

BALANCED SCORECARD IMPLEMENTATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION: AN EMIRATI PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

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Considering the lack of research focusing on the use of the Balanced Scorecard (BSC) as performance evaluation tool in Emirati higher education institutions, the main purpose of the study is to present a basis for a more general BSC model helping higher education managers in UAE environment for evaluating and managing the performance of their institutions. This paper is based on the case study as a research method. However, the relevance of this case study lies in the use of a joint approach combining SWOT analysis and BSC and generating an integrated strategic management system. The study comes up with a strategic evaluation plan considering the 4 BSC perspectives and designs the strategy map for it in the case of the Emirates College of Business. In this research, the traditional customer perspective of Kaplan and Norton is replaced by the students and stakeholders perspective. It is found that there is a limitation in the effective strategic problem that leads to the recruitment and placement issues, increased costs, student retention, lack of partnerships, a decrease in annual growth of income and poor performance management that can be managed through effective strategic planning. The study also reflects that there is a range of opportunities that can be exploited using the strengths in order to achieve the goals. The outcomes of this study case can be employed in the strategic planning of ECB and all other Emirati business institutions can be inspired.

Keywords: Balanced Scorecard, Performance Evaluation, Higher Education, UAE

1. INTRODUCTION

This research is dealing with the problem of performance evaluation in the specific sector of higher education in the UAE environment. The idea of this paper has emerged from 2 main observations:

- Inexistence, to the best of my knowledge, of researchers studying the performance evaluation of the emirate's higher education institutions and using Balanced Scorecard (BSC).

- A growing interest in the strategic considerations at the college where I am working. Indeed, a movement of formalization of strategy has been noticed, at least since last 2 years. This movement translates the awareness and desire of the top management to adapt their strategy and also to align it with the new vision and objectives of their institutions. It requires the use of certain tools for measurement and management, as for example, BSC.

Importance of higher education for the development of a country is no longer to be proven.

Higher education forms the advanced skills and knowledge necessary to build societies and thus, guarantees the sustainability of a country's development. Being aware of this importance, emirate's public authorities have belt during the recent years on the development of higher education sector. Consequently, this sector has shown an extraordinary growth since 1997 due to a strong social demand and also due to a strong political will to set up an educational system meeting the international standards of quality. Indeed, a growing number of private and public colleges and universities have been created all over UAE. The number of higher education institutions licensed by the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research (MHESR) augmented from 5 in 1997 to about 75 institutions teaching 733 accredited programs in 2014 (Commission for the Academic Accreditation; 2014). Majority of these licensed institutions are private and many of them are working under the label of prestigious western universities. In this context, the state has minimized its role only to the

supervision aspect (Van Vught 1989). State authorities are now only focused towards allocating resources to ensure maximum quality in the education sector (Jongbloed 2003).

The rising number of higher education suppliers, diversity of the sector and relatively liberalized market of higher education in UAE have exposed colleges and universities, both public and private, to the market forces and obliged them to compete for students and by enhancing their academic programs, improving the employability of their graduates, their facilities, etc. (Hijazi & al., 2008). However, managing competition is not the only challenge faced by these institutions. At the same time, they have to comply with the high standards of quality to meet the requirements of accrediting structures. Besides, they have to cope with growing demands for quality and accountability from other stakeholders such as students and owners.

In this context of intense competition and increased accountability, higher education institutions have to stay competitive if they want to remain in the race. They need to adapt their strategies and evaluate their performance permanently. For that reason, colleges and universities have to use strategic management tools helping to translate strategy into actions and then into objectives and measures.

One of the contemporary tools of strategic management being able to achieve such a task is the Balanced Scorecard (BSC). Kaplan and Norton provided the concept of the balanced scorecard in 1992 which revolves around measuring performance for successful strategy implementation in organizations. Several companies have implemented the concept of balanced scorecard successfully (Dumond, 1994; Kaplan and Norton, 2001). Although initially developed to be used by for-profit companies, the usefulness of this method has also been recognized by public and private non-profit organizations including higher education institutions. Moreover, BSC is largely considered as one of the major performance evaluation tools and it is verified that by using this tool, higher education units are able to develop their management and efficacy (Weerasooriya, 2013).

University managers will be in fact provided with an effective system to measure performance in accordance with the organizational mission and strategy. This system helps managers to improve performance according to environmental changes (McDevitt and al., 2008). Also, It helps them to better employ the intangible assets they have for future growth (Al-Ali, 2012). According to Al-Ali (2012), university managers should consider BSC as a compliment more than a substitute for traditional financial performance evaluation methods.

The current study, therefore, emphasizes on the balanced scorecard approach and attempts to discuss how it may be useful and applicable in the strategic management of one of the higher education institutions in UAE. It is aimed to contribute to the enrichment of a scarce body of literature treating the construction of a performance steering tool in the higher education sector by the concept of the balanced scorecard. It is also aimed to help higher education administrators, mainly in UAE context, managing their strategies and measuring their performances. The paper is based on a case study methodology and uses the experience of Emirates College of Technology to show how the strategic issues, objectives and the relation between the

objectives can be illustrated in a graphical representation. It also presents how strategies of the college can be translated into numerical balanced scorecard including objectives and measures for the planning period.

This research is structured as follows: section 2 presents the conceptual background on the BSC. Section 3 reviews the literature related to the application of the BSC in higher education institutions. Finally, section 4 presents a case study showing the implementation and development of BSC in the emirate's context.

2. THE BALANCED SCORECARD

2.1. Presentation

Robert Kaplan and David Norton developed the concept of the "Balanced Scorecard" in the 1990s (Kaplan and Norton, 2001). Their work shows that the performance must be linked to the notion of strategic steering. The strategic steering is putting at the disposal of management of any company on a number of varied indicators (Financial and non-Financial, short-term and long-term), grouped under the form of a scorecard, so as to help the managers in their strategic decision-making. Designed initially for the for-profit companies, BSC is based on five major principles (Kaplan and Norton, 2001).

