

The Practice of Strategic Planning and Strategy Implementation in Public Universities of Ethiopia

Assefa Beyene Bassa

ABSTRACT

Recently Ethiopia has been engaged in a huge expansion of its higher education institutions. This was also accompanied by a series of institutional management reforms and quality assurance regulations. Accordingly, the organizational environment in the public universities of Ethiopia has been changing from time to time. In such a context, the key to better align these academic institutions with the needs of their rapidly changing internal and external environments is the design of appropriate strategic plans and effective implementation of their preferred strategies. Hence, the purpose of this study was to investigate the practice of strategic planning and strategy implementation in public universities of Ethiopia. Data were collected through questionnaires from staff members (from both academic and administrative) and students; and through interviews from the management team members (Vice Presidents and Directors) of three selected public universities. The results of this study showed that in the sampled public universities: stakeholders' participation in the process of strategic planning was found to be low; less emphasis was given to critically assessing their ever changing external environment while planning; the practice of clearly communicating their preferred strategies and activities to both academic and administrative staff was found to be minimal and ineffective; there was also lack of adequate monitoring, follow up and feedback systems; moreover, major decisions were made without aligning them with the university's preferred areas of priority and major objectives as stipulated in the strategic plan document.

INTRODUCTION

Ethiopia, though one of the developing countries in the world, possesses a 1,700 year tradition of elite education linked to its Orthodox Church. However, secular higher education was initiated only in 1950 with the founding of the University College of Addis Ababa (World Bank, 2004). Yet, higher education is a key factor for socio-economic development agendas of countries in these days of globally interconnected knowledge economy. To this effect, recently Ethiopia has been engaged in a huge expansion of its higher education institutions by establishing large number of universities in a decade and half, increasing the intake capacity of the existing universities and diversifying academic programs. This was accompanied by a series of institutional management reforms and quality assurance regulations. Hence, the organizational environment in higher education institutions of Ethiopia is changing from time to time.

As a result, the leaders of these currently mushrooming public universities of Ethiopia are responsible for strategic visioning and planning and for effective implementation of their preferred strategies. In this ever-changing academic landscape, an effective strategic planning practice is highly essential to obtain new opportunities and resource requirements with future prospects by better aligning these universities with their internal and external environmental forces. The ultimate benefit of strategic planning practice for these universities is helping them identify clearly appropriate strategies in line with their missions as well as take their campuses where they needed to go (i.e. towards their preferred strategic direction).

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

In Ethiopia, the tertiary education gross enrolment ratio (GER) that was only 0.2% by the year 1970 had not shown any significant improvement after twenty five years in 1995 (which was 0.7%) and only 1.5% by the year 2003 (Teshome 2005; World Bank, 2004). According to the Federal Ministry of Education (MoE, 2010, p. 60), the GER for higher education increased from 3.6% in 1999 to 5.3 % in 2008/09. This means that the Ethiopian higher education has now come close to the African average in GER of 6% in 2000. In this connection, currently there are 31 Public Universities operating toward accomplishment of their missions, compared to the only 2 public universities (Addis Ababa and Haramaya) that existed 15 years ago and the annual intake of

undergraduates has increased from 9,000 in the academic year 1996/1997 to 94,000 in 2011/2012 (MoE, 2012).

This fast growth in students' enrolment trend in public universities of the country indicates that Ethiopia has been aggressively engaged in the expansion of higher education. This expansion policy of Ethiopia is similar to the expansionary policies of the last 50 years. Also known as massification fueled by social demand, open admission, free education and guaranteed employment, have led to higher education enrollments that, since the 1960s, have multiplied nine times in Africa and Latin America and four times in Asia (Trow, 2006). However, one of the most important implications of this growth is the overcrowding at the public universities with an associated perception of decrease in the quality of education (Altbach & Peterson, 1999)

Hence, this mere increase in student numbers alone in the Ethiopian public universities is not sufficient to meet the requirements of providing competent graduates for the social, political and economic development agendas of this nation. Besides expansion, the quality of existing universities is a necessary condition. As universities are accountable to their stakeholders and customers (the students, government and other employers and the public at large), those who manage these institutions need to guarantee their constituencies that the institutions they lead offer quality teaching, research and community services. Consequently, the leaders of public universities of Ethiopia must accept the challenges of developing quality in their operations. However, this expanding higher education systems are in need of resources: to employ growing populations of faculty and staff, to provide study grants or scholarships, to fund broader spectra of research areas, to build new teaching or research facilities, to preserve older capital investments, to stock libraries, or to furnish and upgrade complex infrastructures (Herbst, 2007, p. 3).

Above all, higher education leaders all over the world (including the leaders of public universities in Ethiopia) encounter an increasingly complex external environment where social, political, and market forces are reshaping the postsecondary landscape (Bess & Dee, 2008). It is also argued that the challenges of the higher education environment have become ever more complex as we seek to respond to the calls for reform coming from different directions, the need for change, the financial and budgetary difficulties we are all facing, the demand for accountability-all the issues that surround us, or perhaps bombard us, on a daily basis (Gillespie & Robertson, 2010).

To this connection, the key to successful institutional leadership, management and advancement is the design and implementation of a functional long range and strategic planning process (Wilkinson, et al., 2007, p. 11). The real significance of strategic plan is that it directs senior managers' attention away from day-to-day issues and forces a re-examination of the main purposes of the institution and its key relationships with its customers (Sallis, 2002, p. 119). Hence, the central reason for engaging in strategic planning is to better align the college or university with its environment (Rowley & Sherman, 2001, p. 22).

Universities engaged in strategic planning as means to "make beneficial, strategic changes to adapt to the rapidly shifting environment" (Rowley, Lujan, & Dolence, 1997). This follows that strategic planning process in universities may form the basis for a formal relationship with outside bodies, including government and other funding bodies or may be helpful in fostering closer relations with other external bodies, including local or regional government, the local community and other groups, and organizations and individuals with which the university interacts (Taylor & Miroiu, 2002). Hence, competencies of strategic leadership style are very much required. Strategic leadership style is the combination of three different individual skills and abilities: visioning; focusing; and implementing (Neumann & Neumann, 1999).

