

Managing Risks In Selected Philippine Dental Schools : Basis For Development Of A Risk Management Model

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Abstract: The study deals with risk management in Philippine private dental schools with the objective of developing a risk management model to address the need for change and improvement in school management. Academicians as well as the stakeholders make concerted effort to enhance growth and development of education for the benefit of the students and the community. The researcher assessed the succession planning, student enrollment and safety/ security school management areas through a researcher-made questionnaire. Data were synthesized using descriptive, interview, observation and documentary analysis of data provided by the respondents which consist of Administrative Officers and graduating dental students. Findings show that the succession planning process must be re-evaluated, properly established and the need to develop a strong talent pool. Employees do not prefer external hiring of leaders and be subjected to job rotations. Retention and attrition factors must be properly addressed to safeguard the welfare of the students as well as to ensure the sustainability of the school. Student enrolment and safety and security concerns were valued highly by the respondents. In addition, there is inadequate security measures in the dental schools. Implementing rules and regulation for strict compliance must be clearly defined if the objectives of the school are to be achieved. Administration must oversee good risk management practices in their system and stern observance of the rules and regulations.

Keywords: Risk, Assessment, Management, Succession Planning, Student Enrolment, Safety And Security, School Management.

I. INTRODUCTION

Risk management is an essential business preparation for all organizations. The objective is to minimize or prevent harmful or negative effect that may befall the organization. Schools have a great accountability to the community and society because they need to ensure that their graduates are knowledgeable and skilled professionals who can contribute in nation building. School management does risk analysis to reflect on environmental scanning and think about the strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities that exist within and outside an organization and educational institution.

Risk management involves the identification, assessment and making response to the threats in the organization. Management of risks is done to protect and maintain the sustainability of the organization. Decision makers always think of the best line of action when looking into risk concerns. Some of the strategies in risk management include transferring risk, avoiding risk, reducing the effect of risk and accepting some consequences of the risk.

Dental schools are also vulnerable during a transition period when the deanship and other administrative position become vacant. Leaders have apprehension on what can go wrong and to what extent the threat will affect the organization during an educational crisis. Their managerial skills will be tested on how they will be able to take control of the situation in a smooth manner. The ability to recognize the indications of risk is what separates a good and effective leader from the group. Knowledgeable leaders have to prepare risk management plans and strategies to mitigate these situations and

reduce the harmful effect on the organization. The threats should be assessed if these are of high priority or not; otherwise, attention, budget and effort can be focused on other problems the organization may be exposed to.

When a vital position in school is unexpectedly vacated or an incumbent leaves due to retirement, career advancement, sickness and mortality, the daily normal operations will be affected causing delay in carrying out the functions of the department. It will also make sure continuity of quality leadership and knowledge retention within the organization. The administration need to develop a pool of talent, to undergo intensive training and prepare them for leadership.

Aside from selecting and developing the talent to safeguard the school's welfare, enrollment statistics has also been a major concern for the administration because with few enrolling students, the school will cease to exist. Furthermore, maintaining peace and order, security and safety inside the school is a high priority of the administration. A school with a strong positive reputation that considers not only the holistic academic development of students but also the security and safety of all personnel can attract better and larger number of students.

Dental schools encounter problems such as mobility of employee when given administrative appointments, resignation of talented faculty members seeking career advancement, yearly contract of personnel in an acting capacity like the deanship, contractual status of new employees, influx of new students as well as the school leavers, formulation and implementation of safety and security measures especially for schools in the university belt area. It is in this view that the researcher dealt only with the risk management on succession planning, student enrollment, and safety and security as accessible and observed in the selected Philippine dental schools in the National Capital Region.

II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The respondents of the study includes the administrative officers (Dean, Vice/Associate/Assistant Dean, Assistant to the Dean, Program/Department Head, Senior Staff, Coordinators) , faculty members and graduating students from the four private dental schools. A researcher-made questionnaire was distributed to gather data and information through interview, observation and document analysis. The three management areas were assessed by the administrative officers while the students assessed only student enrolment and safety and security questions. The data gathered were statistically treated using mean, standard deviation, ANOVA and t-test.