- Translation of strategy into operations.
- Linking the organizational mission and vision to its strategy.

- Penetrating strategies into daily operations.
- Making strategy a continuous process.
- Bringing change through effective leadership.

The basic idea of BSC is that the performance evaluation of an organization is not reduced to the financial evaluation; it must be completed by non-financial measures as well. It measures the company performance according to four balanced perspectives within the organizational vision and strategy framework (Figure 1, Kaplan and Norton, 1996, 2001).

- The financial perspective revolves around evaluating previous financial performance.

- The customer perspective is about customer satisfaction and loyalty.

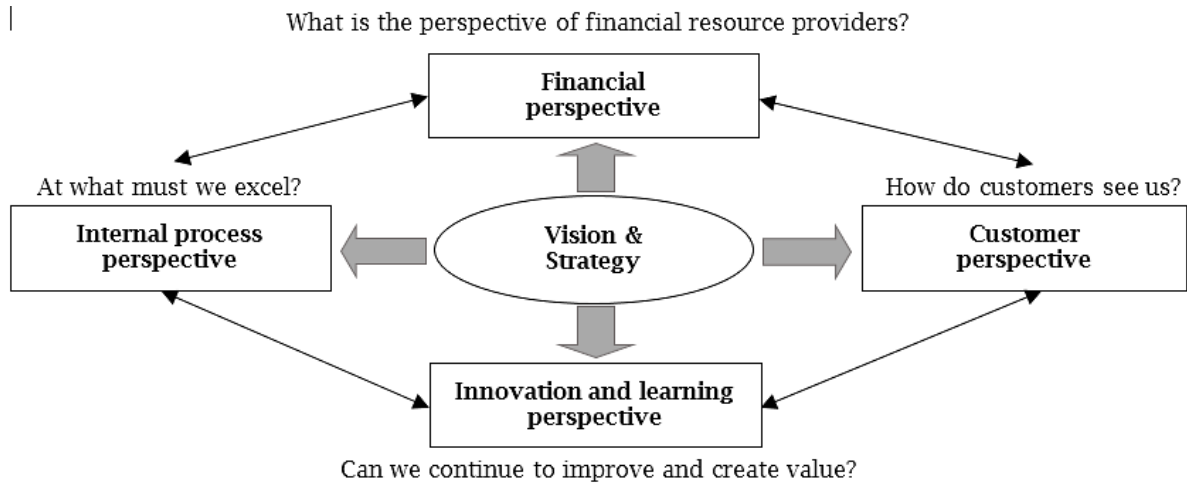
- The internal process perspective helps managers in the evaluation of organizational operations for meeting the customer expectations.

- The innovation and learning perspective is about knowledge management of employees and creation of a culture which drives change, innovation and growth.

Different measures related to these perspectives should be able to create a linkage between the strategies and vision of organizations in order to help managers to monitor progress and adjust strategies as and when required (Kaplan and Norton, 1996). BSC offers a method of organizing and presenting a large number of interconnected and complex information, giving an overview of the company and allowing appropriate decision making and permanent enhancement. Constructing a BSC necessitates the detection of some basic components of operations and financial performance, defining objectives for these components, and then identifying measures to follow up advancement to these objectives (Beard, 2009). However, it is important to point out that a successful conversion of strategies into operational measures using BSC is only achievable if employees

and managers are all committed to the strategic obligations of the company and seek constantly to ameliorate the measures to evaluate (Paul Eisenberg, 216).

Figure 1. Balanced scorecard



2.2. Chain of causality linking the 4 perspectives

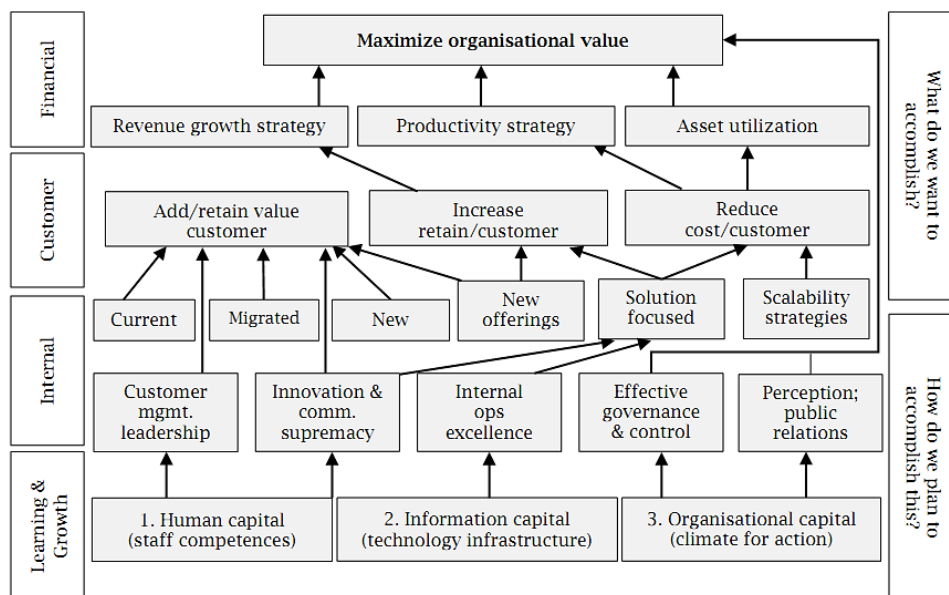
The idea which emerges from this chain of causality is that the financial performance is conditioned by the value perceived by customers, the organization itself, assured within the framework of processes. The basic support functions of which, are employees and information systems, become the guarantors. So, the underlying philosophy of this chain of causality is the primacy of financial performance on all other perspectives. Financial indicators matter most and the whole company has to adapt to consequences its relations with the customer, its internal processes and its staff management. The goal of each lower perspective is to provide support for the achievement of the other higher perspectives. For example, the goal of the innovation and learning perspective is to provide the infrastructure to support the achievement of the three previous BSC perspectives (Ilyasin and Zamroni, 2017). Since BSC has to reflect

the strategy of the company, it has to identify and clarify the hypotheses which underlie the cause and effect relationships, between the measurement of results and the determinants of performance. Every considered indicator is an element of the chain of cause and effect relationship which communicates the strategy to the whole company.