A strategic plan within the university provides a link between academic planning (such as student numbers, courses, and research), financial planning (projected income and expenditure), and physical planning (buildings and infrastructure), and will also guide the overall allocation of funds (Taylor & Miroiu, 2002). Therefore, strategic planning involves shifting the leaders and managers' position so that they consider the overall context and aspects of their institution rather

than one particular part, aspect, situation, or circumstance. For that reason, in academic institutions strategic planning is about identifying some common directions for the department, division, school or college based on needs of the external and internal stakeholders.

To attain the benefits of strategic planning, urgent strategic planning, strategic leadership competencies and practices are needed in these chaotic academic environments. However, the academic communities, here and there, are complaining that people in various leadership positions in most of the public universities in Ethiopia had been intensively engaged in trivial and routine administrative decisions instead of searching for more strategic issues and visionary-proactive leadership to better align the institutions with their internal and external forces that can positively or negatively affect their activities.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In order to align with the objectives of the study, attempts were made to seek reliable answers for the following research questions:

1. What is the practice of institutional strategic planning in public universities of Ethiopia?
2. How were the institutional strategies implemented in public universities of Ethiopia

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this study was to gain an insight on the practice of strategic leadership in public universities in Ethiopia. In this connection, the overall objectives of this study were to specifically investigate the practices of strategic planning and strategy implementation of strategic planning in public universities of Ethiopia.

A LITERATURE REVIEW

Strategic Planning in Universities

Strategic planning is no longer simply the purview of business, and many campuses hope to duplicate the success that many businesses and not-for-profit organizations have had in developing and implementing their strategic plan (Rowley & Sherman, 2001, p. 5). It is the process by which the guiding members of an organization envision the future and develop the necessary procedures and operations to achieve that future (Goodstein, 1993). Strategic plan, sometimes called a corporate or institutional development plan, details the measures which the institution intends to take to achieve its mission. It sets a medium-term timescale, usually over a three-year period. Its aim is to give the institution guidance and direction (Sallis, 2002, p. 124). Strategic planning is about what are the strategic choices that a university can make to help develop and sustain a competitive strategic advantage? (Rowley & Sherman, 2001).

Strategic planning requires strategic thinking, which involves taking a broad set of facts and information into consideration as you strive to understand the present situation and circumstances, identify future trends and formulate future possibilities, decide on your organization's core values and value proposition, develop or firm up your organization's mission and vision, determine the means you will employ to attain your vision and accomplish your mission, and identify ways to mitigate or address challenges or obstacles likely to impede your progress or sub-optimize your overall success (Simerson, 2011; Taylor & Miroiu, 2002). Therefore, without a clear understanding of the institution's core beliefs and values, decision-making has no underpinning or consistency (Wilkinson, et al., 2007, p, 30).

Strategic planning enables the formulation of long-term priorities, and it enables institutional change to be tackled in a rational manner. Without a strategy an institution cannot be certain that it is best placed to exploit new opportunities as they develop (Sallis, 2002, p. 119). It is a means of establishing major directions for the university, college/school or department. Taken together, strategic planning and continuous quality improvement can dramatically improve the ability of the institution to meet the needs of its internal and external stakeholders (Paris, 2003). No planning process is going to be successful if that process is not imbedded in a thorough understanding of both the internal and external environments (Rowley & Sherman, 2001). Hence, an effective

strategic planning in universities involves an internal focus on the campus and an external focus on the environment (Wilkinson, et al., 2007).

A strategic plan is only as successful as the mission, vision, goals and values it enshrines, as well as the accuracy of the environmental assessment, institutional capacity, resources needed and time frame for implementation (Hayward, Ncayiyana, & Johnson, 2003, p. 12). By establishing an environmental scanning process, institutions develop an early warning system to identify and monitor opportunities and threats that need to be anticipated as the campus strategically positions itself in the planning process (Hayward, Ncayiyana, & Johnson, 2003; Hinton, 2012; Wilkinson, et al., 2007;).

Strategic goals motivate people to achieve them, especially if they incorporate central aspects of the vision of the institution and are understood to be testable hypotheses, not rigid formulae (Morrill, 2007). Colleges and universities that align their mission with their educational policies and programs generally are more effective and efficient (Birnbaum 1991b; Bolman & Deal 1991).

The strategic leader recognizes (and emphasizes) the importance of strategy formulation and execution (Simerson, 2011). *Strategy formulation* refers to both the decision-making processes and outcomes that colleges and universities employ to align or fit their mission with their position in the marketplace (the environment), given the limited resources and capabilities of their internal systems (Lawrence & Lorsch, as cited in Rowley & Sherman, 2001, p. 202). As a result, the underlying base for choosing one type over another in the strategic choice process is dependent upon two major realities of the college or university: the resource base of the institution and the institution's prevailing philosophical academic position (Rowley & Sherman, 2001).

Above all, successful strategic planning is inclusive, allowing every major stakeholder-management, teaching and research staff, support staff, students, the council, and other interested parties and stakeholders to participate (Hayward, Ncayiyana, & Johnson, 2003, p. 22). Shared governance is not one of the unique features of colleges and universities; it is also part of what makes campus operations effective. It is the lack of participation and the resulting distrust and power struggles that lead to the failure of the strategic planning process in many colleges and universities (Rowley & Sherman, 2001, pp. 177-78). Consequently, universities should encourage active participation of as many people as possible, including the faculty, administration, students and alumni, engaging them in the on-going dialogue and involving them in the strategic planning process in order to generate a feeling of ownership of the process and the outcomes throughout the university (Birnbaum, 1991a; Hax & Majluf, 1996).

In the first activities related to strategic planning, if top campus leaders commit to forming a full-campus leadership team and also commit to a full and open communications process, the resulting strategic plans will have a much greater chance of succeeding. In this connection, involving staff in major issues such as a strategic plan is one more way of gathering support for the successful implementation of that plan (Rowley & Sherman, 2001). Moreover, according to these scholars, it is a real mistake not to include students (and perhaps alumni) in major campus decisions, since this is the very group that academic programs seek to benefit. Further, the thought that students really don't know what they want from their college or university is a notion that often proves to be false once students are invited to participate.

