site-based process for identifying, screening, and engaging participants was utilized because such site-based participant recruitment recognizes the fact that faculty and staff are more inclined to accept and support change if they are viewed as beneficiaries of and collaborators in that change.

Procedure

After an extensive study of journals and textbooks, the researcher developed a unique new CQM. This CQM was then peer-reviewed by CEOs and SPOs and beta-tested at Sites A and B. The description of the procedure for the case study includes the following: the researcher describes both Sites A and B, gives the rationale for their selection, overlays the CQM (and associated rubrics) for analysis of the existing plan documents for the respective sites, and outlines the study's findings using the peer-reviewed CQM as the benchmark for comparing the respective institutions' current strategic plans.

Likert Rating Scales were used for both the peer review surveys and the quality assessment of the strategic plans for Sites A and B. Likert scales are often utilized in survey research because they enable the researcher to gauge respondents' attitudes and feelings through questions that are phrased to elicit answers indicating the extent to which participants agree or disagree with a particular question or statement. For the peer review surveys used in the first phase of this study, university Chief Executive Officers (CEO's) and Strategic Planning Officers (SPO's) critiqued the various criteria for measuring the quality of a strategic plan and rated each criterion's appropriateness for inclusion in a comprehensive outcome-oriented plan. Possible responses included strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree.

Convenience sampling was the method used for selecting Sites A and B, as the author had established a relationship with each institution through a recent doctoral internship and had determined that both sites were actively engaged in the strategic

planning process, albeit they were at different phases of the process. The researcher has identified seven stages in the process of developing a strategic plan:

- Mission, Vision and Values
- Collaboration and Beneficiaries
- Environmental Scan
- Goals and Objectives
- Action Steps
- Document Creation
- Achievements and Assessments

In context, Site A had completed its plan in 2012; Site B completed its plan in 2013. During his internship, the researcher had observed a strong commitment to the process at both sites even though the two sites had chosen quite different approaches to the planning process.

Research Strategy

This study used Bloom's Taxonomy as a conceptual framework for data analysis. According to Krathwohl (2002), Bloom sequential plateaus of learning begin with the acquisition of knowledge, then proceed to comprehension, application, analysis, and finally to synthesis and evaluation. Bloom stated that the cognitive task of evaluation is the culmination of knowledge acquisition and is quite challenging to accomplish. The PI's rationale for using Bloom's Taxonomy was that, first, this model is generally accepted in academe; but more significantly for this study, Bloom's Taxonomy was useful because its hierarchy of the categories of knowledge seem to correlate with the phases of repositioning that the PI has identified, as shown in Table 2. Bloom's

Taxonomy validates the sequential order of the steps of each Repositioning Phase, as overlaid on the sequential steps of the Taxonomy. This is significant with respect to the user of the rubric to not only know what the components of a CQM should be, but subsequently, what order the steps in the plan should be organized for optimal planning results.

Table 2.

Correspondence between the Phases of Repositioning and Bloom's Taxonomy

Repositioning Phase	Bloom's Taxonomy Level
Qualitative Brand Research	Knowing
Vision Casting	Comprehension
Strategic Plan Development	Application
Facilities Master Planning	Analysis
Culture Transformation	Synthesis and Evaluation

The CQM utilizes several areas of quality measurement, which correspond to principles of Bloom's Taxonomy (Krathwohl, 2002) and provide a level of reliability overall to the rubrics and assessments. Further, the application level of the taxonomy, synergized by the preceding levels of knowledge, is incorporated into the creation of a scoring metric. Further, when implemented in the sequence stated, the Repositioning Phases shown in Table 2, reflect the cognitive process dimension of Bloom's Taxonomy

Data Collection Procedures

Data Collection for this mixed use research project consists of two parts. Part I is the quantitative research component and Part II is the qualitative component. The starting point for Part I is the development of a Comprehensive Quality Matrix (CQM)

for university strategic planning. This CQM was inspired by a generic matrix format designed by Driscoll and Wood (2007), which the researcher customized for a university repositioning context. Driscoll and Wood explained that, in their template, "each component is described with levels of performance indicators, much like standards, into ratings" (p. 108). However, the CQM designed in the course of this study is subtly different. It has several columns indicating a regressive, quality, and content validation going from left to right. Accordingly, the rows represent areas (some with sub-areas) of quality measurement, which should be part of a CQM.

Instruments

Standard qualitative instruments and techniques such as surveys, questionnaires, and interviews were utilized in this study. Specifically, a web-based (online) survey service, Survey Monkey, was used to conduct the content validation surveys, utilizing a Likert rating scale for data analysis. Interviews and questionnaires were used at the beta testing sites, also utilizing Likert rating scales for data analysis. Other research data was gathered through in-depth conversations and focus groups with participants involving Fiedler's Least Preferred Co-worker instrument.

Data Analysis

The overall process for Part I data analysis evolves from the Survey Monkey internet survey of Top 100 university Presidents to establish a Comprehensive Quality Matrix (CQM) for university strategic planning. From completed survey responses, focus was placed on achieving a statistically valid sample. From the statistically valid sample, inter-rater reliability was analyzed, ultimately progressing to the level of establishing

content validity for the components of the CQM by the experts in the field of higher education administration. The null hypotheses were:

H_{01} - There will be consistency (no difference) between raters.

H_{02} - There will be content validity (no difference in alignment).

H_{03} - There will be no difference in proportional representation of categorical factors between study sites for each group: % male, % private tuition, relative ratio of research-to-liberal arts/other.

H_{04} - In comparison of characteristics between the study sites, there will be no mean difference in continuous measures between groups.

H_{05} - There will be no difference in proportion of representation between sample validation respondents and overall sample, for the characteristics of gender and institution type.

H_{06} - There will be no difference in proportion of representation between sample validation respondents and overall sample, for the characteristics of average tuition and average enrollment.

H_{07} - Likert ratings for all three surveyed domains were not different between the two study sites.

There is not an explicit significance test for Cronbach's alpha inter-rater reliability. For Cronbach's alpha the researcher evaluated the null hypothesis of no consistency between raters using a literature-derived threshold of 0.70.

The PI evaluated demographics differences between those who responded to the survey and those who did not respond. The null hypothesis was:

H_{04} - In comparison of characteristics between the study sites, there will be no mean difference in continuous measures between groups.

Chi-squared tests were used to evaluate the null hypothesis of no difference in proportional representation of categorical factors in each group (i.e., % male, % private tuition, relative ratio of research/liberal arts/other). Welch's t-tests were used to evaluate the null hypothesis of no mean difference in continuous measures between groups.

Quantitative portion:

The PI used rank-based statistics to compare survey responses because survey data could not be considered to be interval (i.e., the difference between a 1 and a 2 on a Likert is not necessarily the same size difference as the difference between a 4 and a 5).

The null hypothesis was:

H_{07} - Likert ratings for all three surveyed domains were not different between the two study sites.

The PI used the Kruskal-Wallis chi-squared test to test the null hypothesis that Likert ratings for all three domains were not different between each other at each site.

Part I of the research involved a content validity panel of 'experts' in the field of higher education administration to evaluate and revise the quality standard instrument (CQM). Part II of the research, however, involved interviews with staff and faculty at each institutional site as well as analysis of each institution's written strategic plan.

The two sites selected for research were similar in enrollment size, general locale and access capability, but differed markedly in other defining characteristics, such as

annual tuition, average freshman ACT score, ownership, and doctoral faculty. The two research sites, hereafter referred to as Site A and Site B, also had contrasting indicators of strategic intent. Also, the two sites can be contrasted on leadership style and organizational dynamics. Site A reflected strong strategic intent to redefine and advance its mission and purpose, whereas Site B was challenged to sustain the critical mass needed to be viable. Table 3 is a compilation of Quick Facts for the two sites:

Table 3.

Demographic Comparison of Site A and Site B

Criterion	Site A	Site B
Tuition (per year)	$27,300	$8,500 (State subsidized)
Enrollment	1350	1450
Av. Freshman ACT Score	27	19
Ownership Type	Private	State (public)
FTE Doctoral Faculty	110	53

Participant Recruitment

The process used to locate and recruit participants in a mixed method study is important for controlling bias and for efficiently obtaining a representative sample. For Part I, the researcher, through Survey Monkey, sent university CEOs and SPOs from leading educational institutions a qualitative based survey regarding the CQM template for their review with respect to content validity. These participants were selected based on their listing in *Forbes* Top 100 Colleges and Universities (Howard, 2013).

For Part II, site-based research was conducted. Staff and cabinet members of Sites A and B were asked by the researcher to participate in voluntary, confidential interviews, focus groups, and surveys. A site-based procedure for locating, selecting, and recruiting participants was utilized. Specifically, a representative group of university department chairs was asked to participate. Site-based participant recruitment recognizes that faculty and staff on the campus level are more likely to internalize change and to support its implementation if they are involved in the planning than if they are not, however this provided data for this subjective view.

Description of the Participants

The project participants for this study, described by the demography noted in Table 4, represent a cross-section of the executives, faculty and cabinet of the two institutions. The PI attempted to match, as closely as possible, the same number of faculty and cabinet members from each site in order to ensure consistent organizational depth.

Table 4.

Participant Source Summary

Site A			
Leader	Faculty	Staff	Site Total
President	Department Chairs	Cabinet Members	
1	4	5	10
Site B			
Leader	Faculty	Staff	Site Total
Acting President	Department Chairs	Cabinet Members	
1	4	5	10
		Total Participants	20

The CEO or President of each site was interviewed along with four department chairs and five cabinet members. These individuals were selected based on their positions within the

organizational structure rather than convenience or access, in an effort to minimize limitations and bias. Table 4 summarizes the number and types of research participants for the study.

Description of Data Collection Methods

A sample of doctoral studies using qualitative approaches, including qualitative interviews, as the method of data collection was taken from Theses.com. The contents were analyzed for their sample sizes. Results showed that the mean sample size was 31; however, the distribution was non-random, with a statistically significant proportion of studies presenting sample sizes that were multiples of ten. Therefore, Part II of this study will use 20 interviews for Sites A and B, as a sample size of 30 was not feasible for one of the sites. Thus, in an effort to make the sample size at each site consistent with the other, 10 from each site (total of 20) was utilized.

The following procedure was used to analyze the data collected in a Likert Scale format. First, the researcher grouped the data to prepare it for analysis. Numeric values were assigned to the standard rating categories: i.e. strongly disagree = 1, disagree = 2, neutral = 3, agree = 4, strongly agree = 5. Next, the researcher determined whether the data collected would be considered analytically ordinal or interval, as that determination would be important for interpretation and must be disclosed in the study. Next, he analyzed the Likert scale data using descriptive statistics, specifically the mode (most frequent response), and illustrated these on charts and graphs. Finally, the researcher used inferential techniques to test the two qualitative research questions posed by the study:

RQ 1. What are the factors that drive the choice of a strategic planning process?

RQ 2. Does the process choice affect the quality of the final plan document?

Chapter Four: Results

This project was a case study of two universities with different strategic planning processes. The purpose was to understand the different processes and the resultant plans, as well as to contrast both plans against a comprehensive quality matrix (CQM) for a university strategic plan particular to its respective environments, to determine the quality of the plan.

The purpose of this two-phase project is to seek answers to those research questions. Diagnostically, we ask whether the quality of a university's strategic plan document may be impacted by the planning process and more introspectively, if the process chosen (i.e. inclusive or exclusive) is characterized by engagement or non-engagement of the faculty and staff. Moreover, a clear strategic intent on the part of university leader(s) may also be significantly important to corporate strategy development and cultural transformation as is the choice of a planning process.

Research Questions and Null Hypotheses

This mixed methods research study was guided by the following questions and null hypotheses:

RQ 1. What are the factors that drive the choices involved in designing a strategic planning process?

RQ 2. Does the process choice affect the quality of the plan document?

H_{01} - There will be consistency (no difference) between raters.

H_{02} - There will be content validity (no difference in alignment).

H_{03} - There will be no difference in proportional representation of categorical factors between study sites for each group: % male, % private tuition, relative ratio of research-to-liberal arts/other.

H_{04} - In comparison of characteristics between the study sites, there will be no mean difference in continuous measures between groups.

H_{05} - There will be no difference in proportion of representation between sample validation respondents and overall sample, for the characteristics of gender and institution type.

H_{06} - There will be no difference in proportion of representation between sample validation respondents and overall sample, for the characteristics of average tuition and average enrollment.

