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yet the principal has to show them how. Finally, great effort has been expended to put the school in readiness level; however, parents are not aware of the accreditation decision, and also of the parents-based reports that should be generated throughout the process that contribute to the school attributes and performance.

The drawback of the SWOT analysis is that it usually reflects a person's existing position and viewpoint, which can be misused to justify a previously decided course of action rather than used as a means to open new possibilities. It is important to note that sometimes threats can also be viewed as opportunities, depending on the people or groups involved. Having identified such factors as strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats strategies are developed which may build on the strength, eliminate the weaknesses, exploit the opportunities or counter the threats (Dyson, 2002)

Planning in a participative environment is the best way to ensure that a wider spectrum of the campus community will accept the accreditation process. Participation means that everyone affected by a process is involved in the decision making that leads to a final decision as well as with implementation. People almost always support changes they themselves have proposed. SWOT analysis as a part of the accreditation process should also be conducted in a participative process. SWOT analysis can be conducted in the form of discussion forums where teachers along with other stakeholders will undergo a conference to examine the school's status quo, its real readiness for the accreditation, and make decisions concerning when to start the accreditation process and how to do it effectively

6. Conclusion

Without involving all stakeholders to clearly define the organizational factors which have a crucial influence on the school's development, performance and prosperity, it cannot successfully undergo the accreditation process.

SWOT analysis can be considered as a controlling method because it involves analysis of the past successes and failures. Implementing SWOT enables the school to analyze its previous failures and successes, its current situation and the predictable future.

Accreditation should be valued for many reasons. It can be a symbol of an elite status. Parents see accreditation as an assurance that the school meets high standards; however, licensing requires necessary eligible funding that is consequently interpreted by a dramatic raise in the tuition which will overburden parents drastically and may result in their refusal to the whole process.

For a successful accreditation process, a school principal should involve all internal and external stakeholders, find the balance between what the school's staff is apt of and what he aspires for the school's future in terms of its different capacities, and never monopolize decision-making.

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recognized SWOT's different items they are directly in-charge of and knowing that the principal has not actually considered their opinions or taken into account asking them about the basis they are straightly responsible for before the actual managing of the report and submitting it to AdvancEd committee.

In order to eliminate the misuse of the SWOT analysis and justification of the decision of the people who do it, SWOT analysis, the same as the whole process of the accreditation must be done in participative process with involvement of the external and internal stakeholders of the school. The principal along with the school's HODs should take into consideration opinions of different groups of the stakeholders in order to have a realistic picture about the school performance and on the basis of this information to make rational decisions aimed at the development of the school keeping up the strengths, overcoming the factual weaknesses, tackling the appropriate threats and investing in the genuine opportunities.

When undertaking accreditation, it is important to identify critical issues that will confront the school within the process. One way to accomplish this is by asking the teachers in a round robin technique to state the major issues that they believe are to count for being strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities of their own school in terms of the school's entities, aspects and capacities. Once the critical issues are defined, outcomes can be described as statements of what success would look like or what the impact of accomplishing the issues would resemble. They are statements of the indicators of success and give the school an opportunity to begin the process of working on or creating strategic approaches. The role of staff at this point may be to flesh out a plan—the what, who, and when. The completed action plan should be shared with those who worked on the strategic components to ensure it represents the intent of the critical issues. The document will give the school a roadmap for the next year to 18 months so that energies are effectively channeled into meeting its mission. Accordingly, each stakeholder, the teachers in particular, should be involved in not less than four things with the results of a SWOT analysis. The four things should include (1) working out what the school hopes to achieve to get accreditation, (2) being objective, (3) incorporating the findings into an action plan, and (4) revisiting findings on a regular basis. Positive participation of all teachers with the specialty group will undoubtedly result in setting precise direction for the school's future.

The case considered here brings to the fore the first question designers of any accreditation system ought to answer: who is responsible for what? In addition to the frustration that seems to surface among teachers as they are overstressed with the requested duties from the planning and management capacities of the school.

In other words, accreditation attempts to transfer management know-how by walking the school through, for instance, strategic planning, operational planning, the use of data for decision-making, and the construction of performance indicators. Experience with this kind of accreditation suggests that it is not enough to tell teachers what to do,

4.3. Resources Capacity

Table (4.3) displays the teachers' approval rate on each item in the SWOT chart with respect to the resources capacity domain.

