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Strategy Development Process in Higher Education: The Case of Marmara University^{*}

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Abstract

Strategic planning in higher education has become one of the most important factors of today's education system. State of the Republic of Turkey, which is aware of importance of this trend in the world, made the preparation and implementation of five-year strategic plans mandatory for higher education institutions. However, when examining the strategic plans made by universities in Turkey in general, it draws attention that strategy development techniques are not used in development processes. Strategies at different levels in universities are not taken in consideration, and strategies are not determined by high participation and not formed and implemented in a conscious way. Marmara University has developed a different and unique approach by considering these facts when doing researches to develop strategies to be effective in the next five-year period. In this notification, it is aimed to reveal strategic approach developed exclusive to universities in 2017-2021 strategic plan of Marmara University, and strategy development process model formed for the purpose of being internalized of strategy in institution. In this respect, in study; it is mentioned how participation of academic and administrative personnel is provided, in which way it is focused on creating value for all stakeholders, how internal and external environment analysis are made with which scientific research projects and how corporate learning is supported in every stage of the process. This paper tries to highlight a case from Marmara University's strategy development process indicating how strategic plan on "the paper" can be changed into internalized strategy creating change, momentum and dynamism through the both implementation of a new approach to strategy and strategy development process.

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Keywords: Strategy, strategy development, university

^{*} This model has been implemented with the support of Prof. Dr. Arif Güllüoğlu and Prof. Dr. Mehmet Emin Arat who allowed the dissemination of strategy to large segments of university and offered their information support in shaping the strategy development process, and help of a team of 120 people and moderators of 10 people who gave active support in the whole process.

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1. Introduction

We are in a process that higher education institutions, universities are undergoing a transformation in all over the world. Globalization dynamics, needs of knowledge-based economy and new communication technologies are transforming all institutions deeply. This process loads new missions and roles to universities, while it increases the importance of universities. In today's world in which competition density among universities at national and international level; now transformation of universities became necessary according to needs and expectations of information society shaped by research-development (R&D), innovation and entrepreneurship. Meaning of this is that determination and management of strategy in universities have gained vital importance. In order to shape and/or adapt to these changes; determination of strategies, management of system and processes, in line with determined strategies and distribution of sources, became so vital for universities. Universities, as all of the other institutions, should seriously think about the factors, which will take part in their strategic plans and basic values to be expressed (Collins and Porras, 1996).

Literature regarding strategy development in higher education focuses on two fields as of education and management. This literature that does not depend on experimental research regarding corporate strategic planning and includes definitive case studies more, has appeared as of 1970s (Shapiro and Nuner, 2001; Dooris, Kelley and Trainer, 2002; Holdaway and Meekison, 1990). Some writers used various strategy development tools in their own institutions such as case assessment matrixes (Doyle and Lynch, 1979; Foster, 1983). Some of them defended that relevant strategic tools need to be adapted according to different cultures and academic values (Groves, Pendlebury and Stiles, 1997; Kotler and Murphy, 1981).

The other worth-stressing important point in strategy development processes of universities is to decide which approach is adapted, outside-in or inside-out. Outside-in approach expresses a widely known, classical strategic perspective (Porter, 1980; Bakoğlu, 2010). It defends the thought that institutions need to define opportunities of external environment and adapt their system in a way to make use of these opportunities. The perspective of inside-out strategy, which reveals the opposite, is as important as outside-in approach (Prahalad and Hamel, 1990; Miller, Eisenstat and Foote, 2002; Bakoğlu, 2003). According to inside-out approach, institutions need to define their strategic sources, which are a part of their business systems, and use these sources to reach the success, and rearrange if needed. Institutions need to create combinations in which outside-in and inside-out strategies are considered together in order to obtain their full of strategic potentials (Meyer, 2007; Bakoğlu, 2000, 2003, 2010).

With reference to all of these facts adopted by the world, Marmara University has adopted a strategy-oriented perception, and actualized the strategy development process stated below with a perception in which outside-in/inside-out strategy development approaches are considered together, through many of implementation ways seen in Turkey for the first time in order to determine the strategies to be effective within the next five-year in scientific ways and with high participation.