H_{07} - Likert ratings for all three surveyed domains were not different between the two study sites

Findings

Although the findings of the strategic plan quality question will not be considered until Qualitative Research Question 2 is discussed, the definition of the components (or domains) of a quality strategic plan are discussed in Part I of the research project.

Study Part I: Content Validity Analysis of CQM

In the first stage of the present study, the researcher conducted a content validity analysis to evaluate the Comprehensive Quality Matrix (CQM) instrument that he had developed, in order to make the necessary revisions before beta-testing the matrix at two test sites. This initial stage of the research involved University Presidents, Strategic Planning Officers (SPOs), and university faculty with relevant knowledge, who

participated in content validation qualitative surveys, relating to the strength of the CQM as a quality plan document template. It should be mentioned here that even though the survey was qualitative in nature, the content validation of the CQM process was quantitative in nature.

Survey Questions for Content Validation Domains

The following are the 29 survey questions used to assess content validation for the CQM, broken down into six broad categories:

1. The plan should begin with an *introduction* section, which should include information that would disclose the strategic intent of the leadership. Strategic intent is the driving force that informs and shapes how an organization defines itself through mission, vision, and strategic advantage.
2. After the introduction section, *qualitative brand research* data could be presented to give support to defining the university's brand from the various perspectives of its stakeholders.
    2a. Free association questions, like "what comes to mind when you think about (university name)" can identify the university's brand equity.
    2b. Projective technique questions can uncover the participant's true feelings about the university.
    2c. Personification technique questions can assign personality characteristics to the university.
3. *Vision-casting* focus groups could next probe into how the university sees itself, not focusing on what the university wants to be but rather on what the university should be.

3a. Asking the right question can be important in foresight/futures projections

3b. Evidence-based suppositions help in transferring the right answer to stakeholders.

3c. Human resource assets can have a direct bearing on organizational building capacity.

4. *Strategic plan development* can be the process of charting how the university becomes what it should be.

4a. Mission, vision, values and philosophy establish university governing principles.

4b. Stakeholder perspectives can be gleaned from focus groups and interview conversations with collaborators and beneficiaries.

4c. Environmental scanning may reveal “what if” and “worst case” scenarios.

4d. Planning goal(s) is/are established to reflect anticipated outcomes, which should be mirrored in the university’s operating budget.

4e. Momentum can be gained through targeted strategies and action steps.

4f. Strategic plan documents by design can be used as assessment tools.

4g. Metrics, such as the balanced score card, may be helpful in measuring outcomes, achievements, and assessments.

4h. Accreditation standards specific to the university and desired status should be referenced and incorporated into the plan document.

5. The purpose of *facilities master planning* is to ensure that the physical plant supports the university's learning goals.
    5a. Clustered classrooms can reflect primary work areas.
    5b. Multi-group collaboration can be accomplished in designated presentation spaces.
    5c. Multi-purpose meeting rooms can facilitate large-group gatherings.
    5d. Small conference rooms create environments for extended learning activities.
    5e. Specialty labs can transform into 'STEAM' studios (science, technology, engineering, arts and math) equipped with digital virtual technology.
6. The key to achieving long-range goals and sustained competitive advantage is *culture transformation*, which happens over time in small, progressive steps.
    6a. Loyalty and commitment to the university are essential not only among leadership but also at every other level of the organization.
    6b. Unity and shared values may be the cord that binds the university together.
    6c. Accountability and 'ownership' within the institution should reflect the level of buy-in to corporate goals and strategies.
    6d. Engagement and involvement of stakeholders can be reflections of the university's brand equity.

Demographics

In order to ensure consistent methods of data collection and evaluation, the PI has established a template for deductive reasoning for use in problem solving. This method is called *matrix logic*: a rectangular arrangement of information in rows and columns. For purpose of matrix logic, those rows and columns have headings. For this study, columns have been headed as (a) Objectives; (b) Input; (c) Activity and; (d) Output. Rows have been headed as (a) Plan details; (b) Indicators; (c) Key Questions/Data Criteria/Factors; (d) Data source; (e) Collection methods; (f) Assumptions. The logic matrix is used to make complex data more understandable and recognizable.

Input – The email addresses and names of the Presidents or Chief Planning Officers of the Top 100 Universities, according to *Forbes* (Howard, 2013) were inputted to Survey Monkey through a private account established by the researcher. The survey was designed by the research in Likert survey style, posing 26 content-validation questions classified according to six major components or domains: (a) Introduction; (b) Qualitative brand research; (c) Vision Casting; (d) Strategic Plan; (e) Facilities Master Plan and (f) Culture Management.

Demographics of Content Validation Survey Respondents

Compared to the sample frame, respondents had lower enrollment. Privately funded liberal arts colleges were over-represented among the respondents, who were those who responded to the survey used for the validation process (see Table 5).

Table 5.

Demographics of Survey Participants

	Overall Sample	Respondents	test statistic	p-value
General				
N	90	16		
% Male	70.00%	75%	$c^2(1,106)=0.007$	0.93
% private[2]	78%	100%	$c^2(1,106)=3.051$	0.08
average tuition ($)[1]	54800.30	54703.38	W=681.5	0.96
enrollment	12999.51	3433.69	W=411	0.006
Institution type[1,2]				
research	47	2		
liberal arts	38	13		
other	5	1	$c^2(2,107)=7.47$	0.02
Geographical location [2]				
US Service schools	4	0		
New England				
CT ME MA NH RI VT	19	4		
Mid East				
DE DC MD NJ NY PA	21	3		
Great Lakes				
IL IN MI OH WI	11	4		
Plains				
IA KS MN MO NE ND SD	5	2		
Southeast				
AL AR FL GA KY LA MS NC				
SC TN VA WV	13	2		
Southwest				
AZ NM OK TX	2	0		
Rocky Mountains				
CO ID MT UT WY	2	0		
Far West				
AK CA HI NV OR WA	13	1		
Outlying areas				
AS FM GU MH MP PR PW VI	0	0		

[1] Service acadmies not included in tuition comparison.
[2] Institutions characterized by Carnegie Endowment.
[3] One "other" university received the survey but skipped all questions.

Note. Data groups 2 and 3 have been combined.

Characteristics of the respondents to the Content Validation Survey were compared to the overall sample in the following categories: gender, association with type of institution, tuition and enrollment, type of institution by Carnegie type and geographic location of institution.

Null Hypotheses were:

H_{03} - There will be no difference in proportional representation of categorical factors between study sites for each group: % male, % private tuition, relative ratio of research-to-liberal arts/other.

H_{04} - In comparison of characteristics between the study sites, there will be no mean difference in continuous measures between groups.

H_{05} - There will be no difference in proportion of representation between sample validation respondents and overall sample, for the characteristics of gender and institution type.

H_{06} - There will be no difference in proportion of representation between sample validation respondents and overall sample, for the characteristics of average tuition and average enrollment.

A Cronbach's alpha test was applied to data. Using a Confidence Level of 95%, and in comparison to the alpha level a=0.05, the p-values of 0.93, 0.08 and 0.96, allow rejection of the null hypothesis for the characteristics of % Male, % Private, and Average Tuition and the p-values of 0.006, and 0.02, allow for rejection of the null hypothesis for enrollment and institution type. Therefore, there are no statistical differences between the overall sample for the characteristics of % Male, % Private, and Average Tuition.

The Carnegie Endowment classification of colleges and universities was used to group the 100 institutions by characteristics such as institution type and geographic location. This was used to draw more inferences about the data, as the Carnegie Endowment is accepted in the industry as a way of classifying and making distinctions between institutions. Although regional rankings for top universities are available, the national ranking seemed to give more content validity to the research.

Of the 100 surveys sent, eight institutions had previously opted-out of Survey Monkey surveys, thus reducing the number *(n*) to 92. Of the remaining 92 institutions, one institution's survey was rejected because it was returned incomplete and one other institution with two sites was counted as one, thus establishing a net number of potential participants at 90. Utilizing Carnegie classifications, these 90 institutions were placed into three groups based on institution type:

- Research – 47
- Liberal Arts – 39
- Others – 5

Of those classified as Research, 2 responded; of those classified as Liberal Arts, 13 responded; and of the Others, 1 responded.

Once data was collected from surveys, the PI deemed it necessary to establish a way of grouping and comparing the institutions that responded. Because the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education was known as a credible taxonomy for grouping and comparing US colleges and universities, it was selected to be used for that purpose. Upon examination of the taxonomy, the PI determined that the grouping primarily centered around educational and research purposes, wherein it pairs groups of

comparable organizations. The taxonomy lists US accredited, degree-granting colleges and universities identified in the National Center for Education Statistics Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) database.

Created in 1973, The Carnegie Classification issued subsequent reports to ensure consistent comparison over three decades, at the time of this writing. The PI utilized the most recent report issued in 2010 to group the participants in the Part I research, as shown in Table 6.

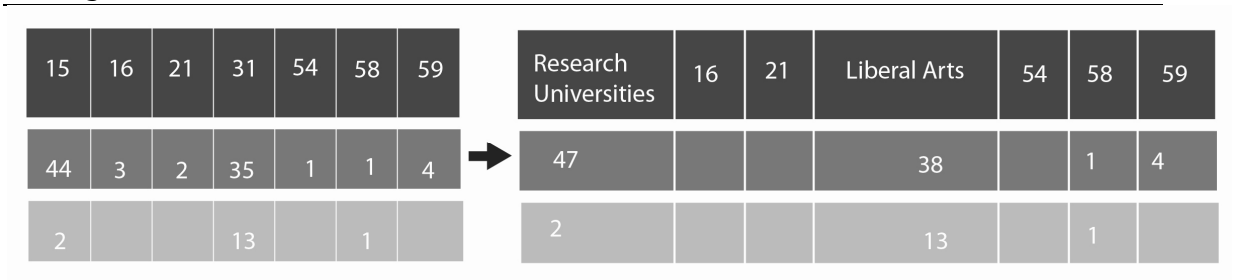
The null hypothesis applied was;

H_{01} - There will be consistency (no difference) between raters.

Cronbach's alpha computed between raters is noted in each cell for: (a) max domain scores and (b) responses to all 29 survey questions. Cells with grey background denote low (alpha <0.7) inter-rater reliability. For domain ratings, raters 4, 5, and 16 disagreed more frequently with the other raters. There was considerably more variability between raters when all 29 survey questions were considered.

Table 6.

Carnegie Endowment



-3	Not classified, not in classification universe
15	Doctoral / Research Universities - Extensive
16	Doctoral / Research Universities - Intensive
21	Master's College and Universities I
22	Master's College and Universities II
31	Baccalaureate Colleges - Liberal Arts
32	Baccalaureate Colleges - Liberal Arts
33	Baccalaureate / Associate's Colleges
40	Associate's Colleges
51	Specialized Institutions- Theological seminaries and other specialized faith-related institutions
52	Specialized Institutions- Medical schools and medical centers
53	Specialized Institutions- Other separate health profession schools
54	Specialized Institutions- Schools of engineering and management
55	Specialized Institutions- Schools of art, music, and design
56	Specialized Institutions- Schools of law
57	Specialized Institutions- Teachers colleges
58	Specialized Institutions- Other specialized institutions
59	Tribal Colleges and Universities

Based on location, the 90 potential respondent institutions were grouped as follows. From U.S. Service Schools, there were 4 potential respondents; from New

England schools, 19; from Mid-East schools, 21;from Great Lakes schools, 11; from schools in the Plains, 5; from those in the Rocky Mountains, 2; from the Southeast, 13; from the Southwest, 2; and from the Far West, 13 potential respondents.

Of those classified as U.S. Service Schools, 0 responded; New England, 4 responded; Mid-East, 3 responded; Great Lakes, 4 responded; Plains, 2 responded; Rocky Mountains, 0 responded; Southeast, 2 responded; Southwest, 0; Far West, 1. The total number of respondents was 16.

The next step in the sequence of Part I research was to determine if the results were adequate, in terms of sample size, to produce quantitatively valid results. The null hypothesis tested was;

H_{02} - There will be content validity (no difference in alignment).

In order to make the analysis of the results clear, a flow chart, shown as *Figure 1,* was created to show visually the audit trail starting from sending out 100 surveys, to the end point of 16 completed responses. The light gray boxes represent the deductions from *n* due to pre-survey opt-outs, current survey opt-outs, non-deliverables and non-responses. The dark gray boxes regressively represent the net remaining after each *n* reduction.

