

MBA Program Evaluation of the Arab Academy for Banking and Finance Sciences – Sana'a

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ABSTRACT

This article details a program evaluation of the Master of Business Administration program (MBA) of the Arab Academy for Banking and Finance Science. It was reviewed with the CIPP Evaluation Model, through which the context, inputs, processes, and product of the program have been evaluated. The SWOT analysis has been used to analyze the data and develop four strategies: opportunities-strengths; weaknesses-opportunities; strength-threats; weaknesses-threats. The Scenario Matrix was then used to summarize four recommendations for program improvement. The research methods included qualitative structured interviews with students and alumni and analysis of program documents. This combined CIPP-SWOT method offers a simplified approach to program evaluation and assumes that action for change will follow.

Keywords: CIPP Model, MBA, Program Evaluation, SWOT Matrix, Scenario Matrix.

1. INTRODUCTION

Education is the core of the world's development and prosperity; it is a highly valuable resource (Santos, 2013) and specifically higher education because it is an essential tool to achieve strategic goals (Czinkota, 2006). In response to the needs and expectations of the business sector and community, there is a necessity for reforming the higher education system (Mizikaci, 2006). The decision to pursue a graduate business degree is highly involved and complex. The decision is not only affected by the candidates' lives and individual careers, but also by changes within the graduate management education market, which becomes more competitive, globalized and continues to develop to meet their needs. (Graduate management admission council, 2018). To meet the demands of the global business world, the form of the MBA program needs to be a combination of academic theory and practically oriented courses (Gurol, Doruk, and Cemek, 2016).

Santos (2013) notes that the most widely accepted definition of an MBA is the one published by Graduate Management Admission Council (GMAC) "A graduate business degree that is earned by completing a Master of Business Administration in a business school and where students engage in traditional academic coursework and instruction based on real business challenges." Another definition of MBA is: "The foremost symbol of Business Education" (2008, p. 584).

One of the definitions of evaluation was adopted by Fournier (1994), who defined it as a systematic, purposeful, and careful collecting and analyzing of information for the purpose of assessing program impact, documenting effectiveness, identifying areas needing change along with improvement and establishing accountability. Another definition was that evaluation shall determine a program's effectiveness for incrementally and specifically adding value, both to operations and potential benefits to members of the public (OECD, 2004). Matthews and Hudson (2001) proposed that evaluating a program should result in continuous improvement of

its offered quality, and Stufflebeam (2002) asserted that the CIPP model (i.e. context, input, process, and product) has been demonstrated to be viable as a general approach for component-based evaluation.

MBA programs have been developing an evaluation framework based on the CIPP model of evaluation, as first described by Stufflebeam in the 1960s. Stufflebeam, (2003) indicated that: “The CIPP Model’s current version (Stufflebeam, 2002-a, 2003-a; Stufflebeam, Gullickson, & Wingate, 2002) reflects prolonged effort and a modicum of progress to achieve the still distant goal of developing a sound evaluation theory, that is to say, a coherent set of conceptual, hypothetical pragmatic, and ethical principles forming a general framework to guide the study and practice of evaluation.”

A SWOT analysis is another tool that has been employed to evaluate an MBA program. It is a simple tool to assist the faculty in organizing data for program improvement and a SWOT analysis can be the driving force for initiating and implementing meaningful change (Orr, 2013). The SWOT analysis originated in the early 1950s as a result of efforts by Harvard Business School professors George Albert Smith Jr. and C. Roland Christensen (Panagiotou, 2003). Following from this development, the Scenario Matrix has been used to generate variations of how the future may develop based on the SWOT Matrix data. When supported by thorough and accurate data, these tools can offer a plausible set of four scenarios to indicate how an industry might develop in the future (Wulf *et al.*, 2010).

The combination of the CIPP model, SWOT analysis, and the Scenario Matrix offers a novel, practical, and theoretically grounded approach to program evaluation that also provides strategic direction towards the identification and implementation of specific improvement efforts. To illustrate in detail how this process works in practice, this study presents an evaluation of the MBA program at the Arab Academy for Banking and Finance Sciences – Sana’a. Beyond this direct practitioner contribution, the study offers insight into the situational context that may be of value to the review and development of other business administration programs in the country. Both the process and findings of this study will allow comparison of the strengths and weakness of similar MBA programs in connection with market needs. Specifically, the Arab Academy for Banking and Finance Sciences may use the results of the study to revise the contents of their programs in order to emphasize the areas of strength and work to improve weaknesses. In short, the findings present an opportunity to respond effectively to students’ needs. More generally, this study contributes a model for business administrators and academic researchers to apply to future program improvement initiatives and scholarly endeavors.