2. Strategy Development in Higher Education

Strategy development at higher education emerged especially since 2000s because of the difficulties that were faced in education and relevant areas. Problems such as increase at unemployed university graduates, change at student demographics, decrease of scores necessary for entering the departments and limitations of resources made necessary to move in accordance with strategy development and strategic plans for higher education institutes. By this means, adaptation to changing environmental conditions and providing changing needs and at the same time guiding education with a proactive approach would be possible (Hinton, 2012). At this point the important thing is, like Porter suggests (1996), applying a strategy which will create a differentiation, otherwise the strategy would stay as just a motto. Here one of the important questions is about how well the universities apply and audit the strategies (Neilson, Martin and Powers, 2008). Creating measurable performance indications and making regulations on financial resources are crucial for accurate application and auditing of strategic plans.

If the higher education institution doesn't improve its strategy with this understanding, since it won't include the necessary tools to implement a real strategic plan, they will remain as just beautiful ideas that will allow the development of the institution. In addition to all these, every university that would be successful in its own field should target a specific niche. It is extremely important to define a strategy where the niche is adapted with the strengths of the university (Hamel and Prahalad, 2005).

Competition between higher education institutions has brought the necessity of strategic thinking. For this reason, strategic plans targeted to goals are critical to the success of the institution. The plans should show how to act in the fields of education, research, student and staff mobility, internationalization and etc.

3. Main Aim of the Process of Marmara University Strategy Development

As known, it has been made compulsory for public institutions to prepare five-year strategic plans and to act in this context by the Government of the Republic of Turkey. Therefore, the primary purpose of the strategy development process is to prepare Marmara University's strategic plan for 2017-2021 according to Regulation on Principles and Procedures of Strategic Planning and 10th Progress Plan. However, in addition to this basic and compulsory aim, purposes other than to accommodate a total change which will make the entire process much more meaningful, are also considered. In brief, these purposes ensure to; carry our university confidently into future, become strategy oriented, to plan and to perform the change needed, ensure it to become younger, flexible, and dynamic and keep up with the necessities of the time.

However, higher education requirements of the new age are not only about the innovation of structure. To reach to a distinct place in the university rankings and to make necessary changes for that place stands out as an important purpose. Placement of the students in departments according to the base points with a lower score is also a noticeable negativity. To overcome this negative situation, it has been observed that various improvement and renewal studies should be made. In addition to all these; it has been emerged that our university needs a transformation in order to fulfill requirements such as; raising funds and developing project at national and international level, conducting original studies in the field of research and development, making high quality publications, improving university-industry collaboration, developing international and national collaborations with other universities, becoming an internationally known university and having the ability to attract high level students.

According to these facts, it was concluded that our university needs a unique strategy development model consist of some features such as difference, innovativeness, feasibility, realism, democratic and participating.

4. The Uniqueness of Strategy Development Process of Marmara University

As a result of reviewing the strategic plans of other universities in Turkey, in terms of their approach and their strategy development processes, it can be stated that the strategy development studies of Marmara University have unique qualities and characteristics. Accordingly, the uniqueness and characteristics of University's strategy process and approach are as follows:

- Firstly, considering the differentiation of levels in university, strategy has been identified at two different levels as university level and unit level. With a highly democratic approach, the application which gives the units the opportunity to determine their own strategies, it also gives them a chance to draw their own futures. In this context, the integration of the university level and unit level strategies has been done for the first time within the process.
- Another unique feature of the process comes from its scientific research foundations. The SWOT matrix for determining the strategies at university level was created in the light of the findings of multidisciplinary scientific research projects with common wisdom and a participative manner. To develop strategies and SWOT matrix, five scientific research projects (BAPKO) has been implemented. These projects are; PESTLE analysis, stakeholder analysis, value chain analysis, university analysis, competency analysis and competitor analysis.
- Each stage of strategy development process carried out with multi-disciplinary approach, broad participation and by activating the collective intelligence. In order to ensure participation, a tripartite structure was established which will be discussed in detail in the next section.
- Throughout the entire process, seminars, meetings and workshops carried out in order to train relevant units to develop their strategies in scientific ways, and university level strategies identified by the multi-disciplinary teams.
- Beside trainings, an original source named Strategy Development Guide for Units was provided, which explains the whole strategy development process and clearly shows the step-by-step studies of the process.
- For the first time, a university has developed a strategy with a distinctive and unique approach and strategy development model.