To build a "balanced scorecard" and choose the relevant indicators, Norton and Kaplan's methodology consists of establishing a strategic map allowing the connection between the four complementary performance levels, corresponding to the four perspectives. A strategic map describes the process by which intangible assets are transformed into material results on the financial axis or on the customer axis. It gives managers an appropriate framework to describe and manage the strategy.

The representation of this map is made according to the following schematic diagram:

Figure 2. A generic strategy map



Source: Armitage & Scholey (2007)

As depicted in Figure 2, customer results drive the financial outcomes. Corporate strategies and tactics remain important to achieve customer results by using human, information, and capital resources of organizations (Kaplan & Norton, 2004).

2.3. The BSC structure

No doubt that BSC is considered today as one of the highly recognized performance evaluation techniques. This is due to the flexibility of its structure facilitating the adaptation of this technique to the specificities of any organization. It is known that Private, public and Non-Profit entities don't have the same have different orientations, goals, visions and missions. Accordingly, it seems to be crucial to adjust and adapt the architecture of the BSC (Świerk and Mulawa, 2015). Niven (2002) argues that Non-profit organizations tend to focus on the organizational mission and customer orientation rather than the financial perspective. Along the same lines, Kettunen (2005) claims that in the public sector the customer perspective represents the main objectives, in opposition to the private sector where it is more realistic to put finance perspective at the highest level.

Kaplan and Norton (2001) stated that non-profit organizations prefer building their BSC starting from the initial perspective of organizational mission. An exploration of customer perspective, internal process perspective, learning and growth perspective, and financial perspectives is done sequentially. In contrast, Lawrence and Sharma (2002) reported that the DXL University keeps the mission and strategic objectives at the top whereas financial perspective comes second and other perspectives are considered later.

Wilson and al. (2003) noted that the Canada National Department of British Columbia Buildings Corporation (BCBC) changed the financial perspective into shareholder perspective during the creation of BSC. This BSC also kept customer perspective and shareholder perspective on the same levels. Likewise, Wilson et al. (2003) also indicated that various national departments (the Norwegian Directorate of Public Construction and Property, the US General Service Administration, and the Nation Property Board of Sweden) established BSC similar to the business model with the financial perspective first which is unexpected from organizations belonging to the public sector. Moreover, some non-profit organizations come up with another perspective in response to their key Strategies. They created a social responsibility perspective (Kaplan and Norton, 2001).

The above literature review argues basically that the non-profit organizations do not always stick with the traditional configuration of the BSC perspectives considering the financial perspective on the top. Indeed, they tend to adopt the four main aspects of BSC according to their specificities, and strategic orientations. However, some public sector and non-profit bodies choose to structure their BSC in the same way as do the private and business companies. This may be explained by the nature of the organizational culture of this body which may focus more on financial achievements as do businesses (Chen and al., 2006).

3. APPLYING BALANCED SCORECARD IN EDUCATION

3.1. Use of BSC in higher education

Since its creation in 1992, the concept of BSC has been largely used in business fields and in the strategic management area for industries (Lovaglio 2011). Nevertheless, BSC can be also adopted by government agencies, universities, and non-profit organizations (Niven 2008; Pietrzak 2014). Cullen et al., (2003) argued that using BSC in educational sector can revive the importance of overall managing business operations as compared to just monitoring performance. Moreover, monitoring non-financial measures can give higher education institutions the possibility to take into account «student and stakeholder feedback, faculty and staff satisfaction, and the internal efficiency of the institution's processes» (Cindy Brown, 2012). For Taylor and Baines (2012), the BSC is applied by university managers as a tool enabling to enrich their knowledge of the organization's strengths and weaknesses.

Many examples related to the use and development of the BSC tool in higher education sector can be pointed out. Sutherland (2000), (cited in Karathanos and Karathanos, 2005) stated that the Rossier School of Education at University of Southern California used the concept of BSC for evaluation of its academic programs and relevant planning processes. In this context, Armitage and Scholey (2004) were successful to apply the BSC concepts for master's degree programs in business, entrepreneurship and technology. Karathanos and Karathanos (2005) also explored how Baldrige Education Criteria for Performance Excellence used BSC instrument for the education sector. Overall, it can be easily suggested that there are various differences and similarities that exist between application of BSC for education and business.

Chang and al. (1999) reported a survey of 69 accounting department heads. Majority of the accounting department heads were in favour of using BSC due to its underlying benefits to accounting education programs. Chang and al. (1999) also talked about the case of the University of California, San Diego, which developed a BSC planning and performance monitoring system for thirty institutional functions. This development based on the data collected from internal financial reports, National Association of College and University Business Officers benchmarks, and satisfaction surveys conducted by faculty, staff and students. This project was developed in line with the vision, mission, and values of the University. O'Neil and al. (1999) presented out a BSC developed by a faculty team at the Rossier School of Education of USC and inspired by the business sector. This Balanced Scorecard consists of different perspectives of academic management, internal business, innovation and learning, and stakeholder perspective at large. This implementation of BSC made management aware of important aspects associated with the leadership of the university, competitive advantage factors, methods for improvement and creation of maximum value, and opinions of students and employers about the university.