1.1 Study Objectives

The main purpose of the study is to evaluate the MBA program in the AABFS using CIPP, SWOT, and the Scenario Matrix. The research objectives revolve around the main goals as follows: to identify the needs of the enrolled students aligned with the program objectives; to identify alternative strategies that could be used to enhance the merit of this program; to investigate whether the processes employed by the management are aligned with the program objectives; to examine whether the final product of the MBA program is aligned with the program objectives; to determine opportunities that utilize strengths; to determine weaknesses that can be improved by taking advantage of available opportunities; to determine strengths could be used by AABFS to reduce threats; to determine defensive tactics could be used by AABFS to reduce weaknesses and avoid threats; and to determine the recommended scenarios by applying the CIPP model and SWOT analysis that may help AABFS to improve the MBA program.

1.2 Significance of the Study

In the local context, evaluating the MBA program fulfills a service to society by helping to determine how well the market needs for well-educated professionals are being met. Findings from the study offer actionable formative data to support the continuing development of the AABFS MBA program and other similar efforts in the country. Direct feedback from student perspectives of program strengths and weaknesses to the leadership of AABFS will offer valuable insight on opportunities to create a better academic environment. Moreover, the findings of the study will provide decision makers in the MBA program with pertinent data and information to improve the overall quality of higher education. Beyond the local significance, the study will also encourage researchers in the field of business administration to conduct further studies using the clearly presented CIPP-SWOT-Scenario Matrix model, or variations thereof.

1.3 Study Organization

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2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Firms are always in need of qualified managers and supervisory personnel (Camino and Mejia, 2006). Ross (2011) explained that an MBA program is part of economic and societal development to increase personal knowledge, skills, and living standards. Iwasaki (2005) agreed that the MBA degree has been one of the fastest growing and most popular fields of study since it was introduced in the early 1900s. Moreover, he indicated that the potential seekers of the MBA degree have a wide variety of backgrounds with respect to age, gender, education, ethnicity, academic/scholarly knowledge orientation, and duration and type of work experience. In addition, the MBA is considered to be a passport into a state of financial growth for individuals. Despite these beliefs, Iwasaki (2005) found that there was no relationship between job outcomes and the MBA degree. Furthermore, the MBA may not be the only way to achieve confidence from developing knowledge and skills, as this can also be accomplished through actual work experience.

Chaudhry (2003) argued that firms are not fully satisfied with MBA graduates worldwide. Many common weaknesses have been identified, such as deficiencies in communication skills and limited work experience. Therefore, he emphasized that MBA programs have to teach common business fundamentals while also tailoring content to suit the needs of the local business community.

Santos (2013) claimed that business school applicants are informed and better educated now more than ever because they have been provided with tools that help them to seek out superior alternatives. Thus, the deficiencies of programs, the unmet needs of employers, and the discerning abilities of applicants all combine to make evaluation critical to higher education institutional success.

Matsuda, and Matsuo (2017) stated that MBA holders have the benefit on starting up a new business. The reason is not that MBA holders are advantaged with remarkable talent or occupational experience, but that MBA holders gain resources through the MBA program. An MBA program is worth completion because even when controlling for remarkable talent or occupational experience, it enhances performance. This encourages potential candidates of MBA programs by clarifying that an MBA program is a worthwhile investment of their two years as students. However, there is no guarantee that all MBA programs are equally effective. A program can be effective if it encourages students' creativity, leadership, or other essential abilities, but the role of peer networks incorporated through classmates also contributes to the perception of effectiveness.

Hemmer and Frye (2012) emphasized that program evaluation is about examining whether change has occurred. Therefore, an approach to program evaluation should examine intended and unintended change. Stufflebeam (2001, p. 5) defined evaluation as "a study designed and conducted to assist some audience to assess an object's merit and worth." Moreover, Kusek and Rist (2004, p. 12) defined evaluation as "an assessment, systematic and as objective as possible, of a planned, ongoing, or completed intervention. The aim is to determine the relevance of objectives, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability so as to incorporate lessons learned into the decision making process."