III. RESULTS

The respondents' assessment on the three management areas have no significant difference since all the particulars were viewed to be very important and influential to a very great extent. There is a unanimous reaction when it comes to the importance of succession planning. There is a need for a well planned succession planning to prepare the organization's future and ensure continuity. Academic performance and financial reasons affect student attrition which is prevalent among third world countries. Regular guidance and counseling must be conducted to support and help these students who have the tendency to leave school. Conversely, management has to plan strategies to retain students until they graduate and attract more students. The more experienced administrative officers assessed student enrolment and safety and security with high regard compared to the graduating students. In addition, there are inadequate safety and security measures enforced in these schools.

IV. DISCUSSION

Understanding Risk Management:

The idea behind risk management is to safeguard businesses from being vulnerable. Hence, business plans concentrate on keeping the company viable by reducing financial risks. It is also intended to protect personnel, customers as well as the general public. Risk management involves the identification, assessment and making response to the threats in the organization. Management of risks is done to protect and maintain the sustainability of the organization. Some of the strategies in risk management include transferring risk, avoiding risk, reducing the effect of the risk and accepting some consequences of the risk.

Succession Planning:

Organizations like schools also have risks to deal with in their daily operations. Their assets such as human resource, students and facilities are all vulnerable to uncertainties all year round. Succession planning prepares the organization's future and viability. However, problems arise when there are no clear policies and processes being implemented in the selection of the next leader. There are also factors affecting the retention and attrition of student enrollment in dental schools which the research has determined. The primary concern of keeping all personnel and students safe in the school is also a big management risk to deal with because the school is a dynamic environment and change is inevitable. The academe seeks growth, change and development that will benefit not only the school, the students and the community likewise.

Schools have to re-appraise if the existing risk management scheme at present is applicable or adequate. Good governance is a very important factor in upholding the school's sustainability. School managers perceive risk on what they consider of value and worth being protected for the organization.¹ Leaders must also consider individual differences of employees in the organization and be understanding of their situations. The leaders can ignite change by encouraging employees to go beyond compliance and be proactive in the organization.

Avanesh² made a study on succession planning and its impact on organizational performance. The findings proved that there is a very positive relationship between succession planning and organizational performance. Training future leaders may be time consuming and requires additional resource but a wise leader should think of it as a worthwhile asset in the long run because it is essential for the survival of any organization. An efficient succession plan gives a clear logic to the subordinates, ensures available talent to deliver the best and quality service to maintain high standards of productivity, helping people see opportunities for career advancement and maintain the company's reputation and place on top.

Student Enrollment Concerns of Schools:

Based on the Fourth National Survey Act 2010³ the three best campus retention practices that make the greatest contribution to student retention are tutoring, internships and faculty use of technology in teaching. Meanwhile, the top three attrition factors are: personal financial resources, level of student preparation and student study skills.

According to the Commission on the Future of Higher Education, students don't enter college because of inadequate information and rising cost of education.⁴ The Philippine government also encourages students to choose schools wisely and take courses linked to promising industries to guarantee employment or entrepreneurship after graduation. Conversely, Tinto identified academic difficulties as one of the three major causes of student departure or attrition in college.⁵

One way to increase enrollment is to instigate school program reforms which must be aligned with the demands of employers and can respond to the community needs⁶. Chancellor Cheryl Hyman launched in 2011 the College to Careers Program which links the colleges with industries to bridge the skills gap in the community workforce. The approach has resulted to an immediate increase of college enrollment in some district schools.