Strategy Implementation in Universities

Strategy implementation refers to "actions taken by a college or university to put their positioning plans into action by changing their mission, changing their environment, or changing their resources, capabilities, and internal operations" (Rowley & Sherman, 2001, p. 202). No organization anywhere in the world has ever added a single penny to its profits from making plans: the rewards are only realized when plans are implemented (Hussey, 1998). The implementation of strategy is arguably the most important stage in the process of strategic planning for one reason: Without successful implementation, an organization's strategy is really nothing more than a fantasy (Hambrick & Cannella, 1989). These scholars further argue that to

formulate strategies without some serious thoughts toward implementation seems a serious waste of the strategists' time. Implementing the plan brings commitment, focus and direction. Implementation is the key to making everything else functional (Wilkinson, et al., 2007). One of the caveats of successful implementation is to implement the strategic plan incrementally. By carefully selecting areas of the plan that will be easier and more straightforward to implement, leaders and planners can achieve success in the early stages of the implementation process (Rowley & Sherman, 2001).

Strategy implementation requires strategic leadership skills in the organization. According to Reeves (2002), strategic leadership is the simultaneous acts of executing, evaluating, and reformulating strategies, and focusing organizational energy and resources on the most effective strategies. According to Harrison & John (1998), strategy implementation should be considered explicitly in the formulation stage so that any resulting strategy is in fact implementable when an organization has decided upon a particular strategic plan; planners and administrators are then charged with altering or creating an organizational structure to best carry out that plan. Once an organization has chosen the proper structure, the implementation process moves on to identify specific people and tasks to carry out the intentions of the planning process (Rowley & Sherman, 2001, p. 15).

A strategic plan is of limited value unless it is used in the budget exercise (Paris, 2003). In strategic planning practices most important thing to help achieve intended goals of an institution is linking and supporting the planned initiatives and activities with realistic long-range budget. Strategic planning must drive resource allocation *not vice versa* (Taylor & Miroiu, 2002). The advantage for the institution using its strategic plan to allocate resources is that that everyone knows ahead of time which activities have priority and which will be receiving the resources in any given budget year. In addition, because the prioritization of these activities was an institution-wide negotiation, there is some buy-in and some patience with the process. Accordingly, the most common way of tying the entire strategic plan into the campus budget process is to prioritize campus needs, values, and programs (Rowley & Sherman, 2001). Thus, without a clear tie between the most preferred strategies and institutional budget, implementing a strategic plan can become nearly impossible endeavour.

Monitoring and evaluation of strategy implementation processes in higher education institutions are so important to check whether the performance practices of planned initiatives and activities are being carried out as planned. Herbst (2007) opined that good planning practice of the past was unthinkable without monitoring or performance measurement, as unthinkable as driving an automobile without looking where the car is heading and without steering to keep the vehicle on course or out of trouble. Above all, as to Rowley and Sherman (2001), monitoring the implementation of the plan is an essential part of the planning process, and needs to be more than routine re-endorsement. The process also needs to allow for regular review and updating ensuring that the plan remains relevant.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study was aimed at examining and describing the current practices pertaining to strategic planning and strategy implementation in the sampled public universities of Ethiopia. Therefore, it was a descriptive research in design. It was also carried out by applying a mixed methods research design especially that of the convergent (concurrent) mixed method design with the purpose of comparing the results from quantitative data with that of qualitative one. Here both types of data were collected simultaneously for triangulation and analyzed at the same time with the findings converging in the conclusions to answer an overarching research question (Ary, Jacobs & Sorensen, 2010).

Recently, many researchers of management related problems have employed more mixed method approaches rather than just quantitative or qualitative research. The view is that a combination of research methods can serve mutual purposes because 'the relative strengths of qualitative and quantitative methods enable management and organisational researchers to address

important questions at different stages of a research inquiry’, thereby enhancing and enriching current knowledge by ‘filling in the gaps’ that studies adopting a singular approach are unable to do (Currell & Towler, 2003, p. 524).

There are also several viewpoints as to why qualitative and quantitative methods can be combined. For the purpose of this research the legitimate reasons of combining these two methods in a single study were to achieve triangulation-combining two or more sources of data to study the same phenomenon in order to gain a more complete understanding of it and to achieve complementary results by using the strengths of one method to enhance the other (Morgan, 1998).

Data Gathering Instruments

Descriptive-survey researchers design and develop their own surveys to gather the perceptions of their sample participants on current educational issues (Lodico, Spaulding, & Voegtler, 2006, p. 106). As this research was a descriptive survey research, the researcher self-developed questionnaires and interview guides to gather data from the sampled participants. For the sample size employed in this research was large, the researcher prepared close-ended questionnaires on the basis of the assessment levels. Hence, three categories of 5-point Likert scale questionnaires were prepared for respondents selected from management positions, from staff members (from both academic and administrative) and from graduating year students of the undergraduate programs in the sampled universities. Likert scales were given scores or assigned a weight to each scale, from 1 to 5. Five numerically coded boxes using a simple 5-point Likert scale for each assessment was provided to respondents.

To minimize the threats to validity, the questionnaires were prepared based on comprehensive knowledge in the research area and by consulting other professionals and experts with experience in the area of study to incorporate their feedback and ensure that the final instrument appropriate to measure what it was supposed to measure. Besides, for measuring internal consistency and its associated reliability of the instruments used in the study, Cronbach alpha was calculated and the results in each category of scales were higher than 0.70, indicating high reliability of the scale items in the instruments.

In addition to questionnaires, interviews were conducted by the researcher (himself) with the officials at the top level management positions in the sampled public universities in order to elicit an in-depth and pertinent data for the purpose of triangulating the results from quantitative data.

Data Sources

In Ethiopia, currently, there are 31 public higher education institutions with full pledged university status accomplishing their mission of teaching, research and community services. Eight of these public universities are relatively old and organizationally well established. Three of them were promoted (as of 2007) from colleges to the level of university with adequately reasonable organizational development status and the rest of these public universities were newly established and started functioning from scratch as of 2007. In this study, therefore, those public universities which started their education and training programs from scratch as of 2007 G.C were excluded because they were considered as very immature to provide sufficient data required to meet the objectives of the study. Subsequently, the data sources for this study were three randomly selected universities from the stratas of those public universities which were believed to be relatively old and organizationally well established and from those of which were promoted from colleges to the level of university. Addis Ababa University, Jimma University and Dilla University were the sampled universities for this study.