Mizikaci (2006) indicated that program evaluation is crucial for educational programs. It assists managers in establishing quality standards against which the program will be assessed, and requires the creation of specific course objectives, teaching-learning practices, and needs and learning outcomes. Research methods for program evaluation may include quantitative data, statistical analysis, documentation, and qualitative methods to provide deeper analysis and information. Batd (2017) emphasized conducting a multiple-methods analysis for consistency and reliability of results. Obtaining similar results using different analytical tools assists evaluators in gaining different perspectives. Furthermore, Duman and Akbaş (2017) thought that performing program evaluation has become an important part of the ongoing process of program development and improvement. As a comprehensive process, stakeholder needs are taken into consideration, as well as the interests and values of teachers, students, and inspectors engaged with the education program.

Stufflebeam (2003) defined the CIPP model as a comprehensive framework for guiding formative and summative evaluations of projects, programs, personnel, products, institutions, and systems. The model has been configured for use in internal evaluations, as well as for contracted or mandated external evaluations. Self-evaluation may be conducted by project teams, individual service providers, or an organization's own evaluators. Applications have spanned service areas and various disciplines, including housing, education and military personnel review systems, transportation, safety, and community development. The model's core concepts are denoted by the acronym CIPP, which refers to the evaluation components of Context, Input, Process, and Product.

Quezada (2005) thought that the application process of the CIPP model has undergone some changes since it originated in the 1960s. Its fundamental form stressed the need for process and product evaluations during the first generation. The model later added emphasis on context and input, thereby comprising four components within a comprehensive system to broaden use for both formative and summative evaluation. Thus, the CIPP Model has become a decision-oriented evaluation approach structured to help administrators improve their decision-making processes and outcomes.

According to Farsi and Sharif (2014), Stufflebeam's CIPP model encourages all evaluators to appraise a program with different evaluation approaches critically and to decide which ones should be further developed and which are most worthy for continued application. In addition, they recommended that evaluators use the term "evaluation approach" instead of "evaluation model" because the former term is broad enough to cover all evaluation practices, encompassing all coordinated and planned activities that help to achieve a set of goals. The study of evaluation approaches is important not only for the purpose of professionalizing program evaluation, but also for the purpose of scientific advancement. Scientifically, such study can help to identify, examine, and address conceptual and technical issues pertaining to the discipline of evaluation research. Operational considerations from the profession can also assist in identifying issues and planning for particular studies.

Yigit *et al.* (2002) mentioned that SWOT analysis is a simple technique, easy to understand, and used by administrators to formulate strategies and policies. Ommani (2011) found evidence for broad applicability in his study of farm management systems that utilized SWOT analysis to analyze business strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. SWOT has also been used as a framework for helping planners set goals and identify adequate strategies to achieve them. Dyson (2004) suggested that SWOT analysis is a method of moving towards an agreed upon strategy and that it aids in generating new strategic initiatives that require considerable analysis and testing before adoption. The testing should be framed against all of the developed scenarios in the SWOT matrix, a matching tool that helps managers develop four basic types of strategies (David, 2015). These strategies are strengths-opportunities (SO), weaknesses-opportunities (WO), strengths-threats (ST), and weaknesses-threats (WT).

The scenarios are used as tools to identify applicable adaptation options for decision-makers and to build shared understandings of community vulnerability to future change (Armitage & Wesche, 2014). Also, Gates (2010, p. 13) provided practical steps to form scenarios, as follows:

1. Identify a focal issue the organization faces or a major decision
2. Identify the macro environment's driving forces that influence the key factors
3. Identify the critical uncertainties
4. Select scenario logic
5. Flesh out the scenarios
6. Identify implications and robust strategies
7. Identify indicators

3. METHODS

This study is qualitative in type, as this format is adequate for the subject matter of evaluating an MBA program. Muylaert *et al.* (2014) stated that "the qualitative research method is characterized by addressing questions related to the singularities that are unique to the field and the individuals researched." Holland and Garbarino (2009) noted that qualitative methods can generate robust, sophisticated, and timely data and analysis. The particular method used in this study is the collection of information through structured interviews.

Jamshed (2014) indicated that a researcher employing a qualitative methodology generally begins without firmly pre-conceived expectations of what they will find and then gradually fine-tunes the approach as data becomes available. This could be done by one-on-one interviews or as issue-directed discussions. As Prescott (2011) emphasized, the interview format has proven to be extremely productive for data collection, as the researcher is fully aware of the importance of enabling the informant to be at ease. On the other hand, Welch (2017) stated that qualitative research is complex and messy, but this approach should be considered if it is necessary to explain phenomena in the multiple contexts in which a business routinely operates.