Career uncertainty may be influenced by future expectations such as finding a high-paying job, rather than self worth as emphasized by Mattison⁷. The guidance established earlier before getting to college is an influential factor in career decision. The information about student exchange program is not well disseminated in some schools and not all are familiar with it. In addition, only a few schools have direct linkages with international schools. David Giroux who is the spokesman for the University of Wisconsin in Milwaukee is focused on beefing up their recruitment of international and foreign students as well as out of state students when they noted a decrease in freshmen enrolment since 2007⁸.

Looking into the Health Safety and Security:

School management must prioritize the health safety and security of all the personnel and students in the campus. It is also part of their community responsibility to maintain peace and order at all cost. Adolfo⁹ looked into the school wellness policies of eight university belt consortium schools and stressed the favorable coordination of the educational program, education related services, school environment and administration support.

The Green Building design can also influence and affect human health, welfare, environment and economic stability¹⁰. This was emphasized in the study of Vahdat and Smith¹¹ for the need of retrofitting school buildings geographically situated in seismic prone areas. Buildings also have a major effect on health as it affects the quality of air and pollution

within and around the school. A related investigation by Babayigit¹² was also conducted in 31 primary schools in Kecioren, Ankara assessing the level of air pollutants in and around the school. Moreover, the faulty construction and neglected maintenance remain to be the major causes of structural hazards.

Olson¹³ cited Kaufman's observation that administration may respond to health and safety of students' issue, one area that has received little attention is laboratory safety, general health and safety awareness in science laboratories. The current guide book entitled 'School Chemistry Laboratory Safety Guide' was published in 2006 and provides teaching personnel and laboratory staff with quick suggestion to create a safe learning environment for their students.

Communication coordination/ two way communication from top to bottom is also essential if information needs to be circulated to all concerned personnel¹⁴. Everybody must take responsibility and be held accountable to comply with the administration's communications. In addition, the operations in school can be made efficient through successful communication. The sharing of information, programs, pronouncements, policies and planning can all be disseminated through all the appropriate channels to inform, encourage and get the concerned people involved.

Risk Management Model for School Improvement:

Schools aspire to be significant and become the university of first choice. The school resources must be protected, valued and also entails managing the risks it may be exposed to. Risk management process includes identifying the risk, assessing the risk, management action, implementation, evaluation and monitoring. Risks must be quickly identified because these things hinder the accomplishment of the objectives. Some of these include the loss of a key talent, incompetent leaders, technology glitch, miscommunications and inadequate safety and security measures. The causes for such risks must be also determined and measured as to severity and frequency. The third process is the course of action the management will carry out. The control measures and actions must be put into operation with strict compliance. Then finally, evaluate and monitor the process underwent. This is a risk management cycle that is done on a regular basis from where feedback can be generated.

The model below shows the school management areas of concern namely succession planning, student enrolment and safety and security which follows the risk management process of identify, assess, manage, implement and monitor which is a continuous cycle or process done on a regular basis and more often as the need arises. External and internal factors play together and must be clear to the management which consist of both organization and leadership. There is a need for a good leadership who can look into the welfare, safety and security of students and all personnel. This will translate into the increase in student enrolment which is one of the objectives of management for the sustainability of the school. The risk management model is presented in Table 1.

TABLE 1 Risk Management Model

	Succession Planning
Identify	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine the type of risk and to what degree this threat may affect the organization • Identify the need for a key position promptly to be able to respond to the situation at hand • Establish clear key functions, responsibilities and job descriptions that should be aligned with the school's mission and vision • Recognize the need for training and development if there is no talent pool to choose from • Initiate external hiring if there are no qualified personnel within the organization
Assess	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quantify the situation when there is a need to hire personnel for a particular position • Assess the different areas of concern that need key personnel who can be accountable and responsible • Gauge the competencies on education qualification, work experience and performance level • Assess the vulnerability of risk involved and the level of risk priority
Manage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formulate criteria and qualifications that must be met by the personnel