Response rate was calculated using the standards of the American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR). Response rate was calculated as (number of surveys returned divided by the number of surveys communicated to participants). The PI developed and utilized a logic matrix for each research question. The logic matrix is a tool that has been used for more than 20 years by program managers and evaluators to describe the effectiveness of various programs. The model describes logical linkages

among program resources, activities, outputs, audiences, and short-, intermediate-, and long-term outcomes related to a specific problem or situation. The logic matrix has ensured consistent collection and evaluation of data. The matrix template consists of a defined goal guided by input, activity and output. This matrix was used in Parts I and II of the research (Dewey, 1938).

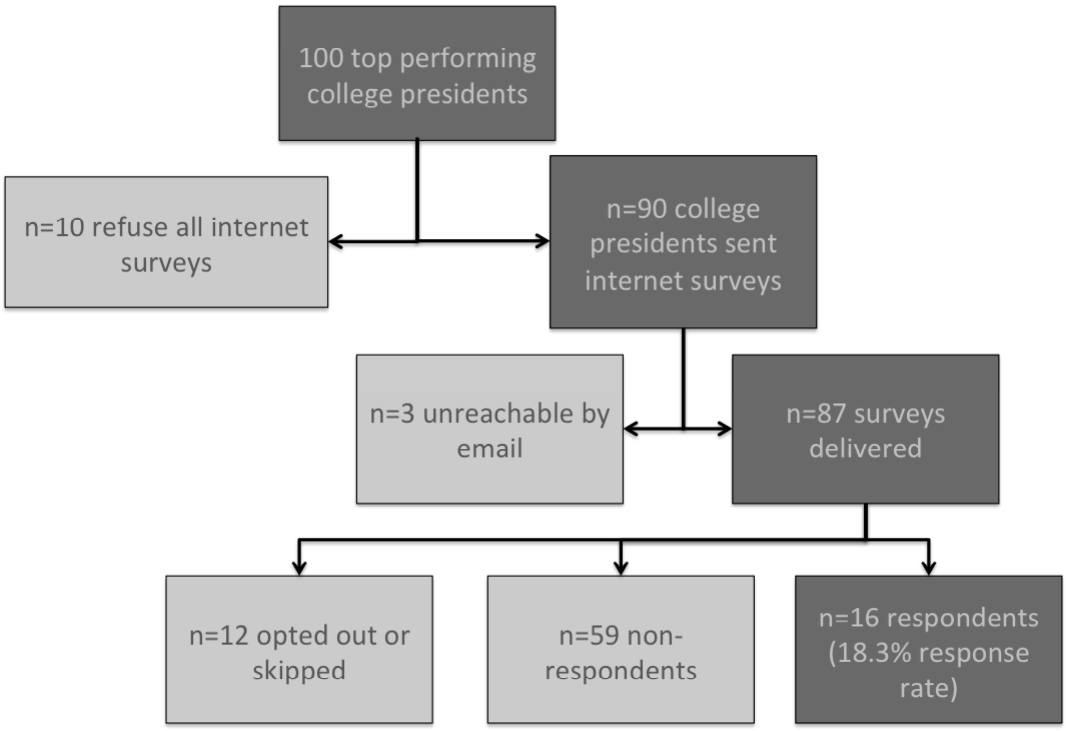


Figure 1. Content validation response rate.

Activity. Statistical tests used to validate the data included the chi-squared test and the Mann Whitney test. The former was used to test whether response depended on gender of President, source of funding, or Carnegie Endowment institution type. Results showed that there was no significance to gender of the President or to Carnegie Endowment classification with respect to response rate. There was, however, a clear pattern of greater likelihood of response from smaller, privately funded institutions

compared to larger, state-funded institutions. The Mann Whitney test was used to test the null hypothesis that tuition and enrollment of respondents does not differ from that of the overall sample. This test does not assume normality as the *t*-test does.

After these tests, the Carnegie Endowment classifications that were used as basic input data was regrouped from seven classifications into three so that the data would more clearly reflect a slightly higher proportion of Liberal Arts institutions responding, compared with Research Institutions

Output. The number of eligible sample units that cooperate in a survey has historically been central to survey research in the United States because of the assumption that the larger the proportion of participating sample units, the more accurate the survey estimates. Formulas for calculating rates are now standardized, but the relationship between response rates and survey quality has become much less clear.

Often, response rates in survey research are calculated simply by dividing the number of completed interviews by the number of individuals who were selected to participate in the research, i.e. the sample. However, this method is too simplistic and does not do justice to the complexity of research design, sampling processes, and the practical difficulties of contacting and assessing potential survey participants. Therefore, the Council of American Research Organization (CASRO) proposed a method that better accounts for the various situations encountered in survey research. This method formed the basis for the development of a standard for the calculation of response rates by the AAPOR. This standard was further refined by the Institute for Social and Economic Research (ISER).

The response rate (number of surveys returned divided by the number of surveys communicated to participants) is the proportion of completed interviews to the total number of eligible respondents. The various versions of the response rate take the respondents of whom eligibility could not be determined as all eligible, as all not eligible, or a fraction, *e*, of the unknown respondents is considered to be eligible. The survey for this study took the following into consideration: previous opting-out of Survey Monkey surveys, requests to opt-out of the present Survey Monkey survey, incomplete surveys, and complete surveys.

Demographics

Inputs. The sample information can be described as follows:

1. The Top 100 Colleges were determined by consulting *Forbes* (Howard, 2013). A database was established for these institutions that included fields for institution name, physical address, telephone number, and President's name and email address. These 100 institutions were sent the survey via Survey Monkey email, after a "hard copy" introduction letter was sent to the Presidents via U.S. Mail. The introduction letter explained the nature of the survey and its importance to addressing the gap in the literature on the subject.
2. Upon inputting all 100 of the email addresses, the Survey Monkey instrument had on file previous opt-out requests from 10 of the potential recipients, thus reducing our number *(n)* to 90 potential recipients.
3. Of the 90 potential recipients, 3 were unreachable by email (i.e., bounced), resulting in 87 delivered surveys.

4. Of the 87 delivered surveys, 12 opted out, 59 did not respond, and 16 responded
5. With 87 delivered surveys and 16 completed responses, the response rate was 18.3%

Activities. Response rate breakdown and calculation for this study followed AAPOR, based on the results of a literature search. Research cited in the literature review stated that a lower sampling rate does not necessarily invalidate a survey as long the sample has been characterized carefully. Further, according to research discussed in Chapter Two, it is more important to set the response rate in the context of comparable studies than it is to achieve an absolute threshold. These researchers sampled staff members at 10 universities whose directories were available on the web. They compared three study arms: contact and response by email; contact by email and response via the web; and contact and response by mail. The response rates for the three study arms were 34%, 19%, and 72%, respectively (AAPOR). Survey Monkey is a model of the contact by email and response via the web type.

Output. This study reflected an email method of distribution with response via the web, which maintains its own characteristics for typical response rate and does support a lower response rate (18-20%). Thus, the response rate of 18.3% is valid.

Content Validation

Content validity has been defined in varying ways. Polit and Beck (2006) defined content validity as “the degree to which an instrument has an appropriate sample of items for the construct being measured’’ (p. 423). Along similar lines, Waltz, Strickland, and Lenz (2005) defined it as, “whether or not the items sampled for inclusion on the tool

adequately represent the domain of content addressed by the instrument'' (p. 155). Finally, Wynd, Schmidt, and Schaefer (2003) defined it as "the extent to which an instrument adequately samples the research domain of interest when attempting to measure phenomena" (p. 509).

Among researchers in the field of nursing, the most widely reported measure of content validity is the Content Validity Index, or CVI. The CVI has been used for many years, and it is most often attributed to Martuza (1977), an education specialist. However, researchers who use the CVI to assess the content validity of their scales—regardless of their own disciplinary backgrounds—often cite methodological work in the nursing literature, most often Davis (1992), Phokhwang and Halloran (2008), Lynn (1986), Waltz et al. (2005), or Waltz and Bausell (1981). Lynn's seminal study has been especially influential on the issue of content validity.

Content analysis can be difficult when the construct of interest is highly abstract, but methods have been proposed to quantify the process (Lawshe, 1975; Lynn, 1986). Lawshe proposed a method wherein experts rate each item on a 3-point scale. With this information, the content validity ratio (CVR) can be computed with scores ranging from 0 (no agreement) to 2 (perfect agreement). A table of minimum CVR scores for item inclusion was developed based on a one-tailed test at the .05 level of significance (Lawshe).

The score for the entire instrument, called the Content Validity Index (CVI), can be calculated by determining the mean CVR for all of the retained items. Lynn (1986) proposed a two-step method for determining content validity. In the developmental stage, individual items are evaluated by content experts. A4-point scale, ranging from 1=not

relevant to 4=very relevant is used for determining whether items should be retained or rejected. In Phase II of the computation (the judgment phase), a CVI is computed on the remaining items. The summary CVI is the proportion of experts whose endorsement is required to establish content validity beyond the .05 level of significance (see Table 7). Table 7 shows the two-step method for how content validation was determined for this study. The first step calculates CVR, which determines which domains (items) should be retained or rejected. Then the second step, summary CVI is used to evaluate the consistency of the remaining domains and address the hypothesis: H_{02} - There will be content validity (no difference in alignment).

Table 7.

CVR and CVI comparison

Lawshe (1975)			Lynn (1986)			
Rating Scale used for rating items:			Scale used for rating items:			
1	2	3	1	2	3	4
Not necessary	Useful	Essential	Irrelevant	to	Extremely relevant	
Calculations			The CVI for each scale item is the proportion of experts who rate the item as a 3 or 4 on a 4-point scale.			
CVR =[(n·e-N/2)/ N/2]						

Cronbach's alpha is a coefficient of internal consistency. It is commonly used as an estimate of the reliability of content. It can be written as a function of the number of test items and the average inter-correlation among the items:

(N/[N-1]) ([Total Variance – sum of Individual Variance] / Total Variance)

Inputs. Survey responses to 29 individual questions, grouped into six domains including validity, were analyzed categorically from two perspectives: domain and sub-domain ratings. The data interpretation included max ratings, CVI, CVR and Cronbach’s alpha.

Activities. To assess the data from the 29 individual questions, activities were divided into four functions: (a) Find max ratings for each domain; (b) Binarize Likert responses; (c) CVI, CVR, and (d) Cronbach's alpha. Procedurally the next steps would be to Binarize Likert responses by computing the # of raters giving a 4-5 and accordingly examine Cronbach's alpha by computing the reliability between raters.

Tabulation of Content Validity

As seen in Figure 2, for all 29 survey questions, ratings were highly reliable between raters (Cronbach's alpha=0.86). Many domains and subdomains had significant validity measured by content validity index (CVI) and content validity ratio (CVR) ('*' denotes $p<0.05$). Null hypothesis for CVR and CVI: we reject the null hypothesis of no validity for domains at an alpha level of ($p<0.05$).