In their study Beard and Humphrey (2014) propose the application of BSC technique to assess information technology (IT) resources in higher education structures. The proposed BSC uses the performance criteria of the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award in Education. The authors consider that Educational bodies are different from businesses so they need a specific and unique BSC to evaluating their IT resources including student learning and stakeholder satisfaction.

For its part, Al-Zwyalif (2012) noted the relevance of applying BSC in developing countries. He conducted a survey of Jordanian Private Universities among deans, deputy deans, heads of scientific departments, financial managers and administrative managers. He concluded that those in charge in these universities recognized the importance of BSC and assumed that the necessary resources required for the implementation of BSC were available.

3.2. Notion of customer in higher education

It is true that the first, internal and direct customers of every university are the students, but they are not the only ones concerned by the universities' value creation. In fact, university customers include also the students' future employers and even the whole community (Ndoda and Nyamazana, 2014). In Higher Education, there are a variety of stakeholders including students, employers, academic and administrative staff, government, accreditation agencies, etc. All of them are directly concerned by the delivery of educational products and each of them has his own perception of these products and their related quality. Consequently, the notion of customer seems to be a confusing and debatable issue in Higher Education (Harvey, 1993; Schwartzman, 1995; António, 2006). Indeed, the question is to explore the real customer of a course or a degree offered by educational institutions. The one that gets the service (the students) or who pays for the service (the government, the employers) [Harvey, 1993].

However, general orientation is to consider students as the main consumers of educational service. In reality, other consumers are directly involved. The most concerned are employers. They are supposed to consume different education outputs: graduated students they recruit, training courses for their staff, research they take part in (Harvey, 1993). According to Schwartzman (1995), the student has always been considered as customer metaphor, since the introduction of the notion of Total Quality Management in the higher education sector. The problem of reducing customer satisfaction to students' wants and needs may lead to a very limited and unrealistic vision of customer satisfaction. Generally, students have very short-term and self-serving objectives and interests; for instance, passing a course, graduating, learning concepts and techniques with an immediate applicability to employment are most prominent interests of students (Schwartzman, 1995). Moreover, students are not all the time in a capacity or in a situation to know exactly what they want (Harvey, 1993). Characteristics and contents of a degree are not designed directly by student-as-customer. Most that the students can make is to register in a particular degree and then select optional courses to constitute their study plan.

In this research, the traditional customer perspective of Kaplan and Norton will be replaced by the students and stakeholders perspective.

3.3. Performance measure indicators

Karathanos and Karathanos (2005) compared the BSC established initially for the business sector and the one adapted, by the Baldrige Education Criteria for Performance Excellence, to education. They concluded that in both higher education and business, the main purpose is to reach and measure excellence. However, higher education institutions focus more on academic measures than on financial performance. Moreover, measurements in higher education deal, in general, with academic variables and indicators which are most easily quantifiable such as ratios of students and faculty members, grading, demographics of students, class distributions, ratios of graduation and percentile scores, percentage of employed graduates, load on faculty and others (Ruben, 1999). In contrast, Ruben (1999) consent that majority of higher education institutions do not give enough concern to the measurement of students', faculty and staff satisfaction. But this does not prevent them from considering attracting and retaining best-talented people as a major goal and key success factor. In another research, Ewell & Jones (1994) presented measures used by the higher education institutions in 10 states in the USA. These measures are graduation rates by different both genders, the capacity to complete a degree in time, retention rates, respecting ethnicity, transfer rates, the percentage of passing professional exams, job placements, the satisfaction of graduates, workload and productivity of faculty members.

After comparing the Baldrige Award and BSC criteria in the education environment Karathanos and Karathanos (2005) have obtained very close indicators when using both tools. (See Table I).

4. METHODOLOGY FRAMEWORK

This paper is based on the case study as a research method to build a BSC employed as a framework to manage the strategies in one of the Emirati higher education institutions. However, the relevance of this case study lies in the use of a joint approach combining SWOT analysis and BSC and generating an integrated strategic management system. According to Lee and Sai On Ko (2000), it is «a more structural approach in setting up the foundation of the balanced scorecard; instead of simply identifying the “key performance indicators” (KPI) via gut feeling or by brainstorming».

4.1. Link between BSC and SWOT analysis

Kaplan and Norton presented four perspectives (financial, customer, internal processes, innovation and learning) as main aspects of corporate strategy that have to be evaluated. However, the BSC is more considered as a tool of measurement of strategy rather than a tool for deciding strategy (Mc Adam and O'Neill, 1999). In other words, BSC is just a tool helping managers to execute the decided strategy. Thus, it cannot be used successfully if the strategy is not actionable and not in line with the organizational objectives (Al-Baidhani, 2013).

For this reason, the SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis appears as a valuable “springboard” serving to identify key performance indicators (KPI) of BSC.

BSC is noted for its important contribution in reinforcing the linkage between customer enhancement activities and organizational strategy. Nevertheless, BSC is not able to point out identification of new customers and markets (Mc Adam and O'Neill, 1999). In this regard and for the purpose of constructing reasonably the BSC, Kootanaee et al. (2013) recommend beginning first with exploring the organisational environment, for

instance applying the SWOT Framework.

For his part, Kaplan and Norton (1996) explained that the initial phase of implementation of a balanced scorecard is to identify organizational vision and strategy. It is argued that conducting a SWOT analysis, helps to conceive appropriate strategies. Thus, it will be used as "springboard" on the way of the development of the balanced scorecard.