Internal Factors	Strengths	Activating professional learning communities	35%
		Activating coaching programs to exchange expertise, knowledge and skills	30%
		Empowering teachers	21%
		Integrating technology	12%
	Weaknesses	Insufficient resources	100%
		Outdated library and laboratory	100%
		Poor internet capacity	100%
External Factors	Opportunities	Follow-up process for teachers' professional development programs	92%
		Activating coordinators' council	92%
		.Organize fund raising activities	26%
		Wider collaboration with contributing partners and sponsors	63%
	Threats	Budgeting constraints	100%

Teachers added that they are being evaluated without even knowing the result of the evaluation; other teachers claimed out that they have seen their performance evaluation report, yet it was not the same report that was submitted to the principal; certain modifications were done. As a result, teachers believe that any professional development program's content being undertaken does not really reflect the teachers' ultimate professional needs. Also, teachers expressed their worry concerning the arising of non-professional learning communities within the school and among staff members. In the case-school, teachers do not get along appropriately; they are made into struggling groups that are engaged in feuds every now and then.

5. Discussion

The accuracy of the readiness diagnostic report prepared by the school authorities is critically questionable, and it brings to surface a critical question about how the teachers in the school will have a sense of the vision and purpose if they are not actively engaged in the entire school process!

The principal, along with her HODs, has formulated SWOT analysis incongruously with the teachers' perspectives and potentials. All interviewed teachers revealed unawareness of the readiness report that featured SWOT analysis for 3 different capacities. Teachers showed discontentment toward the school principal when they

4.2. Learning Capacity

Table (4.2) displays the teachers' approval rate on each item in the SWOT chart with respect to the learning capacity domain.

Internal Factors	Strengths	.Learning culture promotes creativity, innovation and problem-solving	20%
		Frequent curriculum revision	25%
		Adopting universal design for learning (UDL) in lesson plans	0%
		Teachers' intervention plans tackling students' weaknesses	20%
	Weaknesses	Teachers' poor capabilities	25%
		Lack of character building program	85%
		Incompetent learners in oral communication skills	100%
External Factors	Opportunities	Adapting differentiation strategies.	44%
		Adapting advocacy program	60%
	Threats	Lack of inclusion program	48%
		Overcrowded classes	100%

In the open-ended part of the interview dealing with the learning capacity domain, teachers disagreed on adapting (UDL) and have rather described it as torturing the teachers especially veterans. Teachers claimed out that not enough training was done for them; they were rather supplied by the (UDL) template and asked immediately to adopt it in each lesson plan they write. Also, teachers narrated that none of the leadership personnel has supplied them with any feedback on their (UDL) lesson plans. Considering that, teachers have concluded that the leadership personnel do not know how to use the (UDL), and accordingly they received no feedback in return either positive or negative

On the other side, teachers clarified their perspective concerning differentiation, different learning styles, and inclusion. They believe that they are not familiar with differentiation, and it is way beyond their tolerance. They explained that reaching out every single learner requires full package that comprises of relevant resources, numbers of expert staff members more than the available ones, well-structured and cutting-edge technological facilities, small- group classes, and cooperative parents.

that features the school's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in terms of 3 capacity domains of leadership, learning, and resources.

4.1. Leadership Capacity

Table (4.1) displays the teachers' approval rate on each item in the SWOT chart with respect to the leadership capacity domain.

Internal Factors	Strengths	clear vision, mission, and core values	55%
		well-structured supervision and evaluation process that is shared openly with all teachers	20%
		.data-driven decisions are made for improvement purposes	24%
		.established policies to ensure school effectiveness	30%
	Weaknesses	Ineffective mentoring and coaching program	88%
		little involvement of parents	12%
External Factors	Opportunities	team-work spirit	89%
		partnership and collaboration with local and international educational .institutions	90%
		providing professional development programs for teachers	92%
		establishing procedures to ensure efficient professional development .programs	100%
	Threats	limited financial capacities due to low tuition fees in the elementary school	65%
		consuming more time shifting from one campus to another	25%

In addition to table (4.1), teachers have revealed their discontent with different items in terms of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of the leadership domain.