Accordingly, the primary sources of data for this study were these sampled universities top level management team members, faculty/college/school deans and administrative units’ directors, department/program heads, academic staff members, non academic staff members and graduating year students.

Samples and Sampling Procedures

A combination of appropriate sampling techniques was employed for the study to suit each group of respondents from management positions, from students, from academic and administrative staff. Accordingly, in this study samples from academic staffs were selected using stratified cluster sampling via categorizing them by their academic rank within their natural clusters of Colleges/Faculties/Schools. This sampling technique guarantees that the sample will include specific characteristics that the researcher wants included in the sample (Creswell, 2012, p. 144).

Besides, one-stage cluster sampling method was used to select officials from middle and lower level management positions (i.e. Deans, Directors, Division Heads) by categorizing the clusters based on their colleges/faculties/schools and listing all the clusters in the target population. Then clusters for this study were included by employing simple random sampling technique. On top of that, respondents from administrative staff were selected by using purposeful sampling technique, as it provided the researcher an opportunity to derive an in-depth understanding from information-rich cases on issues that were important to the purpose of the study (Patton, 2002).

Furthermore, for the purpose of this study respondents from the graduating year students were selected by employing multistage cluster sampling technique, as the sampled universities had multiple dispersal located campuses based on their natural clustering in academic Colleges/Faculties/Schools. Cluster sampling technique is normally used to overcome problems associated with a geographically dispersed population where it is expensive in time and resources to construct a sampling frame for a large geographical area (Lodico, Spaulding & Voegtler, 2006). Top level officials -Academic and Research Vice Presidents, and Directors of Quality Assurance in the sampled universities were also selected using purposeful sampling technique as they were believed by the researcher to be key informants for the interviews.

All in all, the dominant sampling technique employed in this study was cluster sampling (one of the probability sampling techniques) in its various forms (i.e. one stage, multi stage and stratified cluster sampling techniques) as each of them applies to select respondents from different groups and institutional levels.

Data Analysis

In this study the qualitative data were used for triangulation purpose to see whether they support or refute results from statistical analysis of quantitative data. Thus, qualitative and quantitative data were analyzed based on concurrent mixed method approach by merging both quantitative and qualitative databases for example numbers and text (Creswell, 2012). The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS 15) computer software was used for analyzing the quantitative data part. For quantitative data the researcher used the Mean as a measure of central tendency (as the study comprised of a large sample size) to describe, and summarize the data in a simple and understandable manner.

When it comes to inferential statistics which are so important to draw inferences or make predictions about the population, the two most important considerations for choosing between the parametric and nonparametric families in survey analysis are *sample size and the type of scale used* in the survey questionnaire (Pallant, 2007). In this regards, the study employed large sample size but the scale type used to collect quantitative data was Five-point Likert-scale. However, since there is an assumption that a Likert scale database could not satisfy a normality distribution, and hence the non-parametric tests which are distribution free were applied as inferential statistical techniques to determine whether there was any difference between or among the comparison groups.

The non parametric statistical techniques used to test group differences in this study were the Mann-Whitney U test which is the non-parametric alternative of t-test and the Kruskal-Wallis H test which is the non-parametric alternative of ANOVA. The Mann-Whitney U test is used to

compare two independent samples when data are either interval scale but assumptions for *t*-test (normality) are not satisfied, or ordinal (ranked) scale. The non-parametric alternative of one-way ANOVA is Kruskal–Wallis and is used for ordinal data, or an interval-scale variable, which are not normally distributed (Creswell, 2012; Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007; McCrum-Gardner, 2008; Pallant, 2007).

Besides this, interviews were analysed using typological analysis approach. Typological analysis approach is done by dividing all information collected through interviews into categories on the basis of some canon for disaggregating the whole phenomenon under study (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993). Thus, the interview data were disaggregated, labelled and summarized into categories and themes based on the attributes of successful institutional strategic planning and strategy implementation practices in universities (emanated from existing theories and empirical studies) and, accordingly, as posed by the researcher in the initial interview guiding questions. Hence, in this study the analysis of quantitative data was done first and followed by qualitative data (interviews) analysis in the form of texts and quotes to triangulate and/or corroborate the results and, finally to identify overall converged findings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The respondents for this study consisted of management team members (Vice Presidents, Deans, Directors, and Heads); staff members (from both academic and administrative staff members); and graduating year (final year) students from various areas of study. From a total of 124 questionnaires distributed to those who were working in management positions in the sampled universities 104 (83%) were completed and returned. Out of the 310 questionnaires distributed to staff (both academic and administrative) 241(77.7%) were completed and returned. Moreover, from the 720 questionnaires distributed to students 570 (79.2%) were returned. In general, from a total of 1,154 questionnaires distributed to all of the respondents categories, 915 (79.3%) were returned and these responses were used in the data analysis process.

Research Question 1.

What is the practice of institutional strategic planning in public universities of Ethiopia?

For the data analysis purpose of this study, the values of the responses below 3 were considered as disagreements, the values of 3 were considered as neutral (indicating neither agree nor disagree) and values above 3 were considered as agreements. If we compute for the average value by summing up all the assigned values for the response alternatives under each of the items within the 5-point Likert scale questionnaires and dividing the result to the total of 5 alternatives provided we can get an average value of 3 (i.e. $5+4+3+2+1=15/5=3$). Based on this assumption, for this study a mean value greater than 3 indicates agreement while a mean value less than 3 indicates disagreement. For quantitative data the mean responses of respondents were compared and judged against these values. Here, the analysis of quantitative data was done first and followed by qualitative data analysis in the form of texts and quotes to triangulate and/or corroborate the results of quantitative data and to finally draw the overall converged findings as presented in the following part.

Table 1: Strategic planning Practice

Variables Under Strategic Planning Process	AAU	JU	DU	Overall Mean
	Mean	Mean	Mean	
Existence of Strategic Plan	3.36	3.85	2.96	3.37
Stakeholders participation in strategic planning	2.71	3.15	2.44	2.75
Clearly indicates the institution's strengths and weaknesses	3.06	3.49	2.61	3.03
Clearly describes the institution's opportunity from its external environment	2.96	3.47	2.63	3
Clearly describes threats to the institution from its external environment	3	3.29	2.67	2.97
Activities and programs are consistent with the goals and objectives of the institution	2.94	3.52	2.69	3.03
Activities and programs are clearly prioritized according to the vision and mission	2.89	3.54	2.65	3
Overall Mean on Strategic Planning Process	2.98	3.48	2.67	3.01

Keys: AAU=Addis Ababa University; JU=Jimma University; DU=Dilla University; Question response scale: 5 = strongly agree; 4 = agree; 3 = neither agree nor disagree; 2 = disagree; and 1 = strongly disagree.