Table 1. BSC for education and business

<i>Education</i>	<i>Business</i>
1. Student Learning Results: It is important to use various assessment methods for analyzing the learning results of students in order to depict a connection with the mission and organizational objectives. Holistic appraisals of student learning are important.	1. Customer Focused Results: Measurements revolve around the satisfaction of customers from product and service features, delivery, and relationships.
2. Student and Stakeholder Focused Results: Measuring satisfaction levels of students and stakeholders about educational programs and quality provision is integral. Student development and learning are enhanced by measuring these factors.	2. Product and Service Results: Measurements of product and service performance from customers' viewpoints.
3. Budgetary Financial and Market Results: Major expenditures on students like tuition fees, cost per academic credit, and resources used for education must be measured.	3. Financial and Market Results: Businesses assess financial and market results through various tools like ROI, liquidity, profitability, value creation, operating margins and others.
4. Faculty and Staff Results: Measurements related to innovation, completion of educational programs, promotion of knowledge management, training rates, communication and collaboration, the overall well-being of faculty and staff and their satisfaction levels.	4. Human Resource Results: Businesses measure similar aspects as of education sector. For instance, training, completion of work, innovation, and overall well-being and satisfaction levels of employees.
5. Organizational Effectiveness Results: This perspective also includes measurement of operations performance. Organizational effectiveness can be measured through improvement in students' performance, overall learning environment of the institution, and completion of organizational plans.	5. Organizational Effectiveness Results: Internal operational performance measures are also included in this perspective. This revolves around measuring productivity, production cycle, and effective deployment of organizational strategy.
6. Governance and Social Responsibility Results: It is important for the education sector to be accountable, and depict ethical behaviour by maintaining stakeholders' trust and complying with legal requirements.	6. Governance and Social Responsibility Results: Businesses also need to be accountable, and depict ethical behaviour by the corporate governance of the organization and adhere to the legal and regulatory aspects of the industry.

Source: Karathanos and Karathanos (2005)

4.2. BSC design process

Taking into account what it has been said above regarding the relationship of complementarities between the BSC and SWOT analysis, the proposed methodology, to construct the BSC applied to the case of a higher education UAE institution, is a combination of the SWOT method and balanced scorecard (BSC), identifying its four main strategic perspectives. This methodology is made up of 3 main phases.

- Identification of Strategy: Strategy is an assumption of how the organizational vision and mission will be accomplished. Identified strategic themes are the reflection of what managers consider important to reach their strategic goals. This stage aims to identify a set of strategic themes for the organization based on SWOT analysis.

- Definition of Strategic Map: Knowing the strategy of the organization, related action plans will be developed and translated into 4 balanced strategic perspectives (financial, customer, internal processes, innovation and learning). A strategic map is then drawn representing the various causal relations between the different perspectives.

- Defining Performance Measures: Once the strategy map is configured, the following phase is the construction of a balanced scorecard presenting various goals and measures for each strategic perspective. The measures selected are adapted from Bailey et al. (1999) (or from Baldrige criteria) but were adjusted to apply to our specific case study.

5. CASE STUDY

5.1. College context

ECB is a private college located in Abu Dhabi, established in 1993. It is a higher education institution offering several accredited bachelor and diploma programs in IT, Business and Media. It is worth noting that ECB was only a training institute initially. It is only in 2003 when ECB was recognized by the UAE Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research. It started with providing diploma programs and later on, in 2012, began providing Bachelor programs.

In 2015, the college enrolled more than 2500 students in 8 different programs in business and management, IT and Media; distributed across three campuses (male, female and Media). Academically, the college is led by a Dean, and two Assistant Deans who work with more than 100 full-time faculty members, 70% of them are PhD holders, in 6 departments including accounting, finance, IT, management, HR and Media. The Department Chairpersons work with the Deanship and quality manager through an academic board.

The academic board acts under the authority of President of the institution. The latter is appointed by the board of trustees, basically composed of the main owners of the college. The college has just submitted for a new accreditation in healthcare and industrial management programs. By providing a larger range of programs every year, ECB is aiming to be considered

as a University within 3 years.

The necessity to implement a program of enhancement, strategy development, and reevaluation has been triggered by following key factors:

- Competition is becoming stronger and stronger.
- College graduates are becoming more demanding.
- The number of faculty members is increasing every year.
- A change in the management team.
- Focusing on assessment and continuous development actions required by the Commission for the Academic Accreditation of the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research.

5.2. Identification of ECB strategy

The identification of strategy phase is composed of 3 main steps:

- Defining vision and mission.
- Conducting a SWOT analysis.
- Defining Strategic themes.

5.2.1. ECT vision and mission

Since 2012, in response to the new vision embraced by owners, the college has been conducting an organization-wide restructuring and development program. To fulfil this new vision, new President and a new Dean were appointed in September 2012. On the other hand, more than 40 faculty members, PhD holders, coming from different countries were hired. The new management and academic team reviewed the existing vision and mission. After organizing a

meeting of main college administrators, college departments chairs, some faculty members and student representatives the new mission and vision were submitted to the academic board and then to the board of trustees for final approval. The following statements came out:

• ECB Vision Statement: To be recognized as one of the leading universities in the United Arab Emirates.

• ECB Mission Statement: ECB intends to provide top quality teaching, research, and community services to its stakeholders in line with national, regional, and international best practices by focusing on the knowledge-based economy, investing in people and new technology.

5.2.2. ECB SWOT analysis

As the vision and mission statements are clearly expressed, the task of identifying the appropriate strategies is possible. For this purpose, SWOT analysis is considered as a key method providing an overall overview of the internal and external environment of the organization. In November 2015, as part of the ECB strategic plan construction, a full day seminar was held involving all of the constituents of the College: ECB President, the Dean and his 2 assistants, College Department Chairs, faculty members, College administrators and student representatives. During this day a SWOT analysis has been conducted under the sub-titles; namely, ECB internal environment (an analysis of ECB strengths and weaknesses) and ECB external environment (an analysis of opportunities and threats). Table 2 summarizes the main results emerging from the SWOT analysis seminars.

