



Exploring the Evolving Paradigm of Strategic Planning in Education: A Comprehensive Literature Review

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Abstract— This review explores how strategic planning in education impacts school performance in relation to the goals, vision, and objectives established by the Department of Education. It examines the effects of strategic planning on school operations and identifies factors contributing to the success or failure of plan implementation. In the academic sector, both long-term and short-term implementation plans require the application of strategic planning concepts by school leaders. Currently, the Department of Education faces numerous challenges, problems, concerns, and issues that need addressing. The objective of this review is to determine how strategic planning is applied in schools and its effects on performance and operations, aiming for continuous quality improvement in the education sector. Additionally, the review seeks to highlight the significance of strategic planning within school organizations. Relevant literature was reviewed and analyzed using the narrative synthesis approach. Strategic planning is a systematic process that sets ambitions for a school's future and determines the best ways to achieve them, connecting three key areas: mission, vision, and planning. It is essential for setting students up for success in K-12 education and beyond. A robust strategic plan articulates a shared vision, mission, and values, increases engagement, and provides a framework to meet students' needs, enabling them to reach their full potential.

Keywords— strategic planning, education, school performance, effects, school operations, applied.

I. INTRODUCTION

In the Department of Education in the Philippines, challenges and changes are inevitable and demand immediate attention. One of the most significant trials faced by education was the sudden onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, which disrupted face-to-face learning nationwide. In response, memorandums and orders were issued to schools on implementing the continuity of learning, adhering to safety protocols to sustain education. In this context, strategic planning became crucial. According to Flanders (2020), strategic planning is essential for helping educational institutions respond to and prepare for obstacles that hinder educational progress.

Another major challenge in the education system is the lack of resources and infrastructure in many schools, especially in rural areas. The deficiency of basic amenities, textbooks, and teaching materials puts learners and teachers at a significant disadvantage, affecting the quality of education.

In the Department of Education, reports like the National School Building Inventory (NSBI) and the Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) in Schools Program are submitted annually to aid in planning, budgeting, resource allocation, and decision-making. Under these programs, strategic planning plays a vital role. This review will examine the effects of implementing strategic planning in these contexts and explore the factors that influence the success of strategic plans.



Strategic planning has been a concern for both private and public organizations. Failure to engage in strategic planning can lead to poor performance and effectiveness within an organization (Michaela, 2011). Currently, strategic management is a significant component of organizations globally, with both private and public sectors utilizing strategic planning (Aligholi & Gheshlagh, 2014). The increased importance placed on achieving higher performance levels makes strategic planning essential in public-sector organizations (Poister, Pitts, & Edwards, 2010). Effective management through strategic planning strengthens organizational performance via effective decision-making and systematic strategy implementation (Zaei, Yarahmadzahi, & Abtin, 2013).

This study will also explore the applications of strategic planning in schools and its effects on their performance. In the Department of Education, strategic planning is employed to set the vision, mission, goals, and objectives of the organization. However, achieving all set goals is not guaranteed, as challenges with critical outcomes are expected in every plan. Successes and failures are part of plan implementation, but failures can be minimized through strategic planning that involves both internal and external human resources.

Previous studies, such as those by Yaakob, Musa, Habibi, and Othman (2019), highlighted the importance of strategic planning in promoting sustainable school development and linking organizational goals with institutional activities. However, Jalal and Murray (2019) emphasized that negligence and lack of experience in applying accurate strategic planning processes can hinder educational improvement.

These insights underscore the importance of strategic planning in enhancing school performance. The School Improvement Plan (SIP), a long-term plan developed collaboratively by all stakeholders, envisions the school's future over the next five years. The Annual Implementation Plan (AIP), derived from the SIP, is a yearly plan ensuring alignment with the department's vision and mission to develop learners to their fullest potential.

Chang (2008) describes a strategic plan as a living document that includes policy direction, implementation strategies, actions, benchmarks for implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and an expenditure framework. This plan ensures that learners receive quality education in terms of holistic development and academic achievement. Strategic planning entails analyzing strategic issues, prioritizing, planning, and implementing solutions to address these issues, thereby ensuring continuous improvement.