- As far as we were able to detect, for the first time in our country, a university formed its strategy for the purpose of producing value for all its stakeholders. The mentality to create value for stakeholders has been adopted, and actions with this mission have been implemented.

5. Strategy Development Process of Marmara University

The strategy development process section includes the topics as; a new approach of strategy development, strategy development model for the universities, involvement of academic and managerial staff who will carry out the process, training modules in strategy development process and external and internal analyses through scientific research projects.

5.1. A New Approach for Strategy and Strategy Development

The proposed university strategy development approach answers to the expectations of stakeholders by producing a strategy that will provide multiple benefits to the university which enables to differentiate and determine the future. The question is, in order to achieve the multiple benefits of each strategy for economic, social and environmental impact and results as the intersection of all three dimensions of the strategy from the beginning of deducting and generating value to all stakeholders, to address the aspirations of the creation (Bakoğlu, 2010). For instance, if you have determined a strategy for transitioning personalized education system, there is a need to identify the expectations of all stakeholders, to determine the necessity of personalized education, and develop such system accordingly. From this point of view this educational model should generate economic, social and ecologic value. The essential balance in strategies can be achieved through creating value by meeting the expectations of stakeholders in order to ensure sustainable competitive advantage by using differentiation strategy as shown in Figure 1.

The balance in the following diagram, has been adapted to universities from Bakoglu's (2010) model which was developed for the business world in according to find an answer to “Can we develop a model that produces value for everyone by changing business world strategy balance in what way?”, and presented at the 10th International Strategic Management Conference (Bakoglu, 2014). It has been thought that the application of the model, which was created for the sake of “creation value for all stakeholders of an institution”, to public sector before the private sector would be more appropriate and realistic.

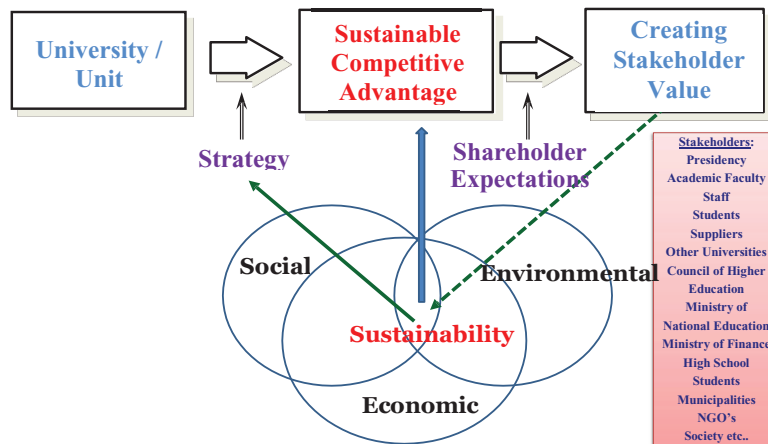


Fig.1. The New Balance in Strategy Development

Source: Adapted from Bakoğlu, R. (2010) *Çağdaş Stratejik Yönetim (Contemporary Strategic Management)*, Beta Yayınları

According to this model, which is a new balance in strategy development; it is observed that university's main goal is to create value for its stakeholders. To generate this value, universities have to analyze their strategies in a broad perspective considering economic, social and ecologic capitals in advance, using PESTLE and stakeholder

analysis that are general external analysis techniques and applying value chain and competence analyses as internal analysis techniques.