The results in Table 1 indicate that the mean ratings of respondents from JU were in agreement that their institution carried out its strategic planning by applying all the key dimensions required for the successful strategic planning process (Over all Mean= 3.48). At the same time the mean ratings of respondents from DU indicated that they were in disagreement

(Over all Mean=2.67), signifying that their institution carried out its strategic planning without adequately applying all the key dimensions and indicators required for successful strategic planning process. Even they were not in a position to agree about the very existence of strategic plan for their institution (M=2.96).

When it comes to AAU the respondents agreed that their institution have a strategic plan; the strategic plan has clearly indicated the institution's strengths and weaknesses; and it has clearly described threats to the institution from its external environment. However, they disagreed on the views that there was adequate stakeholders' participation in strategic planning; the strategic plan clearly described their institution's opportunity from its external environment; the activities and programs were consistent with the goals and objectives of the institution; and the activities and programs were clearly prioritized according to the vision and mission of their institution (see Table 1).

When we see the overall mean (in Table 1) for all the three sampled universities, the two main aspects necessary for successful strategic planning process such as stakeholders participation in strategic planning process (M=2.75), and clearly identifying the threats from its external environment in the strategic planning process (M=2.97) were in problem indicating that these public universities in Ethiopia were not sensitive to their institutions ever-changing external environments (see Table 1). Nevertheless the challenges arising both from internal and external environments of these days' universities require forward-looking, proactive management strategies by the leaders. The results in Table 1 have also indicated that the sampled public universities in Ethiopia did not take advantage of giving adequate chance for the participation of as many stakeholders as possible in their strategic planning process.

In order to check whether there is significant difference between the responses of the two independent groups (managers and non managers) about the practices related to strategic planning in their universities, the Mann-Whitney U Test was performed (as can be seen in Table 2 below).

Table 2: The Strategic Planning Practice within the sampled universities as Perceived by Managers and Non Managers (Mann-Whitney U Test)

Item	Respondents Category	N	MnR	Significance Test		
				Man Whitney U Test	Z	Sig.
Strategic Planning Practices	Non Managers	811	461.12	39639	-1	0.318
	Managers	104	433.64			

*Key: Significance Level: $*P \leq 0.05$; MnR=Median Rank; Managers=Respondents from management positions; Non Managers=Respondents of Staff and Students.*

As can be seen in Table 2 the significance levels obtained are not less than or equal to 0.05, so the results are not significant. According to these results there is no statistically significant difference in the perception of both managers and non managers regarding practices related strategic planning in their institutions.

Moreover, to check whether there is significant difference across the three universities in their performance practices related to strategic planning, the Kruskal-Wallis Test was used.

Table 3: Comparison of Strategic Planning Practices among the sampled Universities (Kruskal-Wallis H Test)

Item	Universities	N	MR	Significance Test		
				X ²	df	Sig.
Strategic Planning Practices among the three sampled universities	AAU	312	453.76	132.657	2	0
	JU	277	594.43			
	DU	326	346.13			

*Keys: Significance Level $*P \leq 0.05$; AAU=Addis Ababa University; JU=Jimma University; DU=Dilla University; MR=Mean Rank;*

As can be seen in Table 3 the significance levels obtained are less than 0.05, so the results are significant. According to these results there is statistically significant difference across the three sampled public universities in their performance practices related to strategic planning, as perceived by the respondents. Based on this conclusion, to identify which university is in a better position, the researcher has inspected the mean rank for the three sampled universities in Table 3. Accordingly, an inspection of the mean ranks for these groups suggests that Jimma University is in a better position in terms of strategic planning practices (see Table 3).

To substantiate the findings from the preceding quantitative data analysis concerning issues related to strategic planning practices, interviews were carried out with the officials at the senior management levels across the sampled universities. In this connection, my interviewees from a senior leadership positions at Dilla University have witnessed the problems related to strategic planning practices in this university by stating as:

Strategic planning in this university was not seen as a priority issue in comparison to other day to day managerial routines. According to these interviewees, for the last four years, officials in various top leadership positions had been talking about the preparation of strategic plan but they were not committed about it as they were for other routine activities and decisions. However, as to them, though the strategic planning process completed and ready for implementation, the vision and missions of the university were not adequately shared with all the concerned stakeholders. (ILM-DU).

This result suggests that the issue of strategic plan in DU is the almost forgotten aspect of institutional management activities. This is contrary to other academic institutions that cope up effectively with and adapt to the rapidly changing interests of their internal and external environments. This result from the analysis of interview data also affirmed the results of quantitative data (as indicated in Table 1) regarding strategic planning practice in Dilla University.

Another interviewee from the top level leadership position in Addis Ababa University, concerning the practice and process of strategic planning in his university, explains that:

Yes we have five years strategic plan with clearly stated vision, missions and values. In my view there was participation of concerned stakeholders in strategic planning process but I have been hearing here and there that academic community were complaining that the involvement major stakeholders was not adequate in the first place and was not continuous practice. He went on saying that I can assure you that we have good strategic plan consisted of all its major aspects (as a document) but it was not responsive to these days environmental dynamisms as it was not open to continuous revision. Another problem, according to this interviewee, was that in his university all of the decisions (both strategic and routine) which had been made were completely ignored what was identified as the preferred strategic direction and its associated objectives and activities in the strategic plan document of this university. Hence, according to him, strategic plan in Addis Ababa University was more of a formality (ILM-AAUI).

From the results (of both quantitative and qualitative data) discussed above, it is recognizable that, in Addis Ababa University, the pressing problems related to its strategic planning practice were inadequacy of stakeholders participation and its inability to proactively assessing and predicting changes in its external environment.

