

## Chapter 12

# Strategic Planning in Education: A Case Study of BCAA in the United Arab Emirates

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### ABSTRACT

*BCAA is an outstanding school that was rated as one of the top schools in the UAE in 2016 and again in 2018. Taking into consideration the fact that strategic planning is an important factor in guiding educational organizations to achieve a shared vision, this case study provides its readers with a detailed guide for other schools to be aided with. This case study shows the commitment of the leadership team towards the strategic planning. It also highlights the importance and the different aspects of the planning. The researcher has interviewed the members of the leadership team in order to collect the required data for the study. The researcher analyzed the collected data thematically to provide other schools with a successful effective model of strategic planning. The findings of this study show that having a well-studied strategic plan in BCAA led it to succeed and to be evaluated as an outstanding college in all aspects. The results also reveal that the success of the BCAA strategic planning is due to the commitment, cooperation, effective communication, and sincerity of the people working at it.*

### INTRODUCTION

BCAA is located in Al-Ain city, UAE. It follows the “British Curriculum” that leads to GCSEs (General Certificate of Secondary Education) and A Level exam (Advanced level). The College starts with grades of Foundation stage (FS 1 and FS 2) through Year 13. It has more than 70 different nationalities from all around the world.

As mentioned in the website of BCAA, it operates a house system that consists of four different houses. Each is led by a housemaster or housemistress. Students in each house have roles and tasks to lead and represent their house in various inter-house competitions. The system of houses provides students with a variety of chances to form friendships across all grades. As the BCAA website mentions, “Each House has its own base, identity, and ethos, but with a common framework for the pastoral support of the pupils”. Therefore, BCAA cares for producing a full rounded student all the time.

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## ***Strategic Planning in Education***

BCAA, provides its students with core subjects, as well as additional extracurricular activities which include different kinds of sports such as basketball, cricket, football, netball, and swimming, in addition to music as an important subject.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The purpose of this study is to review and investigate the strategic planning process, taking place at BCAA and to highlight its strengths. This study can be considered as a guide for other educational organizations, especially those with a real need to be guided to an effective way of planning for an enhanced performance. It also focuses on the importance of communicating the strategic planning with all staff in the organization to ensure the right application of the plan. However, if staff are not willing to adapt to the planning, it will lead the whole organization to fail. Naylor (1979) found inadequate human engineering was one cause of planning failure.

### **Objectives**

This study has two main objectives:

- Providing support to the strategic planning process in the educational sector.
- Identifying the reasons behind an effective strategic planning at BCAA.

### **Definition of Terms**

- **ADEC:** Abu Dhabi Education Council. It aims at developing education in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi.
- **BCAA:** Brighton College Al-Ain
- **Mission:** “Your fundamental purpose in life. Why you exist” (Fogg, 1999, p. 5).
- **Strategic Planning:** “The process by which the guiding members of an organization envision its future and develop the necessary procedures and operations to achieve that future” (Goodstein, Nolan, & Pfeiffer, 1993, p. 3).
- **Vision:** “Where you want to be in the future-what kind of business that you want to become” (Fogg, 1999, p. 5).

The limitations of this case study are:

1. All the interviewees in this case study are working in the College and they may show bias toward the place they work at.
2. The data collected during the interviews are affected by the perceptions of the leadership team, therefore, they may not always be accurate.
3. The sampling process was influenced by the availability and time constraints of the participants.

### **Assumptions of the Study**

The assumptions of this study are:

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