Table 2. ECB SWOT analysis

<i>Strengths</i>	<i>Weaknesses</i>
	Employees Recruitment and Placement
	Lack of Institutional Facilities
Strong Organizational Structure	Performance Management
Information Technology Systems and Infrastructure	Organizational Communication
Implementation of Higher Education Best Practices	Lack of Career Path
Qualified Faculty and Staff	Knowledge Management
Unique and Accredited Academic Programs	Lack of Purpose Built Campus
Strong Top Leadership with Regard to Quality, Institutional Expansion and Growth	Lack of academic research
Qualified Faculty and Staff	ECB Partnerships with Universities
Unique and Accredited Academic Programs	Student Retention Programs
	Training and Development
Commercial/Business Partnership	Strong Inflationary Pressure - leading to increased operational and other costs
Different Campuses for Both Genders	The decrease of the annual growth of income
Location of ECB Campuses	
Programs Offered in Flexible and Convenient Timings	
Financial Stability through Cost Leadership	
Strong External Communication	
Internal quality assurance for Teaching and Learning	
Institutional Ability to Adapt and Adopt Change	
<i>Opportunities for ECB</i>	<i>Threats for ECB</i>
Expansion of UAE's economy and potential for the higher education sector to grow	Ever-increasing Competition
Increased demand for more traditional and innovative academic programs	Regulatory Environment
Increased demand for lifelong learning opportunities	Newly established government institutions offering free education
Emiritization of jobs	Less number of students as compared to the educational institutions in UAE
Getting new programs accredited by UAE Ministry of Higher Education & Scientific Research	

5.2.3. ECB strategies

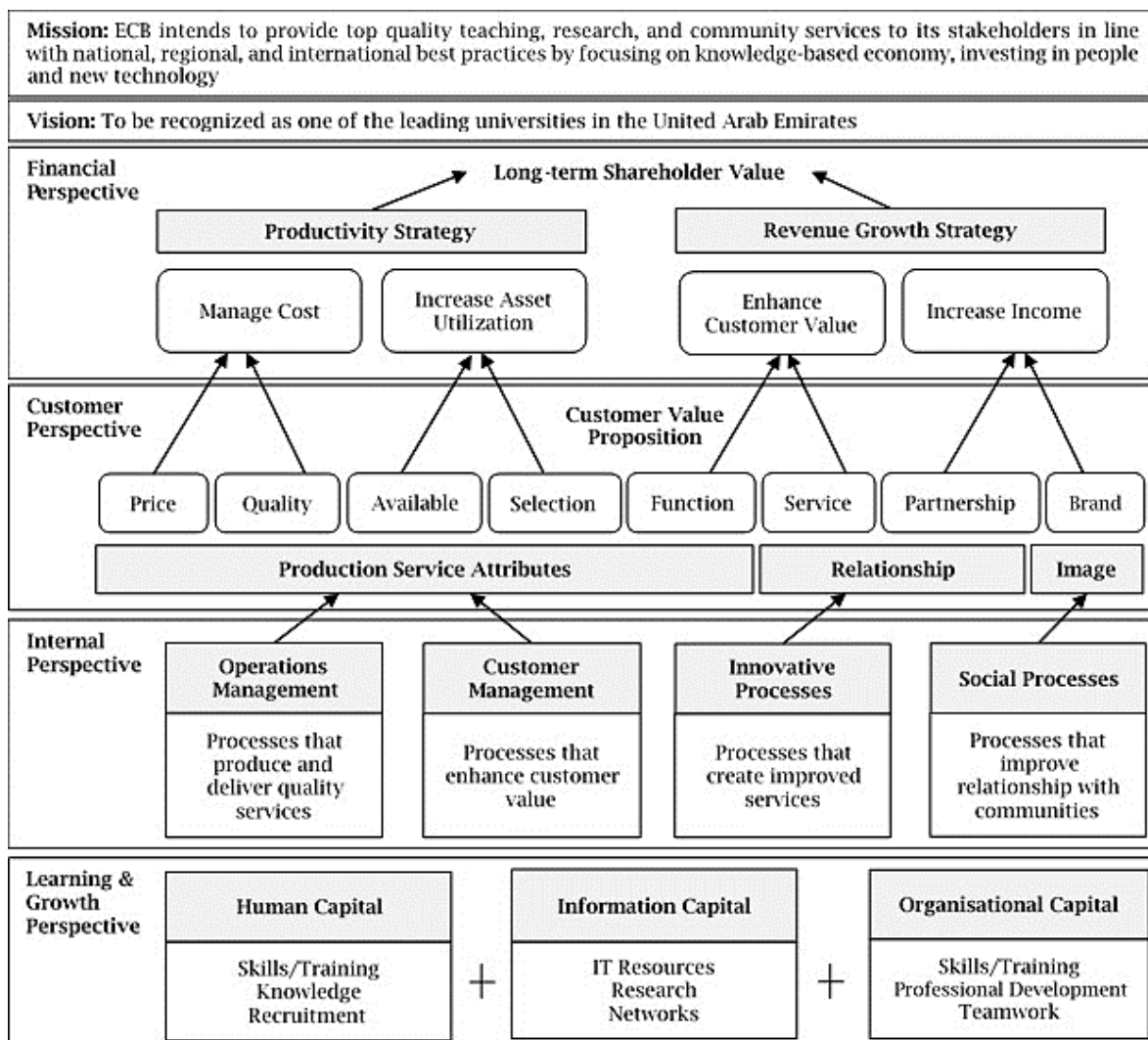
As a result of SWOT analysis conducted in the last step, ECB can make sure that its mission and vision fix problems such as employees' recruitment and placement, student retention, a decrease of the annual growth of income, increased costs, lack of partnerships, poor performance management, and so on. Having evaluated existing college resources, the same team gathered for a second working day to discuss various strategic themes in reference to college goals. The strategic themes of an organization come up with the general strategies. Strategic themes translate what managers consider as crucial and appropriate for the achievement of desired goals of the organization. Each organization has its own set of strategic themes for reaching outcomes and generating value for customers. ECB adopts a global strategy which consists of confirming and improving the positioning of the college as a nationally renowned establishment, dedicated to education and to the success of its students, and to promote research in various fields. Within this main strategy, the college of our study defines following major strategic themes:

- (1) Improving customer satisfaction and promoting the institutional image.
- (2) Building an outstanding learning environment.
- (3) Establishing an appropriate financial structure.
- (4) Revitalizing the competencies, partnerships and the quality of management.

