

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats in Higher Education A SWOT Analysis of Misurata University. Libya

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Abstract

Many schools in Libya are putting their best efforts into improving the quality of education and training as well as research in all the ways possible. To enhance the quality of teaching while taking into account all feasible options and challenges about the university's strategy and possible research in the future. Business strategy means to move ahead, leverage assets and limit liabilities, capitalize on any opportunity that is presented, and contain a threat as planned. The purpose of this paper is to define these elements, to discuss them within the frames of SWOT analysis, and to provide several suggestions for Libyan educational institutions.

Keywords: SWOT analysis: A strategic planning tool of Misurata University with specific reference to education and higher education.

Introduction

A nation or a country can grow significantly with the help of its human capital. Human capital can only be acquired through proper education, this is the reality. Better-educated people are more productive as citizens because they can make better use of modern technologies and resources. Therefore, a country's expansion and development are closely linked to its human capital (Bordoloi, 2018). Higher education plays an important role in the country's economic and social development and its role in human capital development cannot be denied. Accordingly, educated people participate better in the socio-economic development of the country. (Kromydas, 2017) . The main function of strategic planning is to understand the situation through SWOT analysis. SWOT analysis serves a fundamental role in strategic planning that helps in scanning the institutional environment (Ahmad et al., 2017)

Misurata University is now one of the best universities in Libya with great achievements in the teaching and research disciplines. As with most universities in the country, it has several issues including funding, infrastructure, and resource availability. To get insight into these challenges and how they can be dealt with, Misurata University was analyzed using SWOT analysis. These areas of interest include the analysis of the SWOT matrix for Misurata University with a focus on Libya's higher education environment. The opportunities for the university are its programs' diversification, up-to-date learning amenities, and well-developed research potential. However, some of the issues that the university has include inadequate resources, no technology, and fewer resources since the university is located in a remote area.

The opportunities for Misurata University include increasing enrollment, expanding academic programs, and establishing international partnerships and collaborations. However, the ongoing political instability and economic challenges in Libya present

several threats to the university, including brain drain, limited funding, and competition from other universities in the country.

The SWOT analysis highlights the need for continued efforts to improve higher education in Libya and support institutions like Misurata University to provide quality education and research opportunities for students and faculty. Addressing the challenges faced by the university will require investment in infrastructure and technology, government support, and international partnerships. By doing so, Misurata University can continue to play a vital role in the development of higher education and research in Libya.

Literature Review

Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in higher education: a SWOT analysis of Allama Iqbal Open University Islamabad (Pakistan) (Nasreen & Afzal, 2020)

The purpose of this research is to investigate the SWOT analysis of higher education which is concerned with the distance learning system in Pakistan. This study was a mixed one in terms of its design, though the actual research method employed in this study was classified under qualitative research. The target population was all the alumni research students who are currently studying or have previously done their masters and /or doctorate levels at the Allama Iqbal Open University in Pakistan as well as all master's and /or doctorate level teachers associated with these students. In the study, the researcher employed the use of the stratified random sampling method. In this study, data were collected by administration of a questionnaire and by the use of an interview method. To be specific, all the questionnaire data were numeric values while the interview data was in the form of narrative responses. As a result, the critical qualitative method had to be combined in the study with the quantitative method or quantitative and qualitative methods.

Several studies highlight the strengths of Misurata University, including its strong reputation for academic excellence and research, a diverse range of academic programs, modern facilities, and strong research culture and capabilities (UNESCO, 2017; El-Mahjoub, 2019). However, the university also faces several challenges, including limited funding, lack of technology infrastructure, and limited access to resources due to its remote location (UNESCO, 2017; Al-Mahjoub, 2018; Al-Azizi, 2019).

The demand for higher education in Libya is increasing due to a growing population and a need for skilled workers in a changing job market (UNESCO, 2017). However, higher education in Libya faces challenges related to limited funding, infrastructure, and access to resources. Ongoing political instability and conflict in Libya also impact higher education institutions, including Misurata University, by limiting funding and operations, brain drain of highly qualified personnel, and competition from other universities (Al-Mahjoub, 2018; UNESCO, 2017).

Despite these challenges, there are opportunities for Misurata University to improve and grow. For example, there is potential for increased funding from the Libyan government, establishment of international partnerships and collaborations, expansion of academic programs, and increased enrollment (UNESCO, 2017; Al-Azizi, 2019).

In summary, the literature review highlights the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of Misurata University in the context of higher education in Libya. To address the challenges facing the university, investment in infrastructure and technology, government support, and international partnerships are crucial. By doing so, Misurata University can continue to provide quality education and research opportunities for students and faculty and play a vital role in the development of higher education in Libya.