Outputs. Six rating domains were used for the research study in Part I: (1) The plan should begin with an *introduction* section which should include information that would disclose the strategic intent of the leadership. Strategic intent is defined as the driving force that informs and shapes how an organization defines itself through mission, vision and strategic advantage. (2) After the introduction section, *qualitative brand research* data could be presented to give support to defining the university's brand from the various perspectives of its stakeholders. (3) *Vision casting* focus groups could next probes into how the university sees itself, not focusing on what does the university want to be but rather what the university should be. (4) *Strategic plan development* can be the process of charting how the university becomes what it should be. (5) The purpose of *facilities master planning* is to ensure that the physical plant supports the university's

learning goals. (6) The key to achieving long range goals and sustained competitive advantage is *culture transformation* that happens over time in small progressive steps.

question	rater 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	CVI	CVR
1	4	5	5	3	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	4	5	0.9375*	0.875*
2	2	4	3	4	3	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	2	4	4	3	0.625	0.25
2.a	5	5	4	4	2	4	4	4	3	4	2	4	3	3	4	3	0.625	0.25
2.b	4	4	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	4	3	3	3	0.1875	-0.625
2.c	4	4	3	3	2	4	3	4	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	0.25	-0.5
3	4	4	4	4	3	4	3	4	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	3	0.75*	0.5*
3.a	5	5	5	4	4	5	4	4	4	5	5	3	5	5	4	4	0.9375*	0.875*
3.b	4	4	4	4	3	4	4	5	4	3	4	3	4	4	4	3	0.75*	0.5*
3.c	5	5	3	3	3	5	4	4	3	4	4	4	5	4	4	4	0.75*	0.5*
4	5	5	5	4	4	4	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	4	4	4	1*	1*
4.a	5	4	5	4	4	5	4	3	4	5	5	5	5	4	2	5	0.875*	0.75*
4.b	5	4	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	0.9375*	0.875*
4.c	5	4	5	3	3	4	3	4	3	3	3	4	4	4	3	4	0.5625	0.125
4.d	5	5	5	4	4	4	4	3	2	5	4	4	4	4	4	4	0.875*	0.75*
4.e	5	5	5	4	4	4	4	3	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	0.8125*	0.625*
4.f	5	4	5	4	4	4	4	4	3	4	4	5	4	3	4	4	0.875*	0.75*
4.g	2	5	4	4	4	4	4	4	2	3	4	5	4	3	4	4	0.75*	0.5*
4.h	5	3	5	4	2	4	3	4	3	4	4	5	4	3	3	3	0.5625	0.125
5	5	4	5	4	4	4	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	4	4	5	1*	1*
5.a	4	3	3	3	3	4	3	4	3	3	4	5	3	3	3	3	0.3125	-0.375
5.b	2	4	3	4	3	4	3	4	3	3	4	4	4	3	4	3	0.5	0
5.c	5	4	3	4	3	4	3	4	4	3	4	4	4	3	3	3	0.5625	0.125
5.d	4	4	3	4	3	4	3	4	3	4	3	4	4	3	3	3	0.5	0
5.e	4	4	3	3	3	4	3	4	3	3	3	4	5	3	3	3	0.375	-0.25
6	4	4	4	4	2	4	4	4	4	4	5	4	2	3	4	4	0.8125*	0.625*
6.a	5	4	4	4	2	4	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	0.875*	0.75*
6.b	5	4	4	4	3	4	4	3	4	4	4	5	4	4	5	4	0.875*	0.75*
6.c	2	5	5	3	3	4	4	4	4	3	3	4	4	4	4	4	0.6875	0.375
6.d	4	5	4	4	4	4	3	3	4	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	0.8125*	0.625*

Figure 2. Tabulation of Content Validity

Under the grouping of the six domain ratings in Likert format, the researcher found the following for domain groups 1, 4 and 6:

- High CVI and CVR
- High overall Crombach's alpha
- High inter-rater Cronbach's alpha

For domain group 5, the raters found high reliability also, but differed greatly in responses to subgroup questions. Under the sub-domain grouping, also in Likert format, the researcher found the following:

- High CVI and CVR, but more variable;
- High overall Cronbach's alpha
- More inter-rater alpha variability with subdomain questions:

5a. Clustered classrooms can reflect primary work areas.

5b. Multi-group collaboration can be accomplished in designated presentation spaces.

5c. Multi-purpose meeting rooms can facilitate large group space.

5d. Small conference rooms create the environment for extended learning activities.

5e. Specialty labs can transform into "STEAM" studios equipped with digital virtual technology.

The two fundamental elements in the evaluation of a measurement instrument, in this case the Comprehensive Quality Matrix (CQM), are reliability and validity. Reliability can be objectively measured, therefore the reliability of the CQM is examined in this study. The PI used Cronbach's alpha, as an objective measure of reliability. Figure 3 shows shaded and un-shaded cells, reflecting overall internal consistency among the 16 expert raters of the domains, as proposed in the CQM. Specifically, the PI utilized this tool to determine how closely related the domains were as a group, as a coefficient of reliability. As the CQI cannot be reliable if it is not valid, the PI also examined validity; whether the CQI did examine what it was intended to examine.

Resultantly, a summary of the output, shown in Figure 3 reflects that domain scores are high across domains and raters, CVI and CVR are statistically significant, and Cronbach's alpha is statistically significant overall; however, as shown in Figure 4, some variation exists between raters.

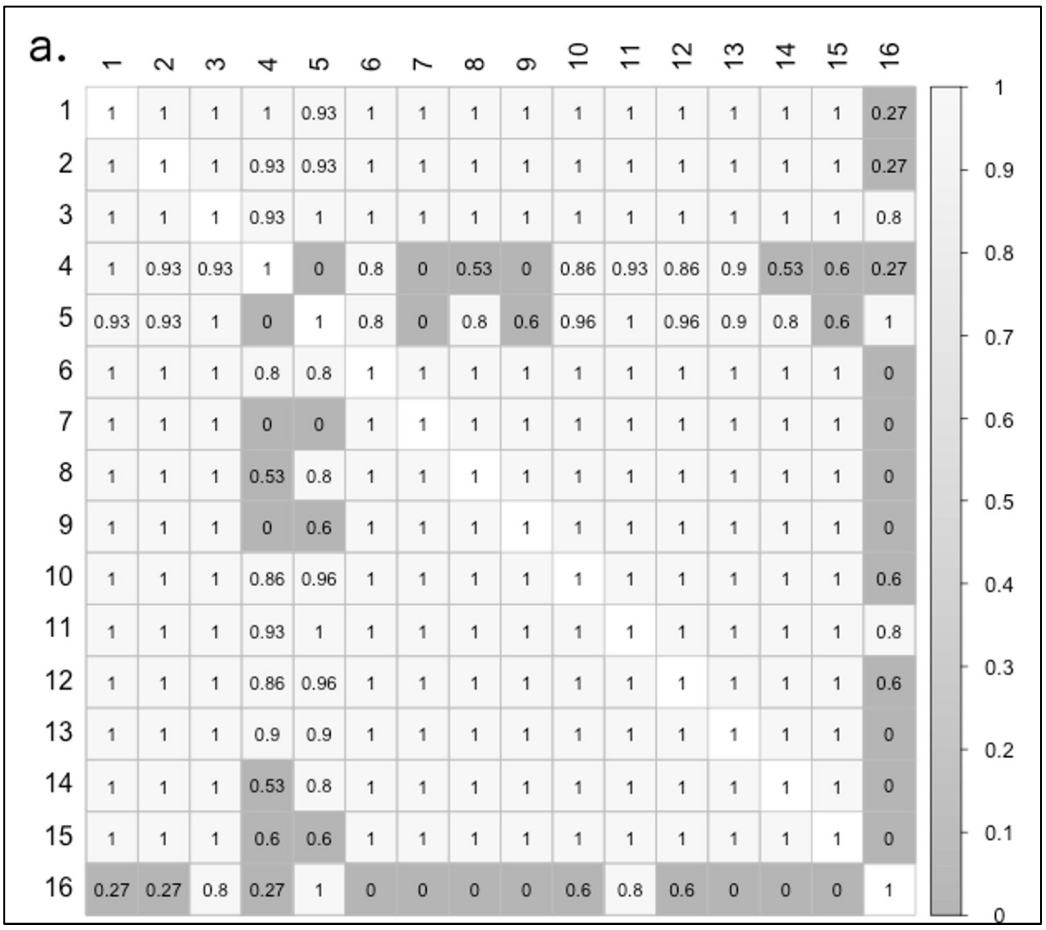


Figure 3. Cronbach's alpha computed between raters.

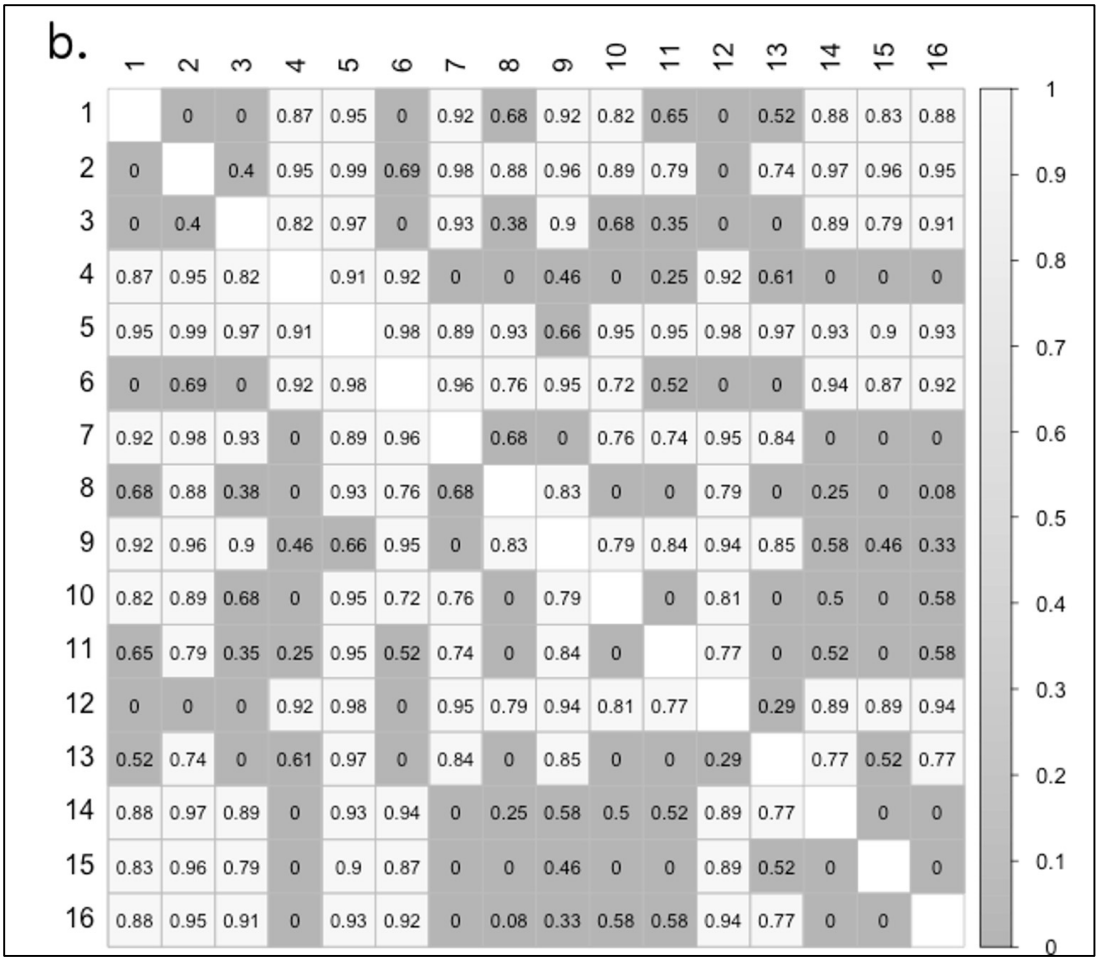


Figure 4. Calculation of inter-rater reliability (Cronbach's alpha).

Considering the null hypothesis for consistency between raters, H_{01} - There will be consistency (no difference) between raters, Cronbach's alpha computed between raters is noted in each cell for a) max domain scores and b) responses to all 29 survey questions. Cells with grey background denote low (alpha <0.7) inter-rater reliability. For domain ratings, raters 4, 5, and 16 disagreed more frequently with the other raters. There was considerably more variability between raters when all 29 survey questions were considered. Chronbach's alpha on max domain scores is generally high as shown by large number of lightly colored cells. Raters 4, 5, and 16 generally have lower agreement with

the rest of the raters. Chronbach's alpha for all 29 questions is lower, as shown by large number of grey cells.

In summary, 100 surveys were sent to leading university executives for the purpose of giving content validation to a Comprehensive Quality Matrix with application to a strategic plan document template. 29 questions were asked to respondents, of which the questions were divided into six overall categories. The results were analyzed for statistical significance, inter-rater reliability and general consistency in response.

Study Part II: Beta-Testing at Two Sites

For Part II of this study, site-based research was conducted. Staff and key faculty of Sites A and B were asked by the researcher to participate in voluntary, confidential interviews, focus groups, and surveys. The group included each institution's president, cabinet members, department heads, and relevant others. A site-based procedure for locating, selecting, and recruiting participants was established by the researcher with the approval of the university liaison. Specifically, university department heads were asked to participate. Also, other key staff and thought leaders were invited to participate as well. The consent form labeled Part II was used in the site-based interviews at both sites, A and B.

Research questions guiding the study were:

RQ 1. What are the factors that drive the choices involved in designing a strategic planning process?

RQ 2. Does the process choice affect the quality of the plan document?

After conducting interviews with executives, faculty, and staff at each institution, the researcher analyzed each institution's choice of a planning process and strategic plan, using the CQM as the comparison standard.