5.2. Strategy Development Process for the University

One of the aspects and originality of the model of the strategy development process of the university is its first determination two different levels of strategy as corporate (institutional) and business (unit) levels and then consolidation the two at the university level. In other words, studies located at the university level for institutional strategies were conducted simultaneously with studies of our university units developed by their own strategies. The strategy development model in question specific to the Marmara University is shown in Figure 2. The University strategy model, below, how and from whom the research project to occur which will be described in more detail with research teams based on scientific research conducted in accordance with the results of the SWOT analysis, was determined with the help of training workshops with all members. The data input for SWOT table drawn from completely on the basis of scientific studies done for PESTLE Analysis, Stakeholder Analysis, Universities Analysis, Value Chain Analysis, Competency Analysis and Competitor Analysis. Since stakeholder analysis can provide data related with both opportunities-threats in the external environment and the university's strength and weaknesses, stakeholder-oriented model is developed and applied for the strategy development process as seen as in the below figure located in the middle providing data for both external and internal environmental analysis. After obtaining the scientific results form the research projects for all the analysis mentioned, some trainings and workshops conducted for the preparation of the SWOT table, the determination of alternative strategies (using TOWS matrix), strategic priorities, vision and mission statement, determination of strategy, goals and targets for the university.

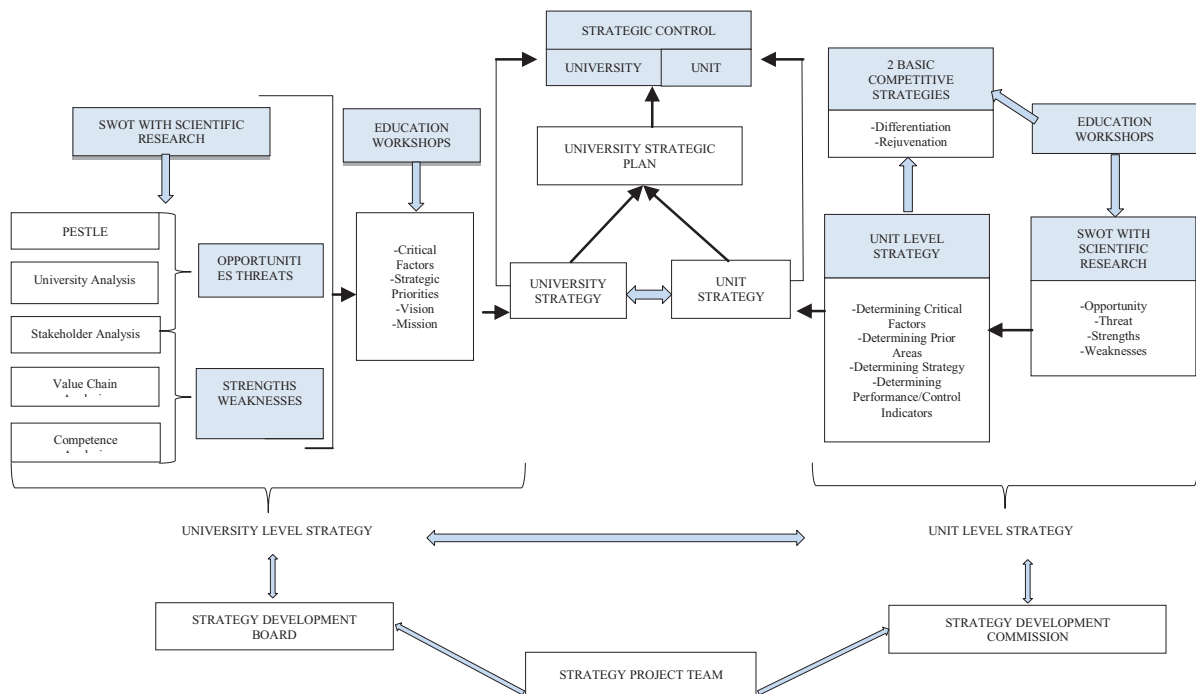


Fig. 2. Strategy Development Process for Marmara University

In the unit level, the strategy development commissions have developed their strategies in line with their situation analysis result. A general training and workshop have been done for the units of Marmara University and "strategy development guide" were distributed to the units to make sure about the units' knowledge on how all the analysis are done and to be able to talk in a common language and integrate two different levels of strategy

efficiently. Along with the guide, training workshops on the analysis done to give concrete feedbacks and opportunity to improve the analysis done, conducted for the units in order to improve units' strategy development process. The members of the Commission, with the support of the whole process of strategy development (trainings, workshops, analysis, evaluation reports and meetings) at the unit level situation analysis, SWOT has been evaluated and the tables have been created in this direction. After vision and mission statements, units have determined alternative strategies in this direction, identifying strategies, objectives and targets.