5.3. Definition of strategic map

By applying the method of BSC, four strategic themes defined previously are translated into a strategic map (see figure below) representing a chain of cause-and-effect relations illustrating the connection between the four strategic perspectives (customer, financial, internal processes, and learning). More precisely, these relations allow a linkage between the expected results from strategy and the determinants that help to reach those strategic results. The strategy map shows how intangible assets are converted to the tangible customer and financial outcomes. We have to note that the utilization of this strategic map will help in the implementation of BSC.

Figure 3. ECB strategic map



Creation of an effective strategic map depends upon the mission of ECB at large. There would not be an exaggeration if it is suggested that mission statement of ECB offers a strong foundation for the creation of its strategic map. Figure 3 shows that in order to accomplish the vision and mission of the institution, there is need to think of financial, customers, internal process, and learning & growth perspectives. More specifically, the strategic map revealed that the financial perspective can be achieved by establishing an effective financial structure that must be developed by developing effective productivity and revenue growth strategy. Since the effective productivity strategy would be useful to manage cost and increase efficient utilization of the assets. Besides, the revenue growth strategy would help in increasing income and customer value. This wide perspective would be influential in terms of creating long-term shared values by creating an appropriate financial structure.

Furthermore, from the customer perspective, it can be seen that financial goals can be achieved if there is strong customer base with the high level of satisfaction. Since, the customer perspective of ECB covers students, faculty, staff, and other employees. Therefore, it is necessary to think from each customer perspective in order to achieve the customer value proposition, which consequently helps in achieving the other related goals and mission of the institutions. Since, the core customers of the institution are students, faculty members and staff, therefore, ECB should focus on improving production service attributes linked with the staff and faculty, relationship building capabilities associated with the students and community as a whole, and an image of its brand. The satisfaction of each group of customers is fundamental, therefore, it must be maintained by addressing their needs and meeting their expectation. For example, students whereas want to access quality education while at the same time they look towards the affordability. Therefore, this expectation of the students must be accomplished by maintaining the price and quality of the services as well as by supporting students through different value-added programs and support services. Furthermore, it can also be achieved by providing the programs and services that could lead to the competitive advantage. To achieve objectives associated with the customers, the satisfaction of the faculty also possesses equal importance. Therefore, ECB should maintain a good relationship with the teaching faculty by focusing on their continuous professional development as well as keep them motivated to achieve the excellence performance. Finally, it is equally important for the institution to develop a strong brand image, for that reason, ECB should develop and strengthen the relations with the community, higher quality students, and promote the institutional visibility and image in the society. Again, to accomplish this, it is essential to focus on improving the internal process of the institution.

The performance of the internal process at ECB is one of the core elements that contribute to the satisfied customer base. Therefore, the success of the internal process of ECB is based on four key areas which are operation management, customer management, innovation processes, and social processes. Altogether, these processes help in building an outstanding learning environment, that

will lead to the satisfaction of the customers. In particular, the operation management perspective of ECB is linked with the processes that are used to deliver the quality service. This can be achieved by conducting a comprehensive evaluation of all programs, services and operational units of the college on regular basis, striving for excellence via continuous improvement of quality, effectiveness, and responsiveness of all programs and services based on performance evaluation/measurement results. Similarly, the customer management is equally important in order to enhance the customer. Therefore, it should be improved by strengthening the academic and student support services that must be based on the quality and affordability. Besides, innovative processes are also fundamental to create improved services. Therefore, innovation must be considered in the area of employing and retaining the high-quality faculty and staff, improving the programs curricula and instructional effectiveness through effective research, and optimizing the use of the resources of the college effectively. Finally, the improvement in social processes is fundamental to improve the relationship with the communities so that positive brand image can be created. This can be accomplished by enrolling the quality students into ECB academic programs, and developing and strengthening the relations with the community.

Finally, come the learning and growth perspectives. It is considered as "the backbone of a successful scorecard because it involves employee skills and information systems" (Ilyasin and Zamroni, 2017). Indeed, from this perspective, it is found that the success of internal process highly depends on the efficiency and availability of the human capital, information capital and organizational capital. Human capital is concerned with the knowledge and skills of the human capital that can be achieved by recruiting quality human resource. Besides, information capital possesses equal importance as it helps in obtaining market trends and current knowledge necessary for bringing the innovation in the institution. For this purpose, the focus must be given towards develop strong information technology (IT) resources and structure, promoting a research environment, and through networking i.e. establishing the relations with senior colleges and universities. Finally, organizational capital must be improved by focusing on the professional development of the faculty and staff as well as by developing institutional facilities.

Hence, the analysis revealed that the success of ECB highly depends on the improvements in its financial performance, customer satisfaction, internal process and learning and growth practices. Since all these factors will equally contribute to the success of the college by bringing innovation and improvement in its process.

5.4. Balanced scorecard of ECB

Creation of a balanced scorecard requires a detailed understanding of strategic priorities of ECB, objectives, measures, targets, and initiatives. Since the vision of ECB is to be recognized as one of the leading universities in the UAE, it aims to offer high-quality teaching, and research services by focusing on the knowledge-based economy and investing in people and new technology. In the light of vision and

mission of ECB, following mentioned strategic priorities seem appropriate to be followed. It is important to note that organizations like ECB need to strive hard and come-up with efficient initiatives in order to achieve long-term strategic priorities. The following balanced scorecard elaborates how ECB can maximize its shareholder value, customer satisfaction, development of internal processes and organizational learning at large. Thus, ECB needs to be focused on achieving these objectives in order to become a leading university in the UAE.