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop leadership skills and mentoring of successors • Develop and nurture a dynamic talent pool • Provide enriching work training experiences, career opportunities, cross functional training and career development for the personnel • Offer an attractive compensation package • Create a healthy work climate and open communication lines • Promote talent mobility, grant appointments, and allocate research funds, faculty development seminars and outside trainings • Appoint personnel based on their strengths and inclinations • Assign to a higher level of responsibilities to capitalize on the personnel's potential • Do external talent hiring when a critical position gets vacant to ensure smooth functioning
Implement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Devise a clear policy and guideline to be put in practice • Strict compliance to the formulated policies • Proper dissemination of all the policies and guidelines for the information of everybody • Apply the policies and guidelines with transparency and simplicity
Monitor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observe and supervise the incumbent personnel • Evaluate and review employee performance

	Student Enrolment
Identify	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize the reasons for the increase and decrease of student enrolment • Determine the school related and student related factors affecting the retention and attrition of students
Assess	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider the financial capacity of students • Survey the intelligence and emotional level of students • Assess the community needs and market environment
Manage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain good reputation and participate in corporate social responsibilities • Apply the comprehensive mission statements, marketing and recruitment efforts to attract students • Uphold quality instruction and strive for excellence to maintain a high accreditation status with outstanding faculty credentials and successful program offerings • Plan strategies to increase recruitment, alumni referrals, student exchange program and scholarships • Strengthen counselling and student services to encourage, enlighten and support the students in order to determine the reasons for leaving school • Conduct research on student behaviours • Develop intervention measures and programs to mitigate the situation of problematic students • Tap the support of students, institution and community efforts to promote the student's academic and personal growth • Modernize facilities and equipment to create a healthy and conducive learning environment • Coordinate with industries for employment and entrepreneurship opportunities for their graduates • Conduct regular consultations with the students and hold up career orientations • Enforce school discipline and good values

Implement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Put into operation the plans and strategies for retention and increase of student enrolment Devise schemes to minimize attrition and decrease of students Set into motion the phases and stages of implementation depending on the needs Resolve issues and settle resistance peacefully Adapt modern trend, motivate and encourage participation of all personnel
Monitor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supervise each department in charge for the progress and development Review regular reports, summaries and inventories

	Safety and Security
Identify	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine the threats that will affect the welfare of students and personnel with regards to safety and security Recognize the security threat posed by intruders and bad elements Survey the peace and order situation within and around the campus
Assess	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Calculate the extent and impact of these risks on students' and personnel's safety and security Measure the frequency of the risk occurrence
Manage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimize and avoid frequently occurring risks by employing strategies and strict measures Persuade personnel and students to report all incidents and problems for immediate action Observe safety measures in classrooms, science laboratories, clinic infirmary and offices at all times Inspect the condition and integrity of facilities and equipment through periodic maintenance check Carry out retrofitting of structural buildings and modernization of facilities and equipment Install modern security protection and apparatus Improve in-house communication system to facilitate dissemination of information Place effective signages and directional signs Conduct regular fire, earthquake and disaster drills Set all security measures within and around the campus Continuous training and orientation of all personnel and security agents regarding safety and security
Implement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strict implementation of rules, regulations and guidelines in all facilities Adapt and maximize current safety and security measures
Monitor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor daily activities and note progress reports Survey facilities and building conditions regularly Scrutinize maintenance reports Follow up and confirm with the department heads the regular reports

V. CONCLUSION

This study have collated the assessment on the management areas operating in Philippine dental schools. Problems with the selection of a leader can be ironed out when there is a bench of talent to cull when the need arises. However, the policy or process of selection must not be bias. It must be assured that the talent selected is highly qualified and competent to run the organization and who can look after the welfare of the personnel, students, stakeholders and the community. Students choose schools with high reputation and facilities that will be conducive for learning. However,

there must be proper guidance and counseling to maintain and retain students until they graduate as well as safeguard the students who are leaving the school. Safety and security measures must be adequate and first-rate to protect the welfare of students and personnel. Hence, the administration and stakeholders must support the budget needs of the school to rejuvenate their assets- human resource, students and facilities.

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