Gradually the process of writing the Strategic Plan of the unit follows these steps:

- Be done with scientific methods of situation analysis (PESTLE analysis, stakeholder analysis, value chain analysis, university analysis, competency analysis and competitor analysis)
- Preparation of SWOT table,
- Alternative strategies (using TOWS matrix),
- Determination of differentiation and rejuvenation strategy, aims and objectives,
- Strategic Plan writing and reporting for the consolidation process.

After determining strategies at two different levels as unit and the institutional levels, the process of consolidation has started. At the institutional level of strategy development, almost each step for the process has been done through workshops among moderators, the strategy development projects team and some essential authorities from the units when necessary by taking in to consideration workshops done beforehand for the necessary preparation work to complete the process. Roughly 120 people from the strategy development commission at institutional and unit levels, the strategy development research and project teams have worked in the workshops to determine critical success factors, determine alternative institutional strategies (SO, ST, WO, WT strategies), Select one the most important strategies among three important strategies they defined, determine objectives and targets for the selected strategy. After all the each steps done with 120 people, the strategy development project team and all the moderators who were mentoring 120 people in the workshops in a round table have done follow-up meetings to integrate all the results of the previous workshops done with 120 people and finalize the institutional strategy development process.

With the identification of the strategies, objectives, targets and performance indicators, Strategic Plan has become ready. Then the costing studies have been done. After this stage, the Strategic Plan, is subject to the necessary arrangements which is examined by the University Senate and approval stages follows that. By 2017 the Strategic Plan takes effect, monitoring will be provided by necessary monitoring and evaluation studies.

5.3. Involvement of Academic and Managerial Staff

To conduct a healthy way of working in the strategy development process and to achieve high participation in the process of academic and administrative staff within the university, a tripartite structure was established. Primarily, a Strategy Development Committee which provides the representation of all units was established to develop university level strategies. The committee includes 55 people with senior managers of the university and representatives of different faculties, schools and institutes.

For the development of unit strategies, Strategy Development Commissions have been established within each unit (faculty, school, vocational school, graduate school, department, administrative unit, coordinatorship, research and application center). In the creation of the commissions in question, representation of the units in all aspects has been considered and unit managers were chaired the commissions. Total number of members in all administrative and academic units of the university forming the commissions is 677.

Scientific project teams have been established to carry out the situation analyses for the development of strategies of our university on the basis of the scientific researches. These teams have developed projects such as PESTLE analysis, stakeholder analysis, value chain analysis, university analysis, competitor analysis and competency analysis, which will be described in detail below and aid by Marmara University Scientific Research Projects Unit (BAPKO).

The strategy development project team consists of 7 people has been established to manage all the process and to provide necessary coordination. The team in question is in charge of planning, coordinating and controlling each stage for the process, and at the same time, responsible for the forming of the Strategic Plan.

Also a moderators group has been created which are mainly specialized in various branches and have taken an active role in research projects. The moderators served as supervisors of round tables by giving applied trainings in

strategy development workshops for both university and unit levels, and from time to time served as team leaders. With a total of 10 people as moderators, the integration of the process and implementation of applied studies is achieved. For instance, it was enabled with moderators group to; form the SWOT matrix which is constituted by scientific researchers, define the critical success criteria in workshops with a team which is about 120 people with all units and institutions, finalize the results in the meetings, create the TOWS matrix, establish the workshops for defining alternative strategies, evaluate alternative strategies and determine university level strategies, integrate the university and unit level strategies with 10th Progress Plan and existing strategies.