Moreover, Fiedler's (1999) Least Preferred Co-worker (LPC) questionnaire was administered to the CEOs (only) for the two sites to gain insight into their preferences regarding tasks and relational orientations. Fiedler identified a Least Preferred Co-Worker scoring for leaders by asking respondents first to recall a coworker with whom they worked with currently or in the past, and would not like to work with again. Then the person is asked to rate that least preferred co-worker on a scale of positive characteristics and negative characteristics. A high-LPC leader generally scores the other person as positive and a low-LPC leader scores the person as negative. High-LPC leaders tend to have close and positive relationships and act in a supportive way, even prioritizing the relationship before the task. Low-LPC leaders put the task first and will turn to relationships only when they are satisfied with how the work is going.

For this research project, presidents from Sites A and B were given the LPC questionnaire and provided with the following instructions:

> Think of the person with whom you can work least well. He or she may be someone you work with now or someone you knew in the past. That person does not have to be the person you like the least but should be the person with whom you had the most difficulty in getting a job done. Describe this person as he or she appears to you by circling the appropriate number from one to eight for each of the following items. (See Table 8)

Table 8.

Fiedler's Least Preferred Co-Worker Analysis

Pleasant	Unpleasant
Friendly	Unfriendly
Rejecting	Accepting
Tense	Relaxed
Distant	Close
Cold	Warm
Supportive	Hostile
Boring	Interesting
Quarrelsome	Harmonious
Gloomy	Cheerful
Open	Closed
Backbiting	Loyal
Untrustworthy	Trustworthy
Considerate	Inconsiderate
Nasty	Nice
Agreeable	Disagreeable
Insincere	Sincere
Kind	Unkind

Note. From Fiedler (1999)

The final LPC score is the sum of the numbers circled on the 18 scales. If the score is 57 or below, a low LPC, this suggests that the participant is task-motivated. If the score is within the range of 58 to 63, middle LPC, this means the participant is independent. Participants who score 64 or above are called high LPCs, and they are thought to be more relationship-motivated. Leaders prioritize between task-focus and people-focus. Relationships, power, and task structure are the three key factors that drive effective styles (Fiedler, 1999).

Based on the LPC test, three factors are identified about the leader, member, and task, as follows:

- *Leader-Member Relations*: The extent to which the leader has the support and loyalties of followers and has relations with them that are friendly and cooperative
- *Task Structure*: The extent to which tasks are standardized, documented, and controlled
- *Leader's Position/Power*: The extent to which the leader has authority to assess follower performance and give reward or punishment (Fiedler, 1999)

The best LPC approach for a given setting depends on a combination of the three previous factors. Generally, a high-LPC approach is best when leader-member relations are poor, except when the task is unstructured and the leader is weak, in which case a low-LPC style is better.

Finally, to determine which planning choice may be best suited for an institution, based on the given dynamics existing within the organization, the Analytical Hierarchy

Process (AHP) was added to give more scientific credence to such determinations. Questions used for Part II research are summarized as follows.

Data for Research Question One

The first research question asked, What are the factors that drive the choice of a strategic planning process?

Executive Cluster Theme A – Leadership Style and Orientation

- Code 1 -Leader-Member Relations
- Code 2 -Task structure
- Code 3 - Leader's Position-power

Staff and Faculty Cluster Theme A - Courage

- Code 1 – Self-directed
- Code 2 – Consensus
- Code 3 – Status quo

Staff and Faculty Cluster Theme B – Organizational Capacity

- Code 1 – No changes
- Code 2 – Adaptive changes
- Code 3 – Major changes

Staff and Faculty Cluster Theme C – Organizational Learning

- Code 1 – Synergy
- Code 2 – Self-assessment
- Code 3 – Decentralization

Staff and Faculty Cluster Theme D – Culture Management

- Code 1 – Shared values

- Code 2 – Commitment
- Code 3 – Engagement

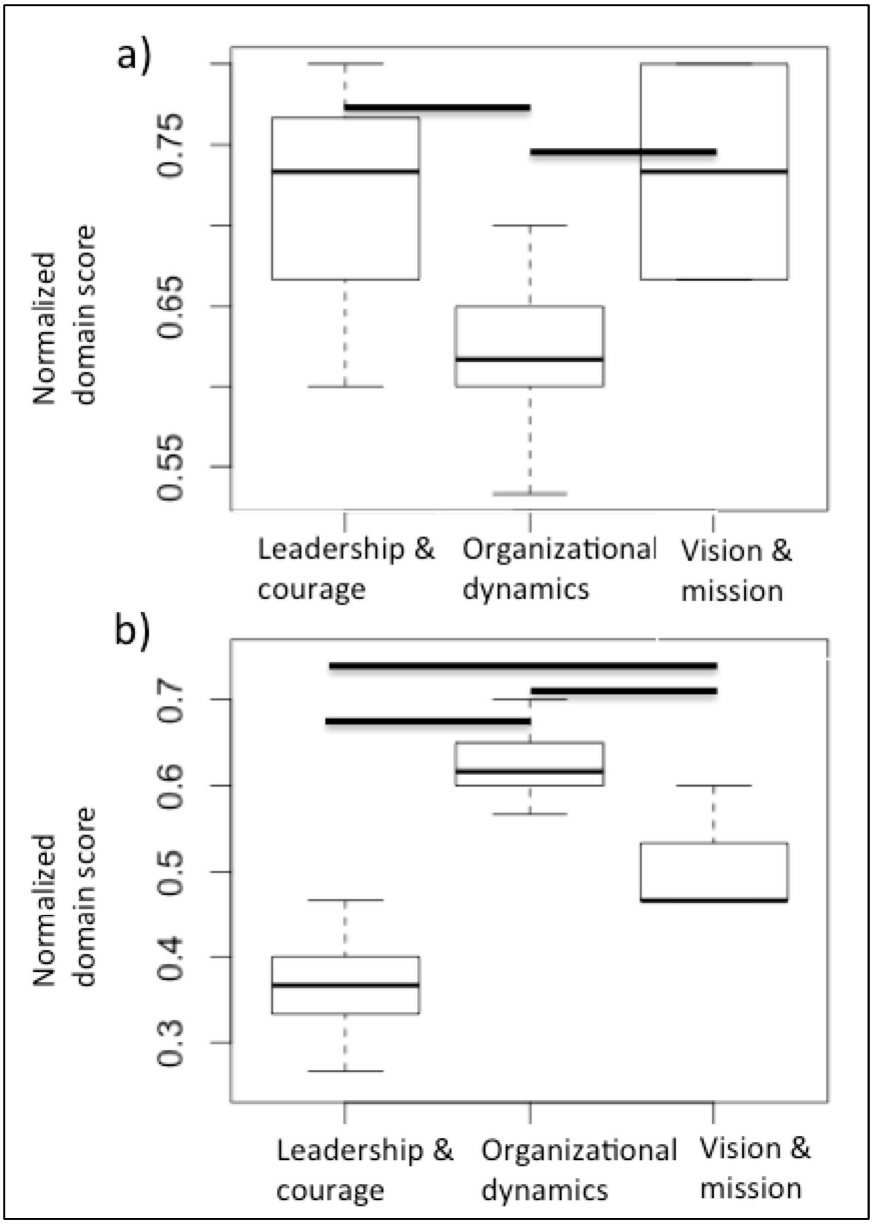
Kruskal-Wallis chi-squared = 9.3665, df = 2, p-value = 0.009249

- D1 vs D2: W = 53, p-value = 0.02742 (wilcoxon test)
- D1 vs D3: W = 29, p-value = 0.7833
- D2 vs D3: W = 59.5, p-value = 0.003999

Kruskal-Wallis chi-squared = 19.3746, df = 2,p-value = 6.207e-05

- D1 vs D2:W = 0, p-value = 0.000837
- D1 vs D3: W = 2.5, p-value = 0.001637
- D2 vs D3: W = 2.5, p-value = 0.001809

To determine if the population mean ranks varied for research question 1between Sites A and B, a non-parametric statistical hypothesis test was used. Through the Wilcoxon signed-rank test, measured in Likert-type Domain scores, the PI established graphic correlations used for analysis. This test was employed to determine if the domain data came from normal distributions and if the two site distributions were similar in shape. Figure 5 depicts graphically the Wilcoxon test for research question 1 for this study.



Figures 5. Likert scale scores for research question 1 for site A and site B.

Solid bar indicates significant ($p<0.05$) difference on Wilcoxon Signed Rank test.

The null hypothesis addressing this part of the study was:

H_{07} - Likert ratings for all three surveyed domains were not different between the two study sites.

As indicated in Figure 5, The three domains were significantly different between each other at each site (Kruskal-Wallis, $p<0.05$). For both sites, we rejected the null-hypothesis of no significant difference in scores between domains (Kruskal-Wallis: a: $p=0.009$, b: $p=0.008$).

For the CVI and CVR survey portion, using a Confidence Level of 95%, and in comparison to the alpha level, $\alpha = 0.05$, p-values < 0.05 allow rejection of the null hypothesis of no domain validity.

For the demographics portion and null hypothesis H_{03} - There will be no difference in proportional representation of categorical factors between study sites for each group: % male, % private tuition, relative ratio of research-to-liberal arts/other, using a Confidence Level of 95%, and in comparison to the alpha level, $\alpha = 0.05$, the p-values of 0.93, 0.08, and 0.96, do not allow rejection of the null hypothesis for the characteristics % Male, % Private, and Average Tuition.

The p-values of 0.006, and 0.02, allow for rejection of the null hypothesis, H_{05} - There will be no difference in proportion of representation between sample validation respondents and overall sample, for the characteristics of gender and institution type, for both enrollment and institution type. Therefore, there are no statistical differences between the sample of validation respondents and the overall sample for the characteristics of % Male, % Private, and Average Tuition. For the on-site survey portion, using a Confidence Level of 95%, and in comparison to the alpha level, $\alpha = 0.05$,

the p-values of 0.009, and 0.008 on the Kruskal-Wallis test, allow rejection of the null hypothesis of no difference between Likert ratings for individual domains, H_{07} - Likert ratings for all three surveyed domains were not different between the two study sites.

Data for Research Question Two

The second research question for this study asked, "Does the process choice affect the quality of the plan document?" A process similar to that for the first research question was established for the second.

Faculty and Staff Cluster Theme A – Qualitative Brand Research

- Code 1 – Positive brand
- Code 2 - Mixed brand
- Code 3 – Negative brand

Faculty and Staff Cluster Theme B – Vision Casting

- Code 1 – Indoctrination
- Code 2 – Change
- Code 3 – Position

Faculty and Staff Cluster Theme C – Strategic Planning

- Code 1 - Buy in
- Code 2 – Respect

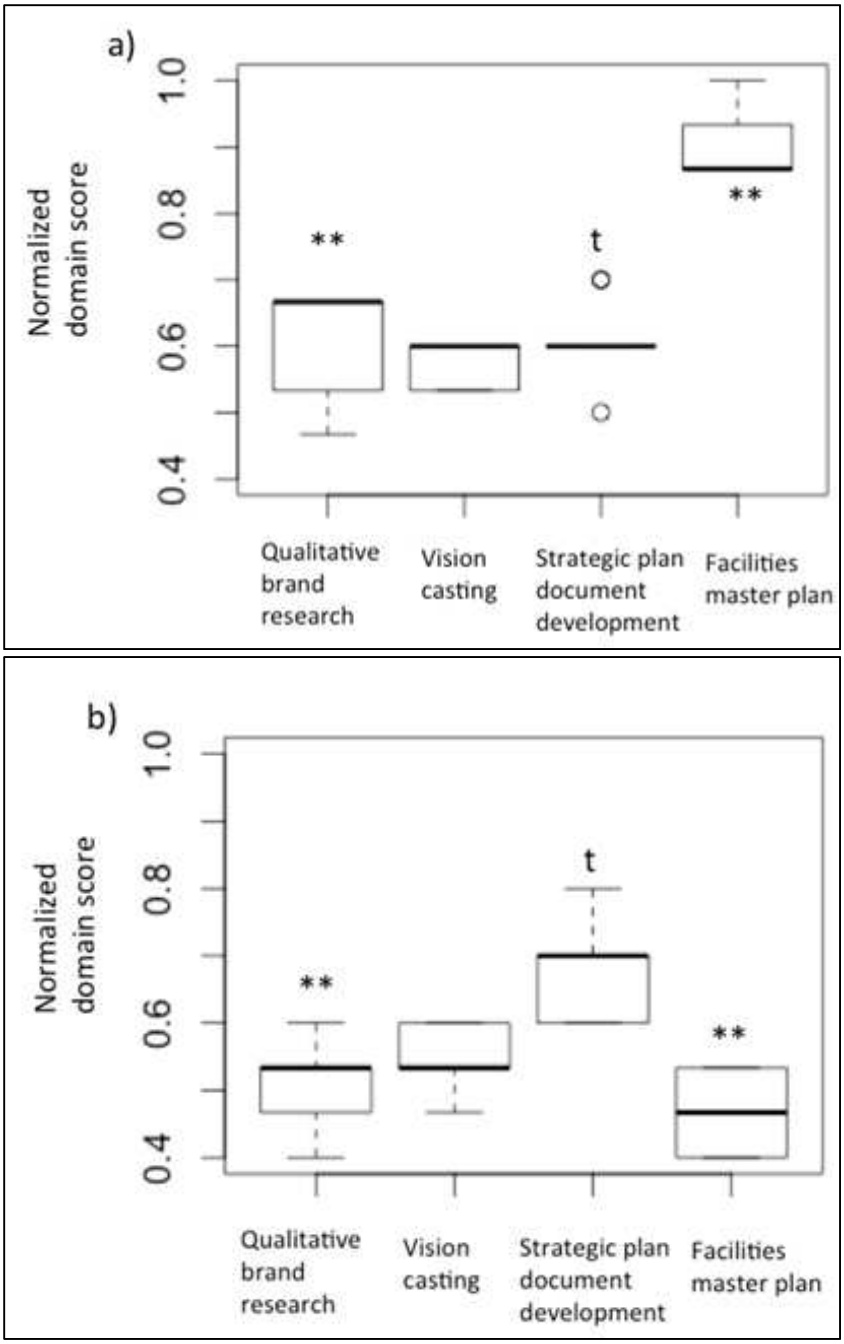
Faculty and Staff Cluster Theme D – Facilities Master Planning