In the open-ended questionnaire, teachers delineated that generally they have no idea what vision or mission mean; however, they haven't received any explanation for these two concepts. Moreover, teacher showed dissatisfaction with the idea that the school's leadership personnel has perfectly set core values, yet has never empowered the teachers in action to promote adopting these core values.

On the other hand, teachers considered that parents are involved negatively in the school in a way that enables them to interfere in every single detail of the school which eventually has resulted in teachers' desperate feelings and the dominating sense of being devalued.

Besides, teachers have confirmed the vitality of team-work and its positively great influence in the workplace.

levels, and across diverse socio-political arenas (Pearce, 2007).

The popularity of SWOT analysis may be attributed to its successful use by Jack Welch at General Motors. SWOT analysis may be perceived as one of the first steps in strategic planning (Simerson, 2011). A SWOT analysis provides managers with a clear picture regarding the organization's current position, by considering internal (strengths and weaknesses), as well as external (opportunities and threats) attributes. While the general strategic management literature recommends that organizations align their internal capabilities with external prospects (Abraham, 2012), this may not always be conceivable, due to the low locus of control attributable to educational organizations' policies (Rowley, Lujan, and Dolence, 1997).

3. Methodology

The above considerations outlined in the literature review have led the author to ask the following research question: How do the case-school's academic staff and senior management team (principal and HoDs) perceive the school's respective strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats?

The core analysis for this study involved a mixed-method approach focused on the perception of SWOT represented by the readiness diagnostic tool.

Semi-structured interviewing was used, since it allowed the researcher and the 54 interviewed teachers to be free in their responses. The open-ended and semi-structured interviews were analyzed manually using inductive thematic analysis. The relevant themes were strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats which meant that a SWOT analysis was conducted for the school's 3 capacities: leadership, learning and resources, and the researcher counted the number of times a specific theme was mentioned by the interviewed respondents. Results for every quadrant of the SWOT matrix were presented in the form of percentages. In this way qualitative datasets were changed into quantitative data sets and displayed holistically.

The examined school in this study is a K-12 school located in two separate campuses in Beirut, and it comprises 841 students, 67 teachers, 3 heads of departments; for the kindergarten, the primary level (grades one through six), and the middle and secondary levels (grades 7 through 12) respectively, and one principal.

The researcher had interviewed 54 teachers teaching different grade-levels and different subject-matters. Also, the researcher used the readiness diagnostic report that comprises of SWOT analysis for the 3 school's capacities of leadership, learning, and resources in which a comparison was conducted to examine the different perspectives in terms of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.

4. Data Analysis and Results

The tables below delineate the teachers' perspectives toward the readiness report

Advanc-ED uses a set of research-based standards and a clearly identified process as guides to help schools continuously improve. Advanc-ED has recently implemented the newly formed standards where schools must meet high standards, engage in continuous improvement, and demonstrate quality assurance through external review. Preliminarily, the school should develop a readiness diagnostic report through which it confirms its readiness to work hard to meet the seven standards devised by AdvancEd. The purpose of the readiness diagnostic is to assess the school's readiness for accreditation through an examination of the results of the school's readiness diagnostic and examination of its practices in relation to the AdvancED Standards for Accreditation. By assessing the school's readiness, a determination can be made regarding the institution's capacity to meet accreditation requirements and engage in the continuous improvement process.

- (Advanc-ED, 2007)

The readiness diagnostic tool is built around the three domains of the IEQ (Index of Educational Quality): Leadership Capacity, Learning Capacity and Resource Capacity. Under each domain heading there is an overall description of the domain and the standards related to that domain. The readiness diagnostic tool is a SWOT analysis designed for the school to reflect on its current status in relation to the accreditation standards and to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges/threats within each domain.

The tool is most beneficial when the principal engages the school's leadership team and staff in a discussion and reflection related to the standards. The results of this tool will provide the foundation for the development of the school's improvement journey and may reveal any areas where the school is currently not meeting the AdvancED Standards for Accreditation. This allows the school to focus its actions to address those identified needs areas.

- SWOT Analysis

It came from the research conducted by Albert S Humphrey and his team at Stanford Research Institute from 1960-1970. The research was funded by the fortune 500 companies to find out why corporate planning failed and what could be done about this failure. Albert S Humphrey is therefore considered to be the founder of SWOT Analysis.

SWOT is the acronym for strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats and may be used to match external factors with the internal capabilities of an organization (Koo et al., 2011). The internal capabilities are delineated as strengths and weaknesses, while the external forces affecting the organization are opportunities and threats.