According to an Aileron (2011) Forbes article, having a plan for the sake of having a plan is a common cause of strategic plan failure. Successful strategic planning requires eligible leadership capable of making tough, development-oriented decisions. Poor leadership, ignorance of market realities, lack of accountability, and setting unrealistic goals can lead to failure. The school manager, akin to a ship's captain, must possess knowledge of school operations and environment to effectively implement plans and projects.

Wells & Doherty (1994) note that strategic planning not only creates an organization's future but also provides a framework for improvement efforts. Strategic planning structures organizational plans, guiding timelines, evaluations, and assignments, which aid in benchmarking and monitoring performance (Moody, n.d.). It is the school head's responsibility to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of new plans.



II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

School performance is a significant concern for learners, parents, teachers, and authorities. Various authors concur that academic performance results from learning facilitated by the teacher and produced by the student. Martinez (2007) defines academic performance from a humanistic perspective as "the product given by the students and it is usually expressed through school grades" (p. 34). Similarly, Caballero et al. (2007) view academic performance as the attainment of goals, achievements, and objectives set within a program or course. The aim of academic performance is to achieve educational goals, primarily learning. Several components constitute the complex unit called performance, including learning processes promoted by the school, which involve transforming a given state into a new state by integrating cognitive and structural elements. Performance varies according to circumstances, organic and environmental conditions, which influence skills and experiences. The overall performance of a school depends significantly on the effectiveness of strategic planning.

Strategic planning in schools follows a basic model: creating a vision for the school, setting goals, determining the approach, and implementing the program. This process typically involves three phases: preparatory mechanisms, which include meetings with all involved parties, identifying problems and solutions through SWOT analysis, designating project managers, listing potential partners, and preparing project proposals; implementation, which involves listing required materials, conducting and implementing programs and projects, and monitoring and evaluating these efforts; and evaluation and celebration, which gathers and analyzes data from project implementations, disseminates successes to partners, celebrates achievements with stakeholders, and recognizes their contributions. Mary King (2023) emphasizes that school's benefit from a well-communicated and executed strategic plan, which keeps everyone informed about strategic goals and how individual actions contribute to these goals. This collaborative approach enables parents, staff, community members, and stakeholders to work towards a common vision. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Department of Education implemented the Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan (BE-LCP) under Secretary Leonor Briones, addressing challenges posed by the pandemic.

Smith (2022) suggests that strategic planning should involve more than just primary decision-makers; it should include community and stakeholder feedback to develop a beneficial and targeted plan. Engaging stakeholders and the community show that their input is valued and helps create a supportive environment. Before each school year, the school organizes its Parents-Teachers Association (PTA) to discuss issues and solutions related to the school program and ensure parents' cooperation. The PTA also supports the school's strategic plans, particularly in addressing resource and infrastructure deficiencies. Research shows that parents significantly influence their child's academic performance. Studies by Anfara, Jr. & Mertens (2008), Becker & Epstein (1982), and Aronson (1996) highlight that the educational level and habits of parents, family size, and socio-emotional environment are crucial factors. The University of Minnesota Extension outlines an eight 'P' philosophy for effective school-family partnerships: priority, planning, proactive and persistent communication, personalization, positive communication style, practical ideas, program monitoring, and process. These elements contribute to fostering a collaborative and supportive environment that enhances school performance.

The strategic planning process in schools is critical for ensuring that educational goals are met effectively. Mary King (2023) emphasizes that a well-communicated and executed strategic plan benefits schools by keeping



everyone informed of strategic goals and demonstrating how their actions contribute to these goals. This approach encourages parents, staff, community members, and stakeholders to collaborate towards a common vision. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Department of Education, under Secretary Leonor Briones, introduced the Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan (BE-LCP) to address the challenges posed by the pandemic. The BE-LCP encompassed essential requirements such as learning competencies, delivery modalities, health standards, and special activities like Brigada Eskwela and Oplan Balik Eskwela.

Achievelt highlights the importance of involving more than just primary decision-makers in strategic planning; community and stakeholder feedback is crucial for developing a beneficial and targeted plan. Engaging stakeholders and the community not only values their input but also helps create a supportive environment. Before each school year, the school organizes its Parents-Teachers Association (PTA) to discuss issues and solutions related to the school program and ensure parents' cooperation. The PTA supports the school's strategic plans, particularly in addressing resource and infrastructure deficiencies.