- Code 1 – Architectural design
- Code 2 – Learning environment
- Code 3 – Incubation
    - Domain 1: W = 66, p-value = 0.02221

- Domain 2: W = 47, p-value = 0.551
- Domain 3: W = 20, p-value = 0.05091
- Domain 4: W = 81, p-value = 0.0002847

To determine if the population mean ranks varied between Sites A and B in research question 2, the PI used the same non-parametric statistical hypothesis test used for research question 1. Through the Wilcoxon signed-rank test, measured in Likert-type Domain scores, similar graphic correlations were established and used for analysis, as shown in Figure 6.

The analytic hierarchy process (AHP) was now introduced as a structured technique for organizing and analyzing complex decisions, such as the choice of a planning process, based on mathematics and psychology. Developed by Thomas L. Saaty in the 1970s, AHP has been extensively studied and refined since then. It has particular application in group decision-making, and it is used around the world in a wide variety of fields that require high-stakes decisions, such as government, business, industry, healthcare, and education. For this project, which focused on higher education leadership, the researcher developed a flow chart.



Figures 6. Likert scale scores for research question 2 for site A and site B.

Note: '**' denotes significant ($p<0.05$) difference on Wilcoxon Signed Rank test between site A and site B. 't' denotes trend level ($p<0.1$) difference. The four domains were significantly different between each other at each site (Kruskal-Wallis, $p<0.05$).

Analytic Hierarchy Structure Adaptation

The table for analytic hierarchy process (see Table 9) shows the goal, criteria, and alternatives for decision-making. Rather than prescribing a 'correct' decision, the AHP helps decision-makers to find one that best suits their goal and their understanding of the particular problems they face. It provides a comprehensive and rational framework for structuring a decision-making process, for representing and quantifying its elements, for relating those elements to overall goals, and for evaluating alternative solutions. In the opinion of the researcher, AHP represents a credible way to make qualitative projections about appropriate choices for a planning process—ie, using an inclusive or an exclusive approach—based on the dynamics of the organization and leadership style of the executive, without making value judgments on that choice or executive.

Procedurally, the researcher first deconstructed the decision of inclusion or exclusion of faculty and staff in the planning process into a hierarchy of more easily comprehended sub-problems, each of which can be analyzed independently. The elements of the hierarchy relate to aspects of the decision problem—tangible or intangible, carefully measured or roughly estimated, well or poorly understood—anything relevant to the decision at hand.

Once the hierarchy was built, the researcher systematically evaluated the various elements by comparing them to one another two at a time, with respect to their impact on an element above them in the hierarchy. In making the comparisons, the researcher used concrete data about the elements, but typically also used judgments about the elements' relative meaning and importance. It is the essence of the AHP that human judgments, and not just the underlying information, can be used in performing the evaluations.

Table 9.

Analytic Hierarchy Process for Site A and Site B.

Site A **Criteria**				
	Leadership & courage	Organizational dynamics	Vision & mission	eigenvector
Leadership & Courage	1.00	6.00	3.00	0.644
Organizational Dynamics	0.17	1.00	0.25	0.085
Vision & Mission	0.33	4.00	1.00	0.271
Alternatives				
	Leadership & courage	Organizational dynamics	Vision & mission	overall
	0.644	0.085	0.2771	
Inclusive	0.167	0.857	0.667	0.427
Exclusive	0.833	0.143	0.333	0.525
				CR = 0.054
Site B Criteria				
	Leadership & courage	Organizational dynamics	Vision & mission	eigenvector
Leadership & Courage	1.00	0.17	0.20	0.081
Organizational Dynamics	6.00	1.00	3.00	0.627
Vision & Mission	5.00	0.33	1.00	0.292
Alternatives				
	Leadership & courage	Organizational dynamics	Vision & mission	overall
	0.081	0.627	0.292	
Inclusive	0.167	0.857	0.667	0.746
Exclusive	0.833	0.143	0.333	0.366
				CR = 0.089

The AHP converts these evaluations to numerical values that can be processed and compared over the entire range of the problem. A numerical weight or priority was derived for each element of the hierarchy, allowing diverse and often unlike elements to be compared to one another in a rational and consistent way. This capability distinguishes the AHP from other decision-making techniques.

In the final step of the process, numerical priorities were calculated for each of the decision alternatives. These numbers represent the alternatives' relative ability to achieve the decision goal, thus allowing a straightforward consideration of the various choices of a planning process.

Site A: Leadership and courage ranks most highly, exclusivity with respect to planned choice. Site B: Organizational dynamics ranks most highly, inclusivity with respect to planned choice. AHP rankings are consistent at each site ($CR<0.1$).

Input. Data input for this segment of the research project came from three Likert survey sources: (a) Survey questions from Questionnaire to Develop Qualitative Research Themes, (b) Questionnaire To Assess Process Choice and Plan Quality through Analytical Hierarchy Decision-Making Model, and (c) Questionnaire to Measure the Leader's Leadership Style and Orientation (Fiedler’s LPC Model).

Activities. Data extracted from Input sources (a) and (b) referenced above were analyzed in the same manner that Likert survey information was treated in Part I. Data extracted from Input source (c), however, was handled in the manner prescribed by Fiedler’s Least Preferred Co-worker (LPC) research model, as previously described.

Output. The data below is a summary of the information collected at Sites A and B:

Part II Research Question 1 - What are the factors that drive the choice of a strategic planning process?

Table 10 is a compilation of the qualitative results for research question 1. The CEO of Site A was asked a series of questions relative to the Fiedler LPC analysis and generated a score of 50 reflective of his leadership style and orientation. In addition, Site A faculty and cabinet members were interviewed and asked a series of 12 probing questions to glean their thoughts on what factors, in their individual opinions, influenced their CEO's choices of a planning process.

Table 10.

. Likert scores for research question 1, site A

CEO		50												LPC
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11	Q12	*n*=12	
CFO	5	2	2	2	3	2	2	5	4	5	4	3		L
Exec	4	2	1	2	4	2	2	4	5	4	3	3		L
Exec	4	3	1	2	4	2	2	4	5	4	4	4		L
Exec	4	2	2	2	5	2	2	5	4	4	3	4		L
F / S	5	3	2	4	5	1	2	5	4	4	3	3		L
F / S	4	2	2	2	4	2	1	4	5	5	4	2		L
F / S	5	2	1	2	4	1	1	5	5	4	4	4		L
F / S	5	1	1	1	4	1	2	4	4	4	3	3		L

Note: Site A - LPC: <58=task oriented; 58-63=independent; >64=relational; Likert: 1= Strongly Disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=No opinion; 4=Agree; 5=Strongly Agree

Part II Research Question 2 - Does the process choice affect the quality of the plan document?

Table 11 is a compilation of the qualitative results for research question 2. Site A faculty and cabinet members were interviewed and asked a series of 11 probing questions to glean their thoughts on what factors, in their individual opinions, influenced their CEO's choices of a planning process.

Table 11.

Likert Scores for research question 2, site A

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q4	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11	*n*=11
CFO	4	4	2	2	4	2	4	2	4	5	4	L
Exec	4	4	2	3	4	2	4	1	4	5	5	L
Exec	3	3	1	3	4	2	4	2	4	5	5	L
Exec	3	3	2	3	4	2	5	1	4	5	4	L
F / S	4	4	2	2	3	3	4	2	4	5	4	L
F / S	4	4	2	2	4	2	5	2	5	4	4	L
F / S	3	4	3	2	5	2	4	2	4	4	5	L
F / S	4	3	3	1	4	3	5	2	5	4	4	L
F / S	3	2	2	3	4	2	5	1	5	5	5	L

Note: Site A - LPC: <58=task oriented; 58-63=independent; >64=relational; Likert: 1= Strongly Disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=No opinion; 4=Agree; 5=Strongly Agree

Part II Research Question 1 - What are the factors that drive the choice of a strategic planning process?

Table 12 is a compilation of the qualitative results for research question 1. The CEO of Site B was asked a series of questions relative to the Fiedler LPC and generated a

score of 70 reflective of his leadership style and orientation. In addition, Site B faculty and cabinet members were interviewed and asked the same 12 probing to glean their thoughts on what factors, in their individual opinions, influenced their CEO's choices of a planning process.

Table 12.

Likert scale scores for research question 1, site B

CEO		70											LPC
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11	Q12	*n*=12
CFO	2	2	5	2	4	3	2	4	2	4	2	1	L
Exec	2	2	4	2	4	4	3	4	2	4	2	2	L
Exec	1	3	5	1	4	4	2	4	3	3	3	1	L
Exec	2	1	4	2	5	3	2	5	2	4	2	1	L
F / S	3	2	4	2	4	4	3	4	3	4	3	1	L
F / S	2	1	5	3	5	3	2	5	3	3	2	2	L
F / S	2	2	4	2	4	4	1	5	2	4	2	1	L
F / S	3	2	5	1	4	4	3	4	2	4	3	2	L

Note: Site B - LPC: <58=task oriented; 58-63=independent; >64=relational; Likert: 1= Strongly Disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=No opinion; 4=Agree; 5=Strongly Agree

Part II Research Question 2 - Does the process choice affect the quality of the plan document?

Table 13 is a compilation of the qualitative results for research question 2. Site B faculty and cabinet members were interviewed and asked the same 11 probing to glean their thoughts on what factors, in their individual opinions, influenced their CEO's choices of a planning process.

Table 13.

Likert scale scores for research question 2, site B.

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11	*n*=11	
CFO	2	4	2	4	2	2	2	4	2	2	2		L
Exec	3	4	1	4	3	2	3	4	2	3	3		L
Exec	2	4	2	4	3	2	3	5	2	3	3		L
Exec	2	3	2	4	2	2	3	4	2	2	2		L
F / S	3	4	2	4	2	2	2	5	2	2	2		L
F / S	2	4	1	3	3	3	2	4	3	2	3		L
F / S	1	3	2	3	3	2	2	5	2	3	2		L
F / S	2	3	1	4	2	3	2	5	3	2	2		L
F / S	2	4	2	3	2	2	2	4	2	3	1		L

Note: Site B - LPC: <58=task oriented; 58-63=independent; >64=relational; Likert: 1= Strongly Disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=No opinion; 4=Agree; 5=Strongly Agree

Research Summary

This study was designed and executed in four sequential steps: locating the sites, performing content validity sampling, assessing plan quality, and analyzing the data qualitatively. These four steps are recapitulated as follows.

Step 1. Site selection

This study was a narrative case study conducted at two small, urban universities in the Midwest, Site A and Site B. The two sites had distinctive approaches to institutional strategic planning. What was studied is a bounded system, specifically the approach to developing a university strategic plan and whether that approach impacts the quality of the plan itself.