Generally, the overall merged findings concerning strategic planning practice and process (from the above analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data) across the sampled public universities indicate that:

- The stakeholders (staff, students, employers, etc.) participation in strategic planning process and practices in these sampled public universities was found to be low and inadequate.
- There was also less emphasis given to assess their external environment in order to clearly identify the opportunities (to build on them) and threats (to reduce their negative impact). Hence, the prioritized strategic issues and objectives of these public universities strategic plans were highly affected by frequently changing interests and policy directions from the government and other external forces.

Contrary to these findings, the literature suggests that successful strategic planning is inclusive, allowing every major stakeholders-the management, teaching and research staff, support staff, students, the council, and other interested parties and stakeholders-an opportunity to participate (Hayward, Ncayiyana, & Johnson, 2003). Moreover, shared governance is not one of the unique features of colleges and universities; it is also part of what makes campus operations effective. It is the lack of participation and the resulting distrust and power struggles that lead to the failure of the strategic planning process in many colleges and universities (Rowley & Sherman, 2001).

Scholars also suggest that the leaders' (in collaboration with the planning team and concerned stakeholders) readiness and commitment to continuously assess their institution's external environment and proactively accommodate changes occurring outside their institution is a crucial step to success in these days' ever changing academic landscape. Effective planning in universities involves an internal focus on the campus and an external focus on the environment. The challenges arising both from internal and external environments of the current universities require forward-looking, proactive management strategies by the leaders. It is difficult to envision a higher education institution committed to continuously improving its services without having a strategic plan with clearly identified opportunities (to build on them) and threats (to reduce their expected negative impacts) accompanied with the culture of continuous assessment from the external environment. The basic strengths of strategic planning are its abilities to help better align the organization with its environment (that set of internal and external forces that can positively or negatively affect the activities of an organization (Rowley & Sherman, 2001).

Research Question 2.

How were the institutional strategies implemented in public universities of Ethiopia?

Without successful implementation, an organization's preferred strategy is nothing more than a dream. Regarding the strategy implementation practices in sampled universities both quantitative and qualitative data were collected from respondents at management positions, staff members (both academic and administrative) and students. Table 4 indicates the results of quantitative data and for the data analysis purpose of this study the values of the responses below 3 were considered as disagreements, the values of 3 considered as neutral (indicating neither agree nor disagree) and values above 3 were considered as agreements. Hence, the mean responses of respondents were compared and judged against these values. Just in a similar way to the analysis procedures carried out above, in this part also the analysis of quantitative data was done first and followed by qualitative data analysis in the form of texts and quotes to triangulate and/or corroborate the results of quantitative data and to finally draw the overall converged findings as put in the following part.

Table 4: Strategy Implementation Practices

Variables Under Strategy Implementation	AAU	JU	DU	Overall Mean
	Mean	Mean	Mean	
Responsibility for the implementation of strategic plan is communicated to the staff	2.63	2.93	2.03	2.53
Mechanisms for monitoring the implementation of strategic plan are in place	2.41	3.09	2.21	2.57
Major decisions and activities are carried out as per the strategic plan	2.26	3.03	2.24	2.51
Resources allocated are adequate to implement the strategic plan	2.3	3.07	2.16	2.51
There is a practice of updating the strategic plan periodically	2.21	3.08	2.29	2.53
Overall Mean on Strategy Implementation Practices	2.36	3.04	2.19	2.5

Question response scale: 5 = strongly agree; 4 = agree; 3 = neither agree nor disagree; 2 = disagree; and 1 = strongly disagree

Keys: AAU=Addis Ababa University; JU=Jimma University; DU=Dilla University

Source: Primary Data

The results in Table 4 show that as to the respondents from the staff and management positions of AAU and DU the responsibility for the implementation of strategic plan was not adequately communicated to the staff. According to them mechanisms for monitoring the implementation of strategic plan were also not in place in their institutions. They did not also agree that major decisions and activities were carried out as per the strategic plan in their institutions. For them resources allocated were also inadequate to implement all the activities as stipulated in their institutions strategic plan. Above all, in these two universities there was no practice of updating the strategic plan periodically (see Table 4). From this it can be deduced that strategy implementation processes in the sampled universities were affected by the lack of clear communication of the what, the where, and the how aspects of strategy implementation to the staff.

As can be seen in Table 4 JU was somehow better than the other sampled universities in strategy implementation aspects and practices. However, JU has also acute problems of communicating responsibilities for the implementation of strategic plan to the staff before beginning its implementation process (Mean=2.93), and more or less in carrying out major decisions and activities as per strategic plan.

To check whether there was significant difference between the responses of the two independent groups (managers and non managers) on practices related to strategy implementation, the Mann-Whitney U Test was performed (see Table 5).

Table 5: Strategy Implementation Practices as Perceived by Managers and Non Managers (Mann-Whitney U Test)

Items	Respondents Category	N	MnR	Significance Test		
				Man Whitney U Test	Z	Sig.
Strategy Implementation Practices	Non Managers	241	175.51	11927.5	-0.713	0.476
	Managers	104	167.19			

*Key: Significance Level: $*P \leq 0.05$; MnR=Median Rank; Managers=Respondents from management positions; Non Managers=Respondents from Staff (academic and administrative), excluding Student respondents.*

As can be seen in Table 5 the significance levels obtained are not less than or equal to 0.05, so the results are not significant. According to these results there is no statistically significant difference in the perception of both managers and non managers regarding practices related strategy implementation in their institutions. In addition, the Kruskal-Wallis Test was carried out to check whether there is significant difference across the three sampled universities in their performance practices related to strategy implementation as perceived by the respondents,.

Table 6: Strategy Implementation Practices among the sampled Universities as perceived by the respondents (Kruskal-Wallis H Test)

Items	Universities	N	MR	Significance Test		
				X ²	df	Sig.
Strategy Implementation Practices	AAU	113	157.44	59.729	2	0
	JU	106	233.65			
	DU	126	135.93			

Keys: Significance Level * $P \leq 0.05$; AAU=Addis Ababa University; JU=Jimma University; DU=Dilla University; MR=Mean Rank;

As can be seen in Table 6 the significance levels obtained are less than 0.05, so the results are significant. According to these results there is statistically significant difference across the three sampled public universities in their performance practices related to strategy implementation as perceived by the respondents. Based on this conclusion, to identify which university is in a better position, the researcher has inspected the mean rank for the three sampled universities in Table 6. Accordingly, an inspection of the mean ranks for these groups suggests that Jimma University is in a better position in terms of strategy implementation practices (see Table 6). To corroborate the findings from the preceding quantitative data analysis concerning issues related to strategy implementation practices, the data collected through interviews were analyzed as follows.