(Artemi & Ajit, 2009)

Libyan educational institutions promote the quality of teaching and research in a variety of ways. E-learning is one of the possible methods to improve educational standards (e-learning, virtual learning, distributed learning, online and networked learning). E-learning is characterized by internet-based education where contact between students and teachers can be through video conferencing, teleconferencing, email, bulletin board, chat, etc. Many universities are planning to implement an e-learning model shortly after seeing the positive benefits of this method. However, the effectiveness of an e-learning system depends on many factors related to the students, the teachers, the course content created, the delivery method, and the environment (delivery model). Before setting up e-learning, analyzing various elements is crucial.

1. Higher education

Since the last decade technical, demographic, and monetary scenarios have been under progressive transformations in higher education (Sharifi, 2012). These global influences included globalization, advances in IT and learning technologies as well as additional government funding which was identified to be the causes of the changes that revolutionized the purpose of universities in today's society. According to Sharma & Singh, (2010). The idea of this alteration produced several problems (Akhavan Kazemi, 2005). To tackle these problems and perform strategic management in the context of the higher education industry many academics use SWOT analyses

.Higher education in Libya

University and Higher Vocational Education

The students who finish specialized secondary education can enroll in one of the faculties of the university appropriate to the specialized secondary certificate they attained. Tertiary education is free, only the person who goes to Open University or any other private tertiary institution needs to pay tuition fees. Libyan higher education is still facing several challenges such as low funding, scarcity of teaching and academic staff, and lack of technology and resource facilities because of the geographical location of the country (UNESCO, 2017) Tamtam et al., 2011 These have worsened by the conflict and political instability that have enhanced the brain drain of qualified professionals which has affected the quality and the access to higher education in Libya as mentioned by Abdulrahim, (2018).

Still, there exists a window of chance to enhance higher learning institutions in Libya amid these challenges. Collaboration and partnerships with other institutions in other countries can assist in tapping into the strengths of the other institutions and enhance the quality of education and research in Libya (Kumari, 2021). Population as well as the job market, has expanded and there is also an increased call for more course offerings since there are establishing new fields academicians need to address then need (UNESCO, 2017).

In order to overcome the challenges associated with higher education in Libya, it is essential to strengthen continuous education and research investment, government and international support, and effective partnership and cooperation (UNESCO, 2017). Also, the accreditation and quality assurance reforms are within the regulations whereby such a system can be developed to enhance the quality of higher education in Libya.

The education system in Libya has seen rapid development shape its future. It has significantly improved and advanced compared to other developing countries (Tamtam et al., 2011), The free aspect of it has made more students enroll and take up studies. However, this rapid structural advancement has come with framework pressures that seem to be weighing heavily on it. Socio-cultural issues have also weighed on the system and in the past saw the ban of foreign-imposed barring

universities from teaching foreign languages. The education system should enlighten learners to the need for peace and security. Due to various social problems observed today, learners should be advised and taught about human rights and the importance of building a peaceful community of mutuality is a vital tenet in today's global affairs. Learners should learn the way of dialogue, and peaceful means of conflict resolution, and develop capacities to address socio-politics in a way that shows a sense of civilization. This will enable them to realize their place in the society and the Libyan place in the international community. (Tamtam et al., 2011)

2. SWOT analysis

SWOT Analysis for Schools, Colleges, and Universities is a tool that guides school leaders, management professors, and staff involved in this analysis and tells them what is effective and what is less effective in the educational environment system. SWOT analysis is used for all planning activities that can influence future financial, planning, and management decisions of educational institutions. (Morrison, 2018).

Methodology

Study population and analysis(SWOT)

The university includes 20 faculties

It contains 152 majors, And the members of the teaching staff are 1236, It contains 12 scientific journals of various specializations, and It has 24,591 students.

SWOT analysis method of Misurata University in Libya:

- 1- Population of the work: The population study for SWOT analysis consists of Misurata University (faculty – employees - students. Therefore, in undertaking this analysis a more nuanced review of the overarching higher education infrastructure within Libya will also be considered such as government policies and regulations on an institutional level from both mainland UK-based institutions (private sector) to those institutes with strong affiliations or direct links.
- 2- Collection of data: Various sources will be used to collect data for SWOT analysis including reports from academics and industry, government-issued publications as well as interviews which would involve feedback given by key stakeholders. To answer the above-discussed questions, a SWOT analysis will be used for data analysis as regards Misurata University's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in Libyan higher education.
- 3- Strengths: The strengths of Misurata University will be based on its reputation, variety of academic programs offered at different levels, and availability of facilities within reach, as well as research readiness. Those partnerships with other tertiary institutions will also be taken into account when the analysis is undertaken.
- 4- Weaknesses: weaknesses will be determined as well for Misurata University based on inadequate finances, lack of information technology infrastructure, and the difficulty in accessing resources because of its disposition. It will also break down the university's operational and institutional struggles as well as what might have precluded it from keeping pace with others in its backyard.
- 5- Opportunities: The opportunities dimension will be determined by whether there is an opportunity for more funding from the Libyan government, as well as other elements like developing international partnerships with established institutions and/or new programs of collaborations; increasing or even expanding academic programs among others. It will also examine the evolving job market and demands for more workers in specific fields.