Step 2. Content validity sampling

According to Spool (1975) a content validity is concerned with three components: (a) the task content; (b) the test content; and (c) the strength of the relationship between the two. Content validation is the evaluation of work by one or more people considered experts in their field of work. It constitutes a form of self-regulation by qualified members of a profession within the relevant field, in this case higher education administration.

This study's content validation was conducted in two parts: Part I made use of an online survey to determine content validation and to rate a university strategic plan matrix in Likert rating style. The task in Part I was to gain professional consensus for assessing the quality of a strategic plan document. An independent company, Survey Monkey, was involved with the design and implementation of the survey, which was sent to 100 university presidents or Strategic Planning Officers across the U.S. Part II began after the matrix had been evaluated by the expert survey participants. At that point, the content-validated CQM was used at the two local sites for the case study. The content validation method was employed to establish and maintain standards of quality, improve performance, and provide credibility for the CQM.

Step 3. Assessment of plan quality

After the rubric had been content-validated by the Part I survey participants, the revised CQM was used at the two local sites for the case study. The content validated CQM was used to guide conversations with faculty and staff at Sites A and B. The researcher looked for the specific primary complexities, then looked for secondary complexities. Focus groups were designed for a maximum number of seven participants,

with “like” individuals coming from the same or similar departments within the university. The researcher also conducted interviews one-on-one.

Step 4. Analyze data

The qualitative analysis of the data proceeded in the following sequence: (a) coding to identify themes, ideas and patterns in the data; (b) statistical analysis to develop descriptive statistics to describe what the data is showing; (c) narrative analysis of the speech content of research participants, with attention paid to grammar, word usage, story themes, meanings of situations, and the social, cultural and political context of the research narrative; and finally, (d) content analysis of the texts or series of texts produced by research participants, used to identify themes and meanings by looking at the frequencies of key words in transcriptions. The ultimate goal of the project was to answer the two primary research questions: What are the factors that drive the choice of a strategic planning process?; and Does the process choice affect the quality of the plan document?

In order to accomplish this, the researcher developed and utilized a logic matrix for each question. The logic matrix is a tool that has been used for more than 20 years by program managers and evaluators to describe the effectiveness of various programs. The model describes logical linkages among program resources, activities, outputs, audiences, and short-, intermediate-, and long-term outcomes related to a specific problem or situation.

Once the researcher had described the project in terms of the logic model, critical measures of performance were identified. Logic models are narrative or graphical illustrations of activities that communicate the underlying assumptions upon which

actions are expected to lead to a specific result. Logic models show a sequence of cause-and-effect relationships—a systems approach to communicating the path toward a desired result.

The logic model was initially used by program evaluators as a tool for identifying performance measures. Since that time, the tool has been adapted to research project planning as well. The application of the logic model as a planning tool allows precise communication about the purposes of a project, the components of a project, and the sequence of activities and accomplishments.

The PI made use of a structural framework for collecting and analyzing data for this study. The horizontal axis reflects plan details, indicators, key questions/data/factors, data source, collection methods and assumptions. The vertical axis reflects objective, outputs, activities, and inputs. This matrix, used in research questions of the study, reflects the differences in the mixed methodology of the study. Table 14 is the logic matrix for research question 1.

Similar to the matrix in Table 14, Table 15 displays the logic matrix for research question 2.

Table 14.

Logic matrix for research question 1.

Research Question 1: *What are the factors that drive the choice of a strategic planning process?*

Plan Details	**Indicators**	**Key Questions/ Data Criteria/Factors**	**Data Source**	**Collection Methods**	**Assumptions**
Objective To determine the factors that drive the choice of a strategic planning process	Driving factors	Strategic Intent ========== Organizational Capacity Organizational Learning ========== Culture Management Leadership ========== Human Resources Self-Assessment ========== Vision	Site-based research from Site A & Site B: CEO Cabinet Faculty	A qualitative bounded system reflective of an instrumental case study,	Independent behavior Grouping variables
Outputs	Framework themes		Site-based research from Site A & Site B: CEO Cabinet Faculty	Likert Rating Scale	Inclusive Non-Inclusive
Activities	Transcription Grouping Coding Analysis	Leader-member relations Task structuring Positional power	Site-based research from Site A & Site B: CEO Cabinet Faculty	Analytical Hierarchy Process (AHP) Least Desired Coworker (LDC)	Pair-wise comparisons Causal Comparisons
Inputs	Criteria 1 Courage	Risk capital Flexibility Uncertainty	Site-based research from Site A & Site B: CEO Cabinet Faculty	Questionnaires Focus Groups Interviews	Reliability Validity
	Criteria 2 Dynamics	Confidence Adaptive change Major change Synergy Collective change response Non-systematic change response	Site-based research from Site A & Site B: CEO Cabinet Faculty	Questionnaires Focus Groups Interviews	Reliability Validity

	Criteria 3 Commitment	Corporate values Accountability Engagement	Site-based research from Site A & Site B: CEO Cabinet Faculty	Questionnaires Focus Groups Interviews	Reliability Validity

Table 15.

Logic matrix for research question 2.

Research Question 2: *Does the process choice affect the quality of the plan document?*

Plan Details	**Indicators**	**Key Questions/ Data Criteria/Factors**	**Data Source**	**Collection Methods**	**Assumptions**
Objective To determine if the process choice affects the quality of the plan instrument	Content validated	Introduction Qualitative Brand Research Vision Casting Strategic Planning Facilities Master Planning Culture Management	Statistically valid sample of CEO's from Top 100 Universities	A qualitative bounded system reflective of an instrumental case study,	Statistically valid sample of respondents are experts in the field
Outputs	Pairwise Kappa Matrix CVI Results Overall Kappa Response rate CVI Index	Intra-rater reliability	Email survey	Likert Rating Scale	Standard of quality has been determined
Activities	Domain level content validity Sub-domain CVI Likert data processing Inter-rater reliability	Similar peer reviewed studies	Survey Monkey data summary	Literature search	Representative sample assurance
Inputs	Forbes Top 100	Carnegie Endowment classification	Returned surveys	Survey Monkey	Comprehensive Quality Matrix

Summary

The big ideas researched from the above two logic models and resultant data collected can be summarized. *Quality can be defined* - The Comprehensive Quality Matrix for a strategic plan template has been content validated by "experts" in a statistically significant standard method. *Factors that affect the choice of a planning process (inclusive or exclusive) have been identified* - four elements, two major and two minor, emerged as recurring themes during qualitative studies: major – strategic intent and culture management; minor – organizational capacity and organizational learning. Further, leader style and orientation impact process choice: Task oriented leaders tend to be more exclusive in a planning process (give the stats), whereas relational leaders tend to be more inclusive in a planning process.

Chapter Five: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

For a university, strategic planning is the key to gaining control of the organization's destiny through a process of collaboration and cooperation. However, it must be recognized that there are multiple levels of complexity involved in analyzing the various approaches to the strategic planning process. Specifically, this study explored the impact of strategic intent and capacity-building as two significant complexities. Strategic intent is the driving force that informs and shapes how an organization defines itself through mission, vision, and strategic advantage. This is the overarching theme that directs the organizational purpose, as defined by the leader(s) of an organization. The purpose of this qualitative research project was to show that the quality of a university strategic plan document may be impacted by the planning process choices of engagement or non-engagement of the faculty and staff

This chapter, Chapter Five, addresses the two research questions of the project though qualitative and quantitative analysis and will present specific responses to the questions posed at the outset of this study. A logic matrix utilizing (a) input, (b) activity(s), (c) output, and (d) goal is the format used for presenting the findings.

This study began with the assumption that faculty and staff involvement in the university strategic planning process would be beneficial to the institution as a whole. However, the inherent complexities in the process, including the organization's strategic intent and capacity for change, can have a direct bearing on the outcome of a strategic plan development process. Moreover, the complexity of culture management has the potential to further impact an institution's planning process.

A review of findings from the research revealed that criteria for a high-quality strategic plan document can indeed be defined. The researcher developed a Comprehensive Quality Matrix (CQM), validated by experts using a statistically significant standard method. The researcher also identified certain factors that affect the choice of a planning process (inclusive or exclusive). During the coding process, four elements, two major and two minor, emerged as recurring themes. The major elements were strategic intent and culture management, while the minor elements were organizational capacity and organizational learning. Leader style and orientation were found to further impact process choice. This study showed that task-oriented leaders tended to be more exclusive in their planning processes, whereas relational leaders tended to be more inclusive.

This research used the case study methodology, providing a detailed account of two contrasting cases. This research is reflective of an instrumental case study, wherein the intent was to understand a phenomenon that is broader than the two cases being directly studied. The research was conducted in two stages. In Part I, the researcher performed content validation of the CQM to define the parameters or definition of a quality strategic plan document; in Part II, the site-based qualitative research was conducted in order to (a) contrast how strategic intent impacts the choice of a planning process and (b) determine whether that choice impacts the quality of the plan itself.

Findings and Interpretations

The intent of this study was not to determine that the choice of an inclusive or exclusive planning process was good or bad, but rather to show that either choice may be appropriate based on the dynamics of the organization at that particular moment in time.

These case studies showed that two small urban mid-west universities utilized significantly differing planning choices based on the dynamics unique to those universities. Both universities have demonstrated success in implementation of their respective plans.

The purpose of this mixed methods research project was to show that the quality of a university strategic plan document may be impacted by the planning process choices of engagement or non-engagement of the faculty and staff. The answers to the research questions are as follows:

RQ 1: *What are the factors that drive the choice of a strategic planning process?*

Four factors were found to drive the choice of a strategic planning process. The major factors were strategic intent and culture management. These two major themes emerged most prominently in the qualitative research of Part II, however the two sites, A and B, varied greatly in how the rated these two themes. The minor factors were organizational capacity and organizational learning, which seemed to have the same relative importance at both sites. All four themes were found in the literature review of Chapter 2, cross referenced under the heading Emerging Concepts for Strategic Plan Development.

RQ 2: *Does the process choice affect the quality of the plan document?*

The researcher found that, yes, the inclusive process choice tends to be more likely to embrace more of the domains (components) of a quality plan than does the exclusive process choice.

Explanation of Findings

Two issues provide rationale for the results: (a) leader style and orientation and (b) organizational dynamics. Leader style and orientation is reflective of individual

preferences and tendencies toward tasks or relationships. Organizational dynamics include courage, vision, self-assessment, and capacity. The codes articulated in the interviews at the two sites suggest that there are four overarching themes (a) strategic intent (b) organizational capacity (c) organizational learning and (d) culture management. Their relative import within the respective sites, however, varied based on leader style and orientation combined with unique organizational characteristics.

Generally, no unexpected and noteworthy findings surfaced during the research; however, the researcher found it interesting that at both Sites A and B there was no consensus of opinion among the faculty and staff regarding vision casting – ie. the question of what the institution should be in order to fulfill its mission.

The choice of a planning process

A strategic plan is a document that determines an organization's long-term goals and then determines the best approach for achieving improved process output, within a specified period of time. It is an organization's process of defining its strategy, or direction, and making decisions on allocating its resources to pursue this strategy (Ahoy, 1998).

According to Caret (2006), President of Townson University, proper planning should propel an institution, particularly a university, in the direction of positive growth. Consequently, if there is not a common inertia internally, there will be no in sync movement and perhaps even random movement in various directions. Therefore, a well thought out strategic plan can keep the organization moving in the desired direction in keeping with the corporate mission.

It is the opinion of the researcher that university executives and governing board members must take the necessary time and effort to understand the nature and complexities of their organizations in order to appropriately choose a planning process. As every organization is different, care must be given to choose a planning process that reflects the current realities of the university, with respect to accomplishment of its mission and values, as is cross referenced in the literature review of Chapter 2 under the subheading , Mission Vision and Values .

The researcher also believes that the leadership style and orientation determines the planning process, which may be most effective within the contextual mosaic of the university. *Without value judgment implied,* it is beneficial for stockholders or governing body members to know if the institution's CEO is a *strong leader* or a *weak leader* in order to generate optimal results from the organization's overall planning effort. Similarly, the knowledge of whether a leader is task-oriented or relationship-oriented is of significance in effective strategy development.

Interpretation of Findings

The researcher has compared each theme to literature findings of Chapter Two with sources for similarities and differences, starting with the most significant theme of strategic intent, not found in previous studies. Comment is also made regarding each theme's application to leadership.

Research Question 1: What are the factors that drive the choice of a strategic planning process?