Our overall research question for this study was: How are the needs of the enrolled students aligned with the program objectives? The data collection instrument to address this research question was a structured interview guide developed with questions that applied the CIPP model and SWOT analysis of the MBA program. The interviews were conducted with a purposeful sample of MBA students, a selection of students who had perspectives on information relevant to the program. In addition, the researchers reviewed multiple AABFS MBA documents such as the academic guidelines and the handbook that added enriching content toward the purpose of this research. The researchers met each interviewee in person for about an hour. Once all interviews had been completed, the collected information was categorized in line with the research questions and analyzed according to the related themes for final recommendations.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Analysis of the Interview Data

The questions in the interview guide aimed to gather data related to Stufflebeam's CIPP model and to provide relevant data for the SWOT analysis. Specifically, four questions on the context, input, process, and product of the MBA program reflected the framework of the research design.

The context component evaluated the clearness and convenience of the vision, mission, and goals of the program from the perspective of the students. The program system was also evaluated in terms of adequacy of credit hours, number of courses, and part-time format. The admission system was evaluated in regard to the convenience of materials such as books, internet resources, and techniques. The balance of the evaluation addressed activities, assignments, presentations, research, workshops, and infrastructure.

The input evaluation component investigated such topics as life-long learning and whether the program enhanced the student's scientific efficiency for planning and research. Interviewees were also asked about the continuity and quality of program delivery, with emphasis on academic staff proficiency and specialized knowledge.

The process component of the program evaluation focused on communication with students to keep them updated with latest news. The process evaluation component also addressed whether or not the program followed the assigned timetable, including the necessary content and principles delivered at appropriate times to fit student learning and research needs.

The product evaluation component investigated the capabilities of alumni for scientific and professional efficiency, social activism, and effective research. Also addressed were the societal satisfaction with alumni of the program, the opportunities for alumni to qualify for new positions or promotions, whether they could apply their knowledge effectively in their work, and whether the program indicates modern development. Table 4.1 below displays the CIPP questions and responses.

In addition to the four CIPP questions, another four questions addressed the four parts of the SWOT analysis. The final question was about generating scenarios based on the interviewee's responses to the SWOT questions. The interview data was analyzed and then inputted into a SWOT Matrix and a Scenario Matrix.

Table 4.1 CIPP model questions and answers

	Context	Input	Process	Product
Research question	How are the needs of the enrolled student aligned with the program objectives?	What are the alternative strategies that could be used to enhance the merit of this program?	How the processes employed by the management are aligned with the program objectives?	How are the final products of MBA program aligned with the program objectives?
Method / data source	By using interviews, student documents, and performing qualitative interview analyses	By conducting student interviews and performing qualitative interview analyses	By obtaining specified information from student interviews and performing qualitative interviews analyses	By using interviews questions with students, and performing qualitative Interviews Analyses
Results	<p><u>Strength in</u> Meeting goals with society and market, meeting students' ambitious, program system, admission, English material, presentations method, and infrastructure as class-rooms, equipment, praying place.</p> <p><u>Lack of:</u> unclarity mission & goals, Arabic learning materials, unknown educational goals, internet connection, technique, activities, assignment for English section, courses research, workshop, cafeteria services.</p>	<p><u>Strength in:</u> Theoretical skill, quality, efficiency of doctors.</p> <p><u>Lack of :</u> Life-long learning, continual improvement, Internet communication for students.</p>	<p><u>Strength in:</u> Conducted timetable, Principal cooperation.</p> <p><u>Lack of :</u> Students Communication network.</p>	<p><u>Strength in:</u> Scientific proficiency, social activist, social satisfaction, opportunities for alumni, apply knowledge in work, indicator for modern development.</p> <p><u>Lack of :</u> Professional efficiency</p>

4.1.1 SWOT Matrix

David (2015) explained that “the Strengths-Weaknesses-Opportunities-Threats (SWOT) Matrix is an important matching tool that helps managers develop four types of strategies: SO (strengths-opportunities) Strategies, WO (weaknesses-opportunities) Strategies, ST (strengths-threats) Strategies, and WT (weaknesses-threats) Strategies.” David (2015) suggested that the most crucial element of developing a SWOT Matrix was that it requires good judgment for matching key external and internal factors because there is no one best set of matches.

David (2015) encouraged attention to external opportunities with SO Strategies to use the firm’s internal strengths, but notes that SO strategies may first require pursuit of WO, ST, or WT strategies in order to build capabilities. Organizations will strive to overcome weaknesses to turn them into strengths, as well as avoiding threats by concentrating on opportunities. By taking advantage of external opportunities, WO Strategies aim at improving internal weaknesses. To avoid or reduce the impact of external threats, ST strategies use a firm’s strengths to defend against threats. Purely defensive WT tactics can also be directed at avoiding external threats and reducing internal weaknesses. However, an organization faced with numerous internal weaknesses and external threats may be in a precarious position.