Accordingly, one of the interviewee from senior leadership position at AAU explained as follows:

I can assure you that we had smart strategic plan as a document but when it comes to the implementation aspect of the strategic plan amazingly our university did not follow the strategy set out in it and all of the activities we had been doing were not in accordance to the objectives and preferred strategies set in the strategic plan. The strategic plan document was saying something and we have been doing some other thing. We haven't been strategic in carrying out our missions and objectives, but busy with responding to day to day routines. Our staff had been confused with frequently changed priority areas of the university on the one hand side and inadequacy of clearly communicating to them these ever changing priority areas and activities on the other hand side. So I could say that we had been totally engaged in crises management than proactive leadership towards our preferred strategic direction (ILM-AAU2).

Another interviewee from the senior leadership position at DU said the following:

We had been dwelling mostly in the issues which were not considered as strategic for our university. Even at the top management level we were debating in silly and routine issues. I doubt to say that we had shared vision. In general, I could say that we had been perturbed with giving priority to routine issues than strategic issues with a significant influence for betterment of our university (ILM-DU2).

One interviewee from the senior management position at JU described the practices and problems of strategy implementation in their institution as follows:

We had clearly stipulated priorities and strategies in our strategic plan document. We had been committed to successfully accomplish them. However, our major challenges have been accommodating the frequently changing external pressures and policy interests and directions of the government with our already prioritized strategic issues which required us to change somehow our already prioritized mission areas. He further went on saying that this situation has been affecting steady operation of our university (ILM-JU1).

The interview results discussed above indicate that strategy implementation practices in these public universities had been troubled with problems that vary with the specific context of each of the universities, but still they all share many problems of strategy implementation in common. If we take AAU, it was highly engaged in crises management than focusing on the implementation of their preferred strategies and significant activities. In this institution strategies were identified for the sake of identification only. AAU is going to somewhere that cannot help it to win its competitive and strategic advantages in this globalized and highly competitive higher education environment. DU had no adequately shared vision and excellence areas let alone thinking about strategic positioning. JU had clearly shared vision with intensely identified priorities and strategies but its implementation practices were affected by volatility of the policy directions and pressures from higher education system management level which is external to the institution. This is the same as Taylor & Miroiu (2002) assertion that in higher education, commonly, much effort is deployed in the development of strategic plans; much less in ensuring effective implementation.

The overall findings regarding the strategy implementation practices across the sampled public universities summarized as follows:

- There was weak communication of responsibilities for the implementation of preferred strategies (as they were stipulated in their institutions strategic plans) to the staff (both academic and administrative).
- Lack of adequate monitoring, follow up and feedback mechanisms (by the management position holders and concerned others from top to lower levels in these sampled universities) for checking and supporting the strategy implementation practices of the staff (both academic and administrative);
- Leaders of these sampled universities frequently making major decisions without referring to and aligning them with the major objectives and preferred areas of priority (i.e. their preferred strategic directions) as indicated in their institutions strategic plans;
- Leaders of these universities did not adequately share their institution's vision and preferred excellence areas where they were heading to all concerned stakeholders (staff, students, employers, and the like).
- Fluctuations of preferred institutional strategic issues, priorities and strategies as a result of frequently changing policy directions at the nation's higher education system level and other external environment related pressures and resultant confusions by the universities communities.

Nevertheless, as scholars in the area of higher education management suggest that implementing the plan brings commitment, focus and direction. Implementation of strategic plan is the key to making everything else functional (Wilkinson, et al., 2007). To formulate strategies without some serious thoughts toward implementation seems a serious waste of the strategists' time (Hambrick & Cannella, 1989). No organization anywhere in the world has ever added a single penny to its profits from making plans: the rewards are only realized when plans are implemented (Hussey, 1998). The implementation of strategy is arguably the most important stage in the process of strategic planning for one reason: Without successful implementation, an organization's strategy is really nothing more than a fantasy. Hence, if the universities did not implement the strategies they identified what was the purpose of strategy formulation? It is simply a waste of time, talent and energy as well as other resources.

CONCLUSION

The results of this study indicate that, in the sampled public universities, stakeholders' participation in the process of strategic planning was found to be low. There was less emphasis given to critically assessing their ever changing external environment while planning. The practice of clearly communicating their preferred strategies and activities to both academic and administrative staff was found to be minimal and ineffective. There was also lack of adequate monitoring, follow up and feedback systems. Moreover, major decisions were made without aligning them to the institution's preferred priority areas and objectives as stipulated in the strategic plan document. Thus, it could be inferred that reaching to their preferred strategic direction in these public universities might be negatively affected and as a result, their prioritized missions' accomplishment and achieving strategic goals and objectives could not be reached. This could also lead to the conclusion that these sampled public universities might lack strategic leadership competencies to deploy the human talents and material resources of their institutions towards the effective implementation of their prioritized strategies in strategic planning.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Considering the significance of the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

- For the successful implementation of strategic plan, all the stakeholders who play significant roles in its implementation must be involved in the planning process. Successful strategic planning must include the major parties--management, teaching and research staff, support staff, students, the board, and other interested parties.
- The importance of strategic planning is its ability to better align the university with its environment (that set of internal and external forces that can positively or negatively affect the university's activities). Hence, while they are in their strategic planning process, the leaders of public universities of Ethiopia are expected to give high emphasis to an in-depth scanning and assessment of their institutions' ever-changing external environment to take advantage of opportunities and to reduce outside threats by making informed decisions.
- Since a university's vision is a directing force with a powerful inspirational and integration effect of all stakeholders to the preferred future of the institution, the leaders of public universities of Ethiopia need to have a clearly articulated and shared institutional vision with all concerned stakeholders especially the staff (both academic and administrative), students, the government and other employers.
- Without successful implementation, a good strategy is nothing more than a simple desire. Therefore, it is recommended that the leaders and management team of the public universities in Ethiopia need to:
 - Clearly communicate the responsibilities of the staff (both academic and administrative) toward the university's prioritized strategic issues and preferred strategies before starting full-fledged implementation process of the strategic plan,
 - Introduce adequate monitoring, follow up and evaluation mechanisms for the strategy implementation practices. The aim is to assess progress made towards the achievement of the strategic targets and also for updating and revision of plans based on the feedback,
 - Refer to the major objectives and priorities in their strategic plans when they are making major decisions.