- 6- Threats: The threats that Misurata University are how the political turmoil and conflict in Libya a risk, as well as due to lack of funds to convince competent cadres Ppmalah University education move outside from another place or competition with other universities within the country Analyses will also reveal

Table 1 Strengths and weaknesses of the university's internal environment

| Strengths and weaknesses of the university's internal environment | Strengths | weaknesses |
|---|--|---|
| The internal environment of Misurata University | <p>Having a vision, mission, and goals for the university.</p> <p>There is interest from the university in the academic programs and their outputs.</p> <p>The university deals with many parties and has internal agreements</p> <p>And external needs to be activated.</p> <p>Availability of several faculty members with a high degree of</p> <p>Scientific and academic competence holding qualifications from</p> <p>Prestigious international universities in various disciplines.</p> <p>There are twelve scientific journals issued by the court University institutions.</p> <p>Strong academic programs and faculty members in several fields, including medicine, engineering, and law.</p> <p>A diverse student body representing different regions and backgrounds in Libya.</p> <p>A relatively large campus with good infrastructure and facilities, including modern classrooms, labs, and libraries.</p> <p>A commitment to community service and outreach through</p> | <p>The university infrastructure is not suitable</p> <p>Poor rehabilitation and development programs for faculty members and staff.</p> <p>Poor communication with the private sector to market programs and activities</p> <p>University research. A severe shortage of laboratories, scientific laboratories, and supplies</p> <p>Operation in the college departments of the university.</p> <p>Insufficiency of financial resources and allocated electronic equipment for the university.</p> <p>Poor support for scientific research and linking it to the requirements of society and labor market needs.</p> <p>Poor use of modern technology in the educational and administrative process.</p> <p>The delay in obtaining university faculties for institutional and program accreditation</p> <p>To date, this affects the competitiveness of the university.</p> <p>Limited resources and funding, affect the quality of education and research opportunities.</p> |

| | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|--|
| | various programs and initiatives. | Inadequate technology infrastructure and insufficient digital resources for online learning. A lack of academic and research partnerships with international universities and institutions. A tendency towards bureaucracy and lack of flexibility in decision-making processes. |
|--|-----------------------------------|--|

Table 2 Opportunities and threats to the external environment surrounding the university

| Opportunities and threats to the external environment surrounding the university | opportunities | Threats |
|--|---|---|
| The external environment, Misurata University | Increasing numbers of students from other regions and cities wishing in studying at the university. The state's continuous encouragement to develop higher education and universities his affiliate The presence of acceptance from the community for public universities and the rejection of the system Private universities in terms of quality and high cost of education with it. The development and growth of local communities represent an | Delay in meeting quality requirements and standards. Lack of reform plans from the Ministry of Higher Education and Research Scientific. The reluctance of many deportees who are sent to study abroad about returning to the country. The student's orientation to certain majors and not others because of Weak guidance and correct awareness of schools and culture public prevailing in the country. Lack of job opportunities available in various disciplines for graduates University in the region. Political and economic fluctuations of the state and the possibility of recession General budgets. Accelerated technological development. Political instability and security concerns could affect the operations of the university and the safety of students and faculty members. The brain drain of talented students and faculty members to other countries could weaken the university's academic reputation and potential for growth. |

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|--|---|--|
| | <p>important area to contain University outputs are distinguished by competencies and skills.</p> <p>Recently, continuous support for the development of Libyan universities has increased from the European Union, the African Union, and others</p> <p>The potential for increased funding and support from the government and international donors, especially in areas such as research and innovation.</p> <p>The opportunity to develop new and innovative academic programs that meet the needs of the local and regional job market.</p> <p>The potential for collaboration with other universities and institutions in Libya and the wider region to enhance academic and research opportunities.</p> <p>The potential to leverage technology and online learning to expand access to education and reach more students.</p> | <p>Competition from other universities in Libya and the region in attracting talented students and faculty members.</p> <p>The potential for changes in government policy or regulations that could affect the university's operations and autonomy.</p> |
|--|---|--|

Discussion

The points you can stand on to work for strengthening them are

Preparing to launch university infrastructure, material base for scientific research, and its support by making laboratories, laboratory equipment, and devices as well as improving administrative apparatus.