SWOT analysis is valuable, since it allows organizations to exploit new opportunities by utilizing internal capabilities (Helms and Nixon, 2010). It may also be used to understand and take action on perceived weaknesses, which may hinder an organization from performing at a higher level. SWOT seems to be ubiquitous in usage, being employed in a wide range of contexts from country to the individual, on different

and resources. Simultaneously, a variety of educational communities have emerged in the form of accreditation agencies that have created a set of standards for schools to be held to, while also encouraging schools to be the best they can be. Further, accreditation agencies aim to ensure accountability of schools and degree programs in order to boost public trust and confidence.

In the educational community, accreditation means trust. It is also recognized as a school that is true to its mission, and a school that embraces the challenge of looking critically at itself in order to recognize strengths and opportunities, be aware of its weaknesses and threats, and to strategically plan for future growth.

Focused on organizational improvement, as the first step of the accreditation process, educators in the case-school have emphasized positive change and "making things better" (Swanson & Holton, 2009, p. 17). Development plans evidenced a wide range of detail and professionalism and of managerial acumen in general, but teachers did not appear to be appropriately much involved in the overall process.

This paper is organized as follows: a literature review that is a three-fold section that reveals requirements imposed on the school by the accreditation agency AdvancEd and the principal/HoD-based view of their own school that is interpreted by a readiness report for the three main domains of leadership, learning, and resources all displayed in terms of a SWOT analysis. This is followed by the qualitative method employed by the author to examine the teachers' viewpoints of the readiness report compared to how it was arranged by the principal and her HoDs. Different data strands are then presented and brought together in the results section. A brief discussion and conclusion follow along with a list of the references used.

2. Literature Review

Accreditation, as a process, is an opportunity to think about, talk about, and write about the uniqueness of a school community. What are the core values? How do they inform school practices? How do core values enrich the day-to-day experiences of children in a school? Accreditation is big work. It requires an exhaustive self-study process. A committee of stakeholders including administrators, faculty, and parents comprise the self-study committee.

Systems to periodically evaluate the performance of K-12 schools are, broadly speaking, of two kinds: inspection, the paradigm of England's OFSTED (Office for Standards in Education); and accreditation, originally developed nearly a century ago by what are now the U.S. regional accreditation agencies.

– AdvancED

It is a newly merged organization, is now "the world's largest education community, representing 27,000 public and private schools and districts across the United States and in 65 countries worldwide and educating 15 million students." (Advanc-ED, 2010).

SWOT Analysis;

Examining the Readiness for AdvancEd Accreditation Process:

The Dilemma of Principal vs. Staff

A Case Study

Iman Freij

Abstract

This paper aims at examining the readiness report of a K-12 school that is undergoing an accreditation process supervised by AdvancEd. The school's principal, along with its heads of departments (HoDs), has devised a readiness report that reveals the readiness of the school in terms of 3 main capacities; leadership, learning and resources. However, teachers were excluded from expressing their viewpoints concerning the three capacities, and eventually did not share in getting by any part of the proclaimed report. The paper displays the dilemma of undergoing an accreditation process without even involving the teachers adequately as real partners in the whole process. Also, it demonstrates a feasible contrast the teachers' perspectives versus the principal-HoD's in terms of a SWOT analysis that indicate the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats the school has encountered. Results show discrepancies in both sides' viewpoints. Recommendations would reveal the importance of authentic engagement of the teachers in any accreditation process.

1. Introduction

Education, generally, is a means of transmitting knowledge, attitudes and skills from one generation to another. According to Oxford English Dictionary (1989, p.385) education is "training and instruction designed to give knowledge and develop skills". Albert Einstein claims that "Education is what remains after one has forgotten what one has learned in school." Education in the largest sense is any act or experience that has a formative effect on the mind, character, or physical ability of an individual. In its technical sense, education is the process by which society deliberately transmits its accumulated knowledge, skills, and values from one generation to another.

Thus, education is responsible for a permanent change in attitude and behavior of an individual that is needed for personal as well as social adjustment of an individual. As a result of the technological revolution since the late years of the twentieth century, schools, all across the world, have been undergoing vital adjusting strategies to increase their potentials in different aspects of schooling; such as, learning, leadership,