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Furthermore, the University of Minnesota Extension outlines an eight 'P' philosophy for effective school-family partnerships: priority, planning, proactive and persistent communication, personalization, positive communication style, practical ideas, program monitoring, and process. These elements contribute to fostering a collaborative and supportive environment that enhances school performance.

Additionally, Wells & Doherty (1994) note that strategic planning not only creates an organization's future but also establishes a framework for continuous improvement efforts. This structured approach guides timelines, evaluations, and assignments, which are essential for benchmarking and monitoring performance. Strategic planning ensures that educational institutions remain adaptable and resilient in the face of challenges.

For instance, during the implementation of the BE-LCP, the Department of Education relied on feedback from various stakeholders, including the Philippine Forum for Inclusive Quality Basic Education, the Chairs of the House and Senate Committees on Basic Education, and extensive surveys from teachers and the public. This inclusive approach facilitated a comprehensive response to the educational disruptions caused by the pandemic.

Lastly, strategic planning in education involves a comprehensive approach that integrates vision setting, goal determination, methodical implementation, and continuous evaluation. By involving all stakeholders, from parents to community members, and maintaining clear communication, schools can create a supportive and effective learning environment.

The strategic efforts made during the COVID-19 pandemic highlight the importance of adaptability and inclusive planning in overcoming significant challenges. Through strategic planning, schools can ensure that their educational goals are met and that students receive a quality education, regardless of the circumstances.

III. METHODOLOGY

This review employed a comprehensive search strategy using applications such as Google and Perplexity AI to collect data addressing the research questions. Both primary and secondary sources were utilized to ensure a robust analysis. Primary data was collected directly to answer the research questions, while secondary data, previously gathered by other researchers, provided additional support and context for the study.

The authors undertook a thorough process of identifying, reading, and analyzing a variety of related literature and articles pertinent to the topic. This involved critical evaluation of both primary and secondary sources, focusing on their credibility, relevance, and potential biases. Proper citation practices were meticulously followed to avoid plagiarism and appropriately credit the original authors.

The data collection process included sourcing original data and referencing citations directly from the research itself. Additionally, ideas and information were derived from related articles identified through the search applications. By integrating these diverse sources of data, the authors were able to back up their study comprehensively.

In summary, the methodology involved a systematic approach to data collection and analysis, ensuring that both primary and secondary sources were critically evaluated and properly cited, thereby enhancing the credibility and depth of the review.

IV. DISCUSSIONS

This research employed various methodologies, including data analysis, descriptive statistics, models, and situational analysis. To present how strategic planning aids school performance, a framework of strategic planning was utilized, outlined in a table to guide the planning process step by step. Questionnaires were also used to gather data.

The implementation of plans within the School Improvement Plan (SIP) and the Annual Implementation Plan (AIP) necessitated strategic planning. According to DepED Order 44 s. 2015, titled Guidelines on the Enhanced School Improvement Planning (SIP) Process and School Report Card (SRC), standards are set for conducting the planning process at the school level. Additionally, Republic Act 9155 – Governance of Basic Education Act of 2001 (Section 6.2.4) stipulates that the School Head has the authority, accountability, and responsibility for developing the School Education Program and School Improvement Plan (as cited by San Miguel, 2019).

Rooted in these guidelines, the school developed both the School Improvement Plan and the Annual Implementation Plan, based on the Basic Education Development Plan.

Collaboration with internal and external stakeholders was essential. For instance, to address the challenge revealed by the Mathematics Diagnostic Test, which highlighted a significant percentage of low-performing learners struggling with the mastery of fundamental operations, a targeted project was initiated.

Recognizing that every learner possesses different abilities and thus demonstrates varied achievements, as noted by Barr and Tagg (1995), it became urgent to provide low-achieving pupils with more opportunities to learn



mathematics at their own pace. Through a series of meetings with the teachers, a Master Teacher, highly adept in Mathematics, was appointed to lead this initiative. A project called MATH LAKBAY was developed, and after submitting and receiving approval for the project proposal and action plan, it was implemented.

The study demonstrated a significant improvement in the Mean Percentage Score (MPS) for Mathematics over each quarter.