Create regular training sessions for faculty and staff, and track all courses to ensure participants are doing what they learn in coursework on a timely basis.

Reach out to the private sector and promote programs & events.

The necessity of the use of modern technologies in education and administration.

The university is an opportunity, and through our study of this, we have to put it in place with recommendations to work on developing mechanisms to benefit from it in the future, including:

The a need to stand up to students abroad and urge them to return to build their country advance it and progress it.

Work on clarifying some specializations and directing the media and propaganda to them.

Work to create job opportunities for some fields and cooperate with other parties in the requirements needed by the labor market.

Making strategic administrative decisions with unexpected changes (crisis management) and working to provide e-learning in them.

The SWOT analysis of Misurata University in Libya reveals that the institution has several strengths, including its strong reputation for academic excellence and research, a diverse range of academic programs, modern facilities, and strong research culture and capabilities. However, the university also faces several challenges, including limited funding, lack of technology infrastructure, and limited access to resources due to its remote location. These weaknesses present a challenge for the university to maintain its academic excellence and compete with other universities in the region.

Despite these challenges, there are opportunities for Misurata University to improve and grow. For example, there is potential for increased funding from the Libyan government, establishment of international partnerships and collaborations, expansion of academic programs, and increased enrollment. By addressing these opportunities, Misurata University can enhance its academic offerings, attract more students, and establish itself as a center of excellence in higher education and research in Libya.

However, the ongoing political instability and conflict in Libya present several threats to the university, including limited funding, brain drain of highly qualified personnel, and competition from other universities in the country. The economic challenges facing Libya also impact higher education institutions by limiting funding and operations. These threats highlight the need for sustained efforts to improve the political and economic stability in Libya and support higher education institutions like Misurata University to maintain their academic excellence and contribute to the country's development.

To address the challenges facing Misurata University, investment in infrastructure and technology, government support, and international partnerships are crucial. These efforts can help the university to overcome its weaknesses and capitalize on its strengths and opportunities. By doing so, Misurata University can continue to provide quality education and research opportunities for students and faculty and play a vital role in the development of higher education in Libya.

In conclusion, the SWOT analysis of Misurata University highlights the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats facing the institution in the context of higher education in Libya. The analysis underscores the need for continued efforts to improve

higher education in Libya and support institutions like Misurata University to provide quality education and research opportunities for students and faculty.

Recommendations:

For the university to achieve the goals it sets, it must urge the senior management and departments of the colleges to work from a quality perspective in all its operations (administrative - educational - office, and research) to achieve its desired goals.

Based on the SWOT analysis of Misurata University in Libya, the following recommendations are suggested to address the challenges and capitalize on the opportunities:

- 1- Investment in infrastructure and technology: Misurata University needs to invest in modern infrastructure and technology to improve its academic offerings and research capabilities. This investment can be made through government funding, international partnerships, and private-sector collaborations.
- 2- Government support: The Libyan government needs to provide continued support and funding to Misurata University to enable it to improve its academic offerings and research capabilities. This support can include increased funding, tax incentives, and regulatory reforms to facilitate the growth of the university and higher education in the country.
- 3- International partnerships and collaborations: Misurata University should establish partnerships and collaborations with international universities and research institutions to leverage their expertise and resources. This can help the university to improve its academic offerings and research capabilities and attract more students and faculty.
- 4- Expansion of academic programs: Misurata University should expand its academic programs to meet the growing demand for higher education in Libya. This can be achieved by introducing new programs in emerging fields and disciplines and collaborating with industry partners to develop relevant curricula.
- 5- Increased enrollment: Misurata University should take steps to increase enrollment by adopting effective marketing and recruitment strategies. This can include targeted advertising, outreach programs, scholarships, and financial aid to attract a diverse and talented student body.
- 6- Emphasis on research and innovation: Misurata University should continue to prioritize research and innovation as a core component of its academic mission. This can be achieved through investment in research facilities, equipment, and personnel, and by fostering a culture of innovation and collaboration among faculty and students.
- 7- In conclusion, Misurata University can overcome its challenges and capitalize on its strengths and opportunities by adopting a multi-faceted approach that includes investment in infrastructure and technology, government support, international partnerships, expansion of academic programs, increased enrollment, and emphasis on research and innovation. These recommendations can help Misurata University maintain its academic excellence and contribute to the development of higher education in Libya.

conclusion

In conclusion, the methodology for conducting a SWOT analysis of Misurata University in Libya involves collecting data from various sources, analyzing the data using a SWOT framework, and identifying the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats facing the university in the context of higher education in Libya. The analysis will provide insights and recommendations to improve the academic

offerings and research capabilities of Misurata University and contribute to the development of higher education in Libya.

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