In addition, a team of 10 student assistants is benefitted that provides support for the scientific research projects, training workshops and meetings of all kinds. They also play a significant role in the scientific research process and conducting workshops in an active and productive way.

5.4. Training Modules in Strategy Development Process

As it is described at the above model, to be able to support the development of strategies and formulating Strategic Plan of the University in a participatory manner with common sense, training modules have been developed. In this period, 7 training has been completed which is contributing collective learning processes. Summary of the training modules which are planned and completed in the development of Strategic Plan is shown Table 1.

First training was carried out for disclosing of the university's strategic development approach all its strategy in the context of aiming keeping informed the team rector and vice rectors of the generated model and the action plan with the participation of the Chairman of the Commission to be disclosed to the Board. The project coordinators explained their work analyzing the situation in the form of a seminar within the scope of meeting.

Table 1. Training Modules in Strategy Development Process of Marmara University

| No | Educations | Education Level | | Methodology | Instructor |
|----|------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|------------|-------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | | Unit | University | | |
| 1 | Contact Meeting | ✓ | ✓ | Seminary | Prof.Dr. M. Emin Arat, Prof.Dr. Refika Bakoğlu, Project managers |
| 2 | Process and Analysis Trainings | ✓ | | Seminary | Project Team |
| 3 | Workshop for Units of University | ✓ | | Workshop | Moderators |
| 4 | Workshop for Units of University 2 (canceled) | ✓ | | Workshop | Moderators |
| 5 | SWOT Analysis, Mission, Vision Workshop | | ✓ | Workshop | Moderators |
| 6 | Moderators Meeting for Critical SWOT Factors | | ✓ | Meeting | Moderators, Strategy Project Team |
| 7 | Workshop for Alternative Institutional Strategies | | ✓ | Workshop | Moderators |
| 8 | Moderators Meeting for the Consolidation of the Strategies | | ✓ | Meeting | Moderators, Strategy Project Team |

The second training which is completed in 2 days due to the number of participants that attended, was a module in which planning process that they would realize how to Strategy the whole situation and the application of the method of the analysis of the conceptual module is defined as has been described. This feedback training on "strategy development guide" were prepared and distributed to all units.

An all day workshop was conducted with teams of 10 to 15 people in which units made stakeholder analysis and evaluated and described how subsequent analysis will be made of, at Maltepe Facility of the University with selected moderator from the Strategy Development Commission.

A second workshop designed for the units of competence in order to evaluate their value chain and their analysis for the units. However, due to the reluctance of participants and the difficulties in creating time, it has been cancelled. It was completed as project team strategy, Process Analysis review and assessment.

The 5th training module has been completed by tabling SWOT analyses, for the determination of the values the university's vision and mission statements and principles with teams between 10 and 15 people accompanied by all-day moderators in a participatory process.

6th training module is a work of 6 hours, which is done by the project team and moderators to determine the critical factors for institutional strategy among SWOT table.

The university's workshop lasted for 6 hours for strategy moderator accompaniment in the form of roundtables with the members of the Commission on the identification of strategies. These workshop recommendations have been reported at each table that was created in the aftermath of corporate strategy in conjunction with sub-objectives and targets designed.

The last training module consists of the strategy project team and moderators. It includes the harmonization of the units' strategies and objectives with the University strategies. In this context, 3 days, 4 hours per day, total 12-hour brainstorming has been done.

5.5. External and Internal Analyses Through Scientific Research Projects

6 Sub-Committee has been established in order to ensure the data that will be used as input in the university strategy development process through the collection and reporting of scientific research. These committees are PESTLE, stakeholder analysis, universities analysis, Value Chain Analysis, competency analysis, including competitor analysis with secondary data.

Strategy project team of our university has developed research projects funded by scientific research projects unit (BAPKO) of Marmara University. Strategy project team, include almost all faculties of our University, was composed of 8 people for PESTLE analysis, 4 people for stakeholder analysis, 7 people for competitor (universities) analysis, 6 people for Value Chain Analysis, 7 people for competency analysis and 4 people for competitor analysis.