After seven months of implementation, the school's average MPS in Mathematics increased from 61.69 in the first quarter to 62.21 in the second quarter, and 67.83 in the third quarter. This improvement clearly reflected the positive impact of strategic planning and targeted intervention on student performance in Mathematics.

Table 1: Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI), PAGTATASA SA PAGBASA SA FILIPINO, Taong Panuruan 2022-2023, (Ika-3 hanggang 6 na Baitang)

Baitang	Populasyon ng Mag-aaral	Blg. Ng Pumas sa GST	Bilang ng Mag-aaral na natasa		Malaya		Pampagkatuto		Pagkabigo		Hindi Makabasa	
			Panimula	Panapos	Panimula	Panapos	Panimula	Panapos	Panimula	Panapos	Panimula	Panapos
3	48	38	48	48	14	18	27	29	6	1	1	0
4	65	28	65	56	3	28	17	37	42	2	3	0
5	67	44	67	64	6	44	25	15	35	5	1	0
6	48	20	48	49	4	18	18	26	25	5	1	0

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Table 2: Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI), READING ASSESSMENT IN ENGLISH, SY 2022-2023, (Grades 4-6)

Grade	Total Learner Population	NO. Of Learners who passed GST	No. of Learners Assessed		Independent		Instructional		Frustration		Nonreader	
			Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
4	65	30	65	62	10	23	11	40	40	4	4	0
5	67	38	67	64	6	40	31	19	39	6	1	0
6	48	15	48	49	1	17	10	26	36	6	1	0

Recognizing that every learner possesses different abilities and thus demonstrates varied achievements, as noted by Barr and Tagg (1995), it became urgent to provide low-achieving pupils with more opportunities to learn mathematics at their own pace. Through a series of meetings with the teachers, a Master Teacher, highly adept in Mathematics, was appointed to lead this initiative. A project called MATH LAKBAY was developed, and after submitting and receiving approval for the project proposal and action plan, it was implemented.

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The PHIL-IRI pre-test at the beginning of the school year and the post-test at the end revealed ongoing challenges, including the presence of non-readers and fast readers who struggled with comprehension due to insufficient vocabulary knowledge. This issue was identified by the teacher. In collaboration with teachers and parents, data were presented, and strategies were developed to address this concern.

One strategy involved creating a WORD WALL where words with correct spelling and meanings were displayed. Another strategy, the 12:30 habit, was implemented wherein after lunch, pupils stayed in the classroom to read words with their meanings and engage in remedial reading. Language experts and researchers emphasize the importance of vocabulary knowledge and its close relationship to reading abilities (Gardner, 2013; Nation, 2013). In the intermediate grades, pupils were advised to bring dictionaries to find the meanings of difficult words.

These strategies were implemented effectively, as evidenced by the improved post-test results. Studies highlight the significant role of vocabulary knowledge in reading and listening skills, noting that insufficient vocabulary can make learners reluctant to engage with these skills (Grabe & Stoller, 2018). The implementation of suggested strategies during planning also proved beneficial. Students with limited vocabularies or word-learning strategies tend to struggle throughout their educational careers, leading to ongoing frustration and failure (Khany & Khosravian, 2014). Moreover, vocabulary levels are often viewed as indicators of access to information and overall education (Beck & McKeown, 2007).



A program focused on remedial reading for primary grades was also planned. A recent study found that remedial reading positively impacts students' academic, social, psychological, economic, and job development (Yolak, Kiziltepe, & Seggie, 2019). Systematic, differentiated teaching based on students' cognitive profiles was emphasized (Hale et al., 2016). These studies demonstrate the effectiveness of remedial programs in raising academic achievement.

Teachers conducted remediation activities after class, focusing on struggling readers using the Marunko approach and basic sight words. The school's reading program, Project ARAYAT, a collaborative effort involving all stakeholders, aimed to assist struggling readers. In this project, primary grades focused on Filipino, while intermediate grades concentrated on English.