REFERENCES

- Altbach, P. G., & Peterson, P. M. (1999). *Higher education in the 21st Century: Global challenges and national response*. New York, NY: Institute of International Education.
- Ary, D., Jacobs, L. C., & Sorensen, C. (2010). *Introduction to research in education*. Belmont, CA: Cengage Learning.
- Bess, J. L., & Dee, J. R. (2008). *Understanding colleges and university organization: Theories for effective policy and practice, Volume II-Dynamics of the system*. Sterling, Virginia: Stylus Publishing, LLC
- Birnbaum, R. (1991a). *Faculty in governance: The role of senates and joint committees in academic decision making*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Birnbaum, R. (1991b). The latent organizational functions of the academic senate: Why senates do not work but will not go away. *The Journal of New Directions for Higher Education*, 75, 7-25.
- Bolman, L. G., & Deal, T. E. (1997). *Reframing organizations: Artistry, choice and leadership*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass.
- Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (6th Ed.). (2007). *Research methods in education*. New York, NY: Routledge
- Creswell, J. W. (2012). *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research*. (4th Ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson Education, Inc.
- Currell, S. C., & Towler, A. J. (2003) Research methods in management and Organizational Research: Toward Integration of Qualitative and Quantitative Techniques. In A. Tashakkori & C. Teddlie (Eds) *Handbook of mixed methods in social and behavioral research*, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, pp. 513–527.
- Gillespie, K. J., & Robertson, D. L. (2010). *A guide to faculty development*. (2nd Ed.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass
- Goodstein, L. P., Nolan, T. & Pfiffer, J. W. (1993). *Applied strategic planning*. New York: McGraw Hill.
- Hambrick, D. C., & Cannella, A. C. J. (1989). Strategy implementation as substance and selling. *The Academy of Management Executive*, (3), 278-285.
- Harrison, J. S., & John, C. H. (1998). *Strategic management of organizations and stakeholders: Theory and cases*. Mason, OH: South-Western Publishing
- Hax, A. C., & Majluf, N. S. (1996). *The strategy concept and process: A pragmatic approach*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Hayward, F. M., Ncayiyana, D. J., & Johnson, J. E. (2003). *A guide to strategic planning for African higher education institutions*. Centre for Higher Education Transformation (CHET). Available at: www.compress.co.za
- Herbst, M. (2007). *Financing public universities: The case of performance funding*. Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Springer
- Hinton, K. E. (2012). A Practical Guide to Strategic Planning in Higher Education. *Society for College and University Planning*, (1-48). Available at: www.scup.org
- Hussey, D. (Ed.). (1998). *Strategic management: From theory to implementation*. Oxford: Linacre House.
- LeCompte, M. D., & Preissle, J. (1993). *Ethnography and qualitative design in educational research*. (2nd Ed.). San Diego, CA: Academic Press.
- Lodico, M. G., Spaulding, D. T., & Voegtle, K. H. (2006). *Methods in educational research: From theory to practice*. San Francisco, CA: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- McCrum-Gardner, E. (2008). Which is the correct statistical test to use? *British Journal of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery*, 46, 38-41
- MoE. (2010). *Education Sector Development Program IV (ESDP IV) (2010/11-2014/15): Program action plan*. Addis Ababa: Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Ministry of Education.
- MoE. (2012). Educational statistics annual abstract for the year 2011/12. Addis Ababa: Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia.
- Morgan, D. L. (1998). Practical strategies for combining qualitative and quantitative methods: Applications to health research. *Qualitative Health Research*, 8, 362–376.

- Morrill, R. L. (2007). *Strategic leadership: Integrating strategy and leadership in colleges and universities*. Plymouth, UK: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc. Available at: <http://www.rowmanlittlefield.com>
- Neumann, Y., & Neumann, E. F. (1999). The president and the college bottom line: the role of strategic leadership styles. *The International Journal of Educational Management*, 13(2), 73-79
- Pallant, J. (2007). *SPSS survival manual: A step by step guide to data analysis using SPSS for Windows*. (3rd Ed.). Berkshire, England: Open University Press.
- Paris, K. A. (2003). *Strategic planning in the university*. Wisconsin-Madison (University of Wisconsin System Board of Regents). Retrieved from: WWW.QUALITY.WISC.EDU
- Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative research & evaluation methods*. (3rd Ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Reeves, D. B. (2002). *The daily disciplines of leadership: How to improve student achievement, staff motivation, and personal organization*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass
- Rowley, D. J., & Sherman, H. (2001). *From strategy to change: Implementing the plan in higher education*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass
- Rowley, D. J., Lujan, H. D., & Dolence, M.G. (1997). *Strategic change in colleges and universities*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Sallis, E. (2002). *Total quality management in education*. (3rd Ed.). London, UK: Kogan Page Ltd
- Simerson, B. K. (2011). *Strategic planning: A practical guide to strategy formulation and execution*. California: Praeger
- Taylor, J., & Miroiu, A. (2002). *Policy-making, strategic planning, and management of higher education*. Bucharest: UNESCO
- Teshome, Y. (2005). *Policy development in higher education in Ethiopia and the role of donors and development partners*. Paper presented at the International Expert Meeting- "Formulas that Work: Making Higher Education Support More Effective; The Hague. Available at: <http://www.nuffic.nl/pdf/os/em/yizengaw.pdf>
- Trow, M. (2005) Reflections on the transition from elite to mass to universal access: Forms and phases of higher education in modern societies since WWII. In P. Altbach (ed.), *International Handbook of Higher Education*. Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Kluwer.
- Wilkinson, R. B., Taylor, J. S., Peterson, A., & Taylor, M. L. (2007). *A practical guide to strategic enrollment management planning in higher education*. Virginia Beach, VA: EPI International Available at: www.educationalpolicy.org
- World Bank. (2004). *Higher education development for Ethiopia: Pursuing the vision*. Washington, D.C.: World Bank.