Executive Cluster Theme A – Leadership Style and Orientation

Code 1: Leader-Member Relations

Code 2: Task structure

Code 3: Leader's Position-power

Literature findings

"Clear strategic intent gives managers a rallying point around which to make decisions about the future of their organization" (Ice, 2007, p. 170). "The 21st Century institutions of higher learning find themselves in an environment of an over-stimulated marketplace (Valimaa et al., 2012).

Importance to leadership

The extent to which the leader has the support and loyalties of followers is manifested through relations with them, which is usually friendly and cooperative. Also, the extent to which tasks are standardized, documented, and controlled reflects and important managerial technique, as does the extent to which the leader has authority to assess follower performance and give reward or punishment.

Staff and Faculty Cluster Theme A – Courage

Code 1: Self-directed

Code 2: Consensus

Code 3: Status quo

Literature findings

Educational leadership reflects willingness to traverse uncharted routes as part of the landscape of a changing academic environment that is re-defining post-secondary education (Fathi & Wilson, 2009).

Importance to leadership

There are some leaders whose actions reflect a willingness to invest large risk capital, backed by large commitment from a few key personnel, but who are willing to go it alone, if necessary. Another group of leaders may be flexible and willing to adapt to a changing operating environment, based on what the majority think is the right thing to do. There exists also another leadership group that is more cautious and measurably conservative, reacting to the uncertainty of the operating environment. The important point is not which leadership style is *correct*, but rather the assurance with which a leader is able to characterize him, or herself, as a leader.

Staff and Faculty Cluster Theme B – Organizational Capacity

Code 1 – No changes

Code 2 – Adaptive changes

Code 3 – Major changes

Literature findings

In a study of two Italian universities, researchers identified two macro-strategic planning dimensions. The variables take the form of *process* dimension (techniques) and *substance* dimension (content) (Bronzetti et al., 2012). Accordingly, the academic community must collaborate with the thought and business leaders to create innovative projects and long-lasting strategic based partnerships (Szulanski et al., 2005).

Importance to leadership

Regarding change capacity, leadership can be quantified with respect to confidence in the current leadership/management team's ability to lead the organization in the desired direction. The current leadership/management team may possess all the core competencies needed for present and future success. Alternatively, leadership

modalities may reflect that some adaptive changes or even major changes are needed to achieve future goals.

Staff and Faculty Cluster Theme C – Organizational Learning

Code 1 – Synergy

Code 2 – Self-assessment

Code 3 – Decentralization

Literature findings

The examination of the difference between the university's current achievements measured against the anticipated results has been dubbed gap analysis (Thompson & Strickland, 2008).

Importance to leadership

A university or other large institution can reflect its belief that there is a synergy effect greater than the sum of knowledge held by individual faculty or staff members. This can be implemented through an organization-wide continuous process that enhances its collective ability to accept, make sense of, and respond to change. The corollary, however, is that a university sometimes does not promote systematic integration and collective interpretation of new knowledge leading to collective action. Thus, it is important to make good use of the natural laws that govern human relations.

Staff and Faculty Cluster Theme D – Culture Management

Code 1 – Shared values

Code 2 – Commitment

Code 3 - Engagement

Literature findings

Organizational culture management in universities has been recognized by only a few researchers. One European researcher opined that the art and science of discipline is the key determinant of differentiation that drives core values (Becher & Kogan, 1981).

Importance to leadership

The university/college reflects the fact that faculty and staff share corporate values. The university/college should have accountability mechanisms in place to ensure mission commitment, while at the same time seek engagement of faculty and staff in the mission and vision.

Research Question 2: Does the process choice affect the quality of the plan document?

Faculty and Staff Cluster Theme A – Qualitative Brand Research

Code 1 – Positive brand

Code 2 – Mixed brand

Code 3 – Negative brand

Literature findings

Management theorists have for over 50 years known that any business, including universities, should begin the planning process by asking the question: what is the picture others see when they look at us? (Drucker, 1954).

Importance to leadership

If the university/college has a positive brand (reputation) in the community, competitive advantage usually attaches. However, when faculty and staff have different feelings about the university/college than generally held in the community, missed opportunities brand equity may develop.

Faculty and Staff Cluster Theme B – Vision Casting

Code 1 – Indoctrination

Code 2 – Change

Code 3 - Position

Literature findings

After multifaceted brand research has been done, the next logical extension is to ask the question: are we in the business that best matches our corporate skill set? (Drucker, 1954).

Importance to leadership

When moral purpose of the university/college is understood and accepted by faculty and staff; and when the dynamics of the institution reflect an understanding of change, the university/college has defined its market niche.

Faculty and Staff Cluster Theme C – Strategic Planning

Code 1 – Buy in

Code 2 – Respect

Literature findings

"Strategic planning is the making of a set future-determining decisions for the institution" (Cope, 1981, p. 23). Strategy is a mechanism for colleges and universities to find establish and sustain competitive advantage and position in the market place (Carroll, 1998). Research suggested a general consistency of opinion regarding process and suggests a three dimensional reflection for the planning process: First Dimension - A standard linear business model; Second Dimension – Flexible to asses current market conditions; and Third Dimension - Future oriented vision (Chaffee, 1985).

Importance to leadership

As mission, vision, and values have "buy in" from stakeholders, the opinions of collaborators and beneficiaries are sought by the university/college in major matters. Consequently, enhanced management capability is achieved.

Faculty and Staff Cluster Theme D – Facilities master planning

Code 1 – Architectural design

Code 2 – Learning environment

Code 3 – Incubation

Literature findings

Twenty-first century educational architecture suggests that the learning should not be an isolated experience. Rather, it should be an expression of the educational philosophy of the institution, led by its mission and vision. Accordingly, architecture is a key identifier of cultural identity (Hoffmann & Erlandson, 2005).

Importance to leadership

The physical facilities of the university/college reflect its teaching philosophy when (a) the campus reflects a learning environment suitable to the students and faculty and (b) when its classrooms are designed to be learning labs for academic development. The anticipated benefit of this project is for the academic community and other interested parties. This study addresses a gap in the higher education literature regarding the need for educational leaders to guide their institutions with a clear strategic intent, that is, a sharp focus on what the organization is trying to achieve and should achieve. In the past, without a proper recognition of the central role to be played by institutional mission and vision, leaders have been forced to rely only on history when making decisions about the

future, rather than being able to see the future in a less bounded and more visionary way. This lack has impeded leaders' efforts at culture management.

This research has established a peer-reviewed assessment instrument to be used for evaluating university and college strategic plan documents. This CQM may be a useful tool in helping institutions of higher learning realize their corporate mission, vision, and value statements.

Recommendations

In closing, the researcher suggests the following recommendations for how the findings of this study might be used:

a. *Leadership decisions*. Strategic planning is a key component of the executive portfolio. This study has made the researcher much more informed about the dynamics of strategic intent, culture management, organizational capacity, and organizational learning with regard to the respective roles they play in effective planning processes.

b. *Application*. University executives can use this study as a guide for the planning process that typically recycles every three to five years. Specifically, this study provides a template that ensures all of the quality components (domains) are included in the plan document. Further, the logic matrix utilized in the study can establish a useful thought progression that minimizes random management activities and keeps actions focused on linear alignment with the mission.

c. *Stakeholders.* Strategic planning in the university setting has many internal stakeholders such as trustees, presidents, planning officers, faculty and

staff, students, as well as many varied external groups. All of these groups have an interest in the university having an efficient and effective planning process and can benefit from the information contained in this study. However, in addition to this general usefulness to a broad audience, this study will also be shared with the 16 participating universities used in the content validation portion of the study (Part I). Also, President Obama's Advisory Board on Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) will be informed of the study's completion, for distribution to requesting institutions.

d. *Problem resolution.* The problem that this case study addresses is the gap in the higher education literature about the import of clear strategic intent, i.e. the focus on what the organization is trying to achieve. Consequently, without recognition of the central driving force of mission and vision, leaders are forced to rely only on history for decisions about the future, which ultimately impedes culture management. Therefore, if more information is known about the import of clear strategic intent on the planning process, better leadership decisions will be made, the planning process will be improved, and various internal and external stakeholders can more effectively lobby for their interests.

e. *Public policy*. Societal need remains the strategic paradigm in the growth and importance of institutions of higher learning. However, now, with looming budget deficits, a changing economic climate, new digital technology, and the global economy, colleges and universities face new

challenges when it comes to linear alignment with shifting public policy. Those who engage in higher education public policy recognize that university strategic planning and public policy are co-beneficiaries in the quest for societal evolution. The present study can aid policy-makers in their efforts to help educational institutions align with current needs.

The researcher also suggests two areas for further examination and research. A new round of hypothetical research questions could be developed under the headings of (a) broader implications and (b) corollary hypothesis.

A broader implication of this study that could warrant further investigation is the potential application to hospital administration; the style and essence of this planning process that was designed for higher education might be applicable in healthcare as well. It would be interesting to see how much variation, if any, would be needed to adapt the Comprehensive Quality Matrix (CQM) to a hospital setting. Given the researcher's background and graduate degree (MHA) in hospital administration, he can report that hospitals and universities share the following general commonalities:

- Both are large, not-for-profit organizations
- Both are governed by Boards of Directors with appointed CEOs
- Both are conglomerates of many disciplines and specialties
- Both employ prime service providers (physicians and professors) who are highly educated
- The consumers (patients and students) of both institutions' services are experiencing increasing influence

Corollary hypothesis testing for this study would pose the question, If the CQM were used as a planning document template, would that imply that the implementation of the strategic plan over a 3-5 year period would have a greater likelihood of achieving the plan goal(s)? In other words, does having a great plan help to ensure that the goal will be achieved? The researcher would like to secure grant funding to test the wider application theory as well as this corollary hypothesis.

Researcher Reflections

Summation of the project would not be complete without a report on how the researcher's opinions, biases, and preconceptions changed because of the study. Initially, at its inception, the researcher embraced the conventional wisdom that faculty and staff involvement in the university strategic planning process would be generally beneficial. The research data, however, suggests the primary complexities of strategic intent and culture management make the actual picture somewhat more complicated than the conventional wisdom would suggest, and in fact these complexities have a direct bearing on how the research questions were answered. Also, the secondary complexities of organization learning and organizational capacity have been determined to affect long-term sustainability and competitive advantage**.**

On a more personal note, the researcher chose this research topic out of a desire to make a contribution to the field of higher education administration. Now, at the completion of this study, the researcher believes that a contribution has indeed been made, in that a content-validated Comprehensive Quality Matrix (CQM) has been developed for a university strategic plan document template. This CQM can be helpful to

officials in preparing accreditation-required documentation for the survey areas of administration and institutional effectiveness.

Moreover, if this template, after being shared with the President's Advisory Board on HBCU, is successful in assisting some of our historically black institutions of higher education that are struggling in their efforts to adapt to the challenges of 21st century educational challenges, then it will have made an important contribution to a global community.

Summary and Conclusion

The purpose of this mixed methods research project was to show that the quality of a university strategic plan document may be impacted by the planning process choices of engagement or non-engagement of the faculty and staff. The data showed that this in fact was true. However, further examination of the data also showed that clear strategic intent, however it is understood by university leader(s), may be equally as important, or even more important to corporate strategy development and cultural transformation, than is the choice of a planning process.

This study reports findings unlike those reported in any other literature. Specifically, to the best of the researcher's knowledge based on his research, the relationship between a leader's style and orientation (task vs. relational preference) and the choice of a planning process (inclusive or exclusive) has not been reported heretofore. This study found that task-oriented leaders tend to be exclusive, and relational leaders tend to be inclusive in their planning processes.

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Vitae

Robert Lawrence Salter currently is Senior Consultant for Higher Education Market Strategies, a consulting firm that offers strategic planning and marketing services to educational institutions. Salter is also Adjunct Faculty for the Strategic Management cluster of the Lindenwood College of Individualized Education of Lindenwood University. This graduate level cluster includes Strategic Planning, Healthcare Marketing, and Global Healthcare classes as part of the Master in Healthcare Administration program. Prior teaching experiences include courses in Healthcare Organization, Long-Term Care, Healthcare Finance, and Human Resources at Harris-Stowe State University.

Educational studies have resulted in Salter earning a Bachelor of Science degree from St. Louis College of Pharmacy and a Master of Hospital Administration from St. Louis University. Salter anticipates receiving his Doctor of Education degree in May of 2014. His doctoral focus has been in Higher Education Administration. Prior to his years in academia, Salter was a healthcare executive having the unique experience of serving as Chief Executive Officer in the fields of Home Health, Long- Term Care, and Acute Care delivery models.