Parental involvement also played a crucial role. Some parents helped teach beginning reading after lunch, covering letter sounds and using charts provided by teachers to teach CVC and consonant blending. Various studies have explored the impact of parental involvement on student academic achievement, highlighting its protective influence and effectiveness in fostering academic success (Chen & Gregory, 2010; Grant & Wong, 2004; Hango, 2007; Jeynes, 2005a; Lee & Bowen, 2006; Somers et al., 2011; Strayhorn, 2010; Trask-Tate & Cunningham, 2010; Jeynes, 2010; Mattingly et al., 2002; LaRocque et al., 2011; Padgett, 2006; Anderson & Minke, 2007; Barnyak & McNelly, 2009; DePlanty et al., 2007; Hornby & Lafaele, 2011; Tekin, 2011; Park et al., 2011; Pomerantz et al., 2007).

Strategic planning in schools has proven highly beneficial. According to Mary King (2023), strategic planning articulates a shared vision, mission, and values; organizes schools, staff, and time effectively; defines success measures; aids in decision-making, responsiveness, and innovation; increases communication and engagement; and keeps everyone in the school—from teachers to administrators—connected.

III. CONCLUSION

Strategic planning in education significantly impacts school performance by aligning stakeholders with a shared vision, mission, and values, promoting effective decision-making, and enhancing student success. Research indicates that strategic planning positively influences student achievement by guiding districts in setting goals that support their core beliefs and mission. Moreover, strategic planning ensures targeted efforts to address specific needs and problems within schools, leading to evidence-based strategies that enhance measurable outcomes. Effective strategic planning fosters collaboration among educational partners, including teachers, staff, students, parents, and the community, creating a cohesive approach to achieving academic success. Involving diverse stakeholders in the planning process and implementing goals through distributed leadership enhances student achievement and overall performance.

Attaining success in strategic planning in education involves several key steps. First, ensuring alignment among all members is crucial. School managers must direct members towards shared goals, ensuring unified progress. Collaborative effort towards project success is vital. Communicating the plan and the programs or projects to be implemented is essential. This includes seeking potential donors and partners, such as local government units, the

School Governing Council, alumni, and other stakeholders. Lastly, having a holistic view of the district is important, which involves identifying potential donors for collaboration.

In a world of rapid change and numerous challenges, from rising socio-economic inequality to environmental issues and mental health concerns, strategic planning in schools can harness education as a powerful tool to effect change. Nurturing a love of learning, goodness, creativity, and ingenuity equips students with the tools needed to navigate these challenges. As Nelson Mandela said, "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world."

A strategic plan inspires the whole community to take action and drive change. Making the school's goals or vision achievable with an actionable plan, rather than abstract, engages people and fosters ownership of their roles in the process. A strategic plan can capture the hearts and minds of everyone in the community, allowing participation in something larger, providing purpose and direction. Committing to a larger purpose is a significant predictor of happiness, fostering a thriving school community and leading to positive outcomes such as high teacher retention and student engagement. The collaborative process of creating a strategic plan itself can have powerful effects on the school community, promoting unity and shared purpose.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

To maximize the positive impact of strategic planning in education, it is crucial to articulate a shared vision, mission, and values to set students up for success. Organizing schools, staff, and time effectively improves efficiency and streamlines processes. Defining how success is measured aids in decision-making processes. Enhancing communication, engagement, and collaboration among stakeholders is essential for maintaining connection, accountability, and a focus on student success.

However, it is also important to acknowledge the potential downsides of strategic planning. Strategies may not always work as intended, and lack of commitment can lead to wasted effort, ineffective plans, and lackluster outcomes. Daunting decisions may limit possibilities and create fear among executives.

Despite these challenges, educational strategic planning remains necessary for successful institutional operation. A strategic plan helps improve various aspects of an educational institution through intentional goal-setting and initiative implementation, guiding students, staff, and the community toward a better future.

All schools should have a strategic plan. Without one, key stakeholders (parents, students, staff, and the community) lack direction. With a strategic plan, everyone works towards the same vision, aiming to reach the same goals and building commitment to the organization.

Strategic planning in public schools must be taken seriously to adapt to changes in the current environment. Schools can set high goals and focus on achieving objectives through strategic planning. Enhancing the standards of educational personnel and educators should be a priority, as they play a crucial role in achieving educational excellence. Training and development of educators should be integral to strategic planning to ensure they become the most effective individuals in the field of education.



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