In the research project for PESTLE Analysis titled “PESTLE Analysis for Creating Sustainable Future for Universities”; Prof. Dr. Refika Bakoğlu (Faculty of Business) was a project manager. Research Assistant Ebru Bulut (Faculty of Political Sciences), responsible from political and social, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Devrim Dumludağ (Faculty of Economics) responsible from economics, Prof. Dr. Güniz Küçükgül (Faculty of Pharmacy) and Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ibrahim (Faculty of Sport Sciences) and Prof. Dr. Zehra Can (Faculty of Engineering) responsible from technological and Research Assistant Gül Gülenay Hacıosmanoğlu (Faculty of Engineering) responsible from ecological factors has served as researchers of the project. For each research area, two focus groups (except legal and political factors) were conducted and also secondary data was used. Thus, total of 10 focus group discussions were conducted. During focus group discussions, in consideration of the forecasts of leading scientists and practitioners in the field in our country, key factors that have the potential to affect the University 3-5-10 years in the future have been identified. Each research areas' (political, economic, social, technological, legal, ecological factors) critical factors identified and then each factor was evaluated for potential of being opportunity or threat for the university.

In the research project for Stakeholder Analysis titled "Stakeholder Analysis of Marmara University to Create Sustainable Value", Assoc. Prof. Dr. Müge Leyla Yıldız (Faculty of Business) was a project manager. Prof. Dr. Refika Bakoğlu, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ayla Öncer (Faculty of Business), Dr. Banu Çalış (Faculty of Engineering), and student assistants were researchers. The main objective of this project is to identified and classified stakeholders of the university and to determine the expectations of stakeholders. For this purpose, as a matter of priority, Marmara University stakeholders were determined and classified according to the severity. In the next phase, the expectations of stakeholders of university have been identified. Recommendations (SWOT) have been identified considering the expectations of stakeholders of Marmara University in order to create sustainable value. The survey method was used for the classification the University's stakeholders according to the severity. Focus group interviews were conducted for the expectations of all external stakeholders. The expectations of our university's internal stakeholders (academic staff, administrative staff and students) were determined through open-ended questionnaire form.

For the analysis of international universities, in the research project titled “Universities' Analysis that Realized Transformation in Education in the Globalizing World”; Assist.Prof.Dr. İhsan Yiğit (Faculty of Business) was a project manager. Prof. Dr. Ayşen Gargili Keleş (Faculty of Health Sciences), Prof. Dr. Birol Çotuk (Faculty of sport Sciences), Prof. Dr. Refika Bakoglu, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Erhan Akyazı (Faculty of Communication), Assoc. Prof. Dr. Devrim Dumludağ and Research assistant Ebru Bulut were researchers. In this study, we perform analysis the universities across the globe with the success of the institutional transformation process. Thus we try to provide these succesfull transformation patterns for contributing to the strategic plan of the Marmara University.

10 world university ranking lists were analyzed and universities that made at least 30 steps leap within the last four years and that those have continued to rise were included in the research. Researchers have visited 13 universities as of 2 in Korea, 3 in France, 3 in Holland, 1 in Portugal, 2 in Germany and 3 in China stated in sample.

Semi-structured question form and face-to-face interview method are used. Also, secondary data analysis was conducted.

For creating strategic group and analyzing main competitors, a 4 people team worked under the coordination of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Müge Leyla YILDIZ and Prof. Dr. Refika BAKOĞLU. Rival universities determined by sampling using secondary data generated by scientific methods, were analyzed in a comparative way with our university. Regular weekly meetings with the strategy project team are contributed the process of the analysis. Methodological content was developed by comments and recommendations of the President of the Commission, Prof. Dr. Refika Bakoğlu, and the assistant Rector Prof. Dr. Arif Güllüoğlu.