Table 3 illustrates the balanced scorecard for ECB that determines the strategic priorities of the college from financial, customer, internal process,

and learning and growth perspectives. As it can be seen that the financial perspective of the college is based on establishing an appropriate financial structure with the goals to increase income, manage costs, increase assets utilization and enhance customer value. However, to which level the determined objectives are achieved, several key performance measures are developed that can be considered to measure the improvement in the financial performance. These measures may include a change in net margin, return on assets, return on equity, total cost to income ratio, and the ratio of students and faculty members.

Table 3. ECB balanced scorecard

<i>Strategic priorities</i>		<i>Objectives</i>	<i>Measures</i>
Financial	Establishing an appropriate financial structure	-To increase income -To manage costs -To increase asset utilization -To enhance customer value	-Net margin -Return on assets and equity -Total costs to income ratio -The ratio of students and faculty members
Customers	Improving customer satisfaction and promoting the institutional image	<i>Students:</i> -To provide the programs and services on basis of competitive advantage <i>Faculty and staff:</i> -To provide professional development opportunities for faculty and staff <i>Community:</i> -To promote institutional visibility and image	-Students/employees/staff or faculty satisfaction index -Retention rates of students, employees and faculty -Training rate of faculty and staff -Survey data from the higher education authorities -Market shares
Internal Process	Building an outstanding learning environment	-To improve continuously all programs and instructional effectiveness -To strengthen academic and student support services -To provide innovative and high-quality academic programs -To optimize the use of the resources of the college	-Occupancy ratio -Expense ratio -The progress of strategy deployment on the faculty level -Increase in the number of learning opportunities -Satisfaction of customers towards college facilities
Learning & Growth	Revitalizing the competencies, partnerships and the quality of management	-To develop relations with the community -To developing human resources -To develop IT resources -To promoting a research environment	-No of staff and faculty members -Retention rates of students, employees and faculty -Number of research publications -Increase participation in college in conferences, program and educational events

Similarly, the customer perspective of the college is based on improving the customer satisfaction and promoting the institutional image with the goals to provide the programs and services on basis of competitive advantage to students, provide professional development opportunities for faculty and staff, and promote institutional visibility and image. The success of accomplishment of these objectives can be measured through several key performance measures including customer's satisfaction index, retention rates of students, employees and faculty, training rate of faculty and staff, survey data from the higher education authorities as it will show standing of the institution in the market, and market shares.

Besides, the internal process perspective of the college is based on building an outstanding learning environment with the goals to improve all programs and instructional effectiveness, strengthen academic and student support services, provide innovative and high-quality academic programs, and optimize the use of college resources. The success of accomplishment of these objectives can be measured through several key performance measures including student's/staff occupancy ratio, expense ratio, the progress of strategy deployment on faculty level,

number of learning opportunities, and satisfaction of customers towards college facilities.

Finally, the learning and growth perspective of the college is based on revitalizing the competencies, partnerships and the quality of management with the goals to develop relations with the community, develop human resources, develop IT resources and promote a research environment. The success of accomplishment of these objectives can be measured through several key performance measures including a number of staff and faculty members in the college, retention rates of students, employees and faculty, a number of college's research publications, and increase participation of college in conferences, program and educational events.

Thus, in the light of the developed balance scorecard, it can be said that developed objectives and related action plan will help in fixing the problems such as employees' recruitment and placement, student retention, decrease of the annual growth of income, increased costs, lack of partnerships, poor performance management, and so on. Consequently, it will bring the positive change in the overall performance of the college in terms of achieving competitive advantage and maintaining a positive image in the UAE.

6. CONCLUSION

This study is an attempt to discuss the usefulness of BSC in the strategic management and performance evaluation of the higher education institutions especially with reference to the case of Emirates College of Business. By adopting case study methodology strategic issues, objectives and the relation between the objectives have been illustrated through a representation of the strategic map and BSC. Since, it has been concluded that to fix the problems faced by ECB such as employees' recruitment and placement, student retention, a decrease of the annual growth of income, increased costs, lack of partnerships, poor performance management can be dealt strategically through effective planning. The implementation and development of BSC in the emirate's context have been depicted that the BSC offers a holistic overview of important aspects of an organizational domain like the customer, financial, internal process, and learning and growth perspectives which ultimately help in achieving the overall mission and vision of the organization.

As it can be seen in the case of ECB that the mission of the college is to provide top quality teaching, research, and community services to its stakeholders in line with national, regional, and international best practices by focusing on the knowledge-based economy, investing in people and new technology. Therefore, ECB can accomplish its mission and vision by exploiting the benefits of BSC

by developing each strategic priorities and relevant goals that could help in addressing the discussion issues. This study has also been reflected that the college possess a range of strengths and opportunities which can be used to achieve the mentioned goals. However, at the same time, it has been granted a set of performance measures that can be used to measure the success of the developed goals and objectives.

No doubt that this study presents a basis for a considerable further research related to the development of the BSC of private higher education institutions in UAE environment. However, at least 2 main research limitations can be found. Firstly, the research deals with a single case study in UAE which does not allow any result generalization. Secondly, the study refers to the higher education private sector and ignores public sector. The difference is significative between the 2 sectors. While the customer perspective typically represents the main objective in the public sector, the finance perspective is considered as the main perspective in the private sector. So, it is suggested in further research to conduct multiple case studies instead of one to obtain results that have significative value. Also, it is suggested to perform a comparative study between the use of BSC in private higher education entities and its use in public higher education organizations to highlight the difference between the two BSC structures. Finally, it would be interesting to conduct investigations on organizational personnel attitudes about the functioning and the use of the BSC.

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