For Value Chain Analysis, in the research project titled "Analyzing and Remodeling of the Value Chain of Marmara University"; Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ayla Zehra Öncer was a project manager. Dr. Refika Bakoglu, Dr. İnci Deniz Ilgın (Faculty of Arts), Prof. Dr. Cem Sefa Sütçü (Faculty of Communication), Prof. Dr. Tevfik Yoldemir (Faculty of Medicine) and Assoc. Prof. Dr. Müge Leyla Yıldız were served as a researcher in the project. The main purpose of this project is to develop a model based on the results of scientific research of the Marmara University value chain. While analyzing the developing model, we also try to develop and determinate of the process in which to areas there is a need for change. The University's value chain model has been developed in-depth interviews performed by the research team as a result of meetings and brainstorming. The questionnaires for the academics and students, in-depth interviews with the relevant administrative unit's managers and the secondary data were used for the analyzing process of the VC model.

For Competency analysis, in the research project titled "Defining the Capabilities and Core Competences of Marmara University through Resource Based View"; Assist. Prof. Dr. Volkan Türker (Faculty of Business) was a project manager. Prof. Dr. Refika Bakoğlu, Assist. Prof. Dr. Mehmet Nuri İnel (Faculty of Business), İlke Kocamaz (Faculty of Business) were researchers. The purpose of this project is to define Marmara University's resources, capacity and competencies, providing a sustainable competitive advantage, and to determine the core competence of the university. Exploratory and descriptive research designed to achieve this goal, aimed to gather qualitative information from different administrative and academic units of the university. In this context, by the research team, focus group interviews were arranged where persons who have high probability of representing different campuses of the university. Academic or administrative units are invited to for determination of their thoughts about resources and competences of Marmara University. Thoughts obtained from the Marmara University's core competencies with focus group studies have been evaluated with content analysis within the framework of the VRIS Analysis.

6. Conclusion

When examining in terms of today's conditions, it can be said that strategy development process has an important role in order universities to remain dynamic and develop them incrementally. It is observed clearly that the proposed strategy development model and strategy approach might have a positive effect, created for Marmara University having the feature of being a big public university in the most important city of Turkey, like İstanbul. It can be said that it is meaningful to create strategy for university in order to generate value for stakeholders with the general purpose of ends of strategy with strategic perspective of both outside-in and inside-out, and make changes in strategy development process accordingly. According to strategic management literature, universities should develop two levels strategy like corporate level and business level strategies, but in practice, it is observed that the two levels strategy is not formed by Turkish universities according to content analysis of the last strategic plans of universities in Turkey, made by the researchers. In this study, it is observed that separating of these two levels of strategies which is one of important feature of Marmara University's strategy development process and model have an important role in terms of internalizing and implementing strategies effectively in any organization. However, it is observed that it can have an effect to lead the changes on perception in which strategic planning work is considered as an unnecessary burden. Finally, it is observed that determination of all data to constitute an input to SWOT, which is the other unique feature of the strategy development process with scientific research projects, can have multi-directional positive effects. It is observed that as set forth by Strategic Management Literature, as well as providing development of Strategy based on strong bases; it has positive contributions in terms of increasing its research competence inside of organization, drawing attention to research, doing interdisciplinary studies and increasing competence of making teamwork. It is necessary to express clearly that new researches should be designed to validate all the mentioned observations above, and all the observation stated here are pre-observations.

It is observed that universities may become more dynamic, more integrated to its environment, its units are more coordinated to work with each other when 1,5 years of strategy development process of the Marmara University taken into consideration. It can be also said that this process has important contribution to creation of competence to study with multi-disciplinary teams and of team works. It is also observed that on one hand a resistance change movement can be seen in process while on the other hand the process and the tension created against the movements may make positive changes in university. It can be said that these and similar to these struggles may have important contribution in strategy development process. It must be stated here that these observations are subjects for new researches in terms of generalizing scientifically.

It can be said that strategy development process and strategy approach created to be applied in especially big-size public organizations are applicable for all universities, public institutions and organizations and event enterprises, and if they are applied, they have important contributions in terms of providing strategy development process and results with high participation and starting inter-organizational transformation movement, and developing competences. Scientific researches are also needed for validation of these theses.

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