A schematic representation of the SWOT Matrix has provided in figure 4.1. The SWOT Matrix is composed of nine cells. There are eight steps involved in constructing a SWOT Matrix. After completing the four key factor cells, labeled S, W, O, and T, the four strategy cells, labeled SO, WO, ST, and WT, are developed (David, 2015).

Table 4.2 SWOT matrix (on following pages)

ST	SO
(S1,S4,S6,S7,S18,S20,S21,T1,T2) Enhance competitive advantage. - AABFS's Commencement (S3, S12, S19, S22, T3) Enhance practice projects. (S6,S14,T4) Design new advertisements (S23,T5) Utilize latest technology.	(S1,O10) Hold seminars discussion and debate. (S3,S22,S19,O2,O8,O11,O14) Establish Academic club. Open MBA specialization. (S2,S20,O12,O18) Open new branches. Support social activities. (S6,S3,O14) Open DBA or PhD program. (S13, O6) establish research center. (S14,O12,O9) open new branch Build up relationship and partnership (S18, O13) Activate the communication with alumni. (S21, O3) Train in business field or survey. (S23,O21) Support student’s innovation.
WT	WO
(W1,W22,T1) Repair and improve admission, E-admission, using teaching technology and technique. (W2,T2) Use E-advertisements (W3,W12,T3) Implement the practical and research goals, activities. (W21,W28,W30,T4) Meet dean and vice dean periodically, support students to be social activist, support innovation, and enhance communication with and between students and AABFS. (W24,T5) Utilize Smarts technology such as boards	(W1,O1) Prepare new student orientation events every semester. (W4, W7, O17) Meet academic staff with students. (W8, W12, W30, O9.O16) Build up relationship and partnership The Toefl shall be considering for entry into program for both sections. (W9, W12,W17,W22,W24,W25, O4,O18,O21) Establish E-library. Create android system.

in every class, Establish computer library, LCD(s)	Update Facebook page. Create official Whatsapp groups. Utilize diversity of learning resources. Use teaching techniques and technology. (W14, W27, O11, O20, O22) Establish Academic club. Support innovation , teamwork building (W20,W23,O10) Hold seminars and debate. (W28, W29, O19, O23) support social activists. Organize AABFS's commencement
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5. CONCLUSION

5.1 CIPP Model and SWOT Analysis

To fulfill the objectives of this study, the research question was addressed utilizing the following methods: structured interviews with part-time, enrolled, and alumnus students; examination of staff/faculty handbook; analysis of accreditation documents; and review of the website of the AABFS. Data were also obtained from a set of written documents of the AABFS vision and mission, and goals and objectives of the AABFS. Data was then assimilated into a framework for SWOT analysis.

5.1.1 Context with SWOT

The strengths of the context evaluation component of the CIPP model included clear vision, mission, and goals. The mission was characterized as adapting with society and market needs, the goals were meeting students' ambitions, and the program had Ministry of Higher Education credibility. The program was seen as suitable in terms of the ease of the admissions process, credit hours, part-time structure, duration of study, number of courses, classrooms, and a place of prayer for men. All courses had books with latest versions in English, and Arabic materials were suitable for assignments and presentations.

The weaknesses of the context component of the CIPP model primarily involved institutional information and communication. This theme began with a simple failure to give students the AABFS handbook while registering. Although the handbook only offers basic information on the program, the larger issues are that the management of the AABFS has not adopted a policy to implement the practical side of the program, educational objectives have not been explained to students, and there is insufficient information available about the program. Perhaps resulting from these management deficiencies, there are weak connections between students and academic staff. Arabic learning materials lacked sufficient references for further study and there were not enough references in the library and there was no e-library. Moreover, there were not enough workshops, class activities were limited, and there were no discussions after assignments to help in providing feedback and information sharing. Technology deficits included facilities without internet service, and classrooms without laptops, projectors, screens, or smart boards. More general amenities were the lack of air conditioners, the unsatisfactory service in the cafeteria, and the women's prayer room was too small.

The opportunities of the context component of the CIPP model included preparing new student orientation events for new students, and the market needs to open new MBA specializations and to train students in underserved business fields. New technologies also offer opportunities, such as an e-library, mobile apps, SMS, Whatsapp, and a Facebook page.

The threats of the context component of the CIPP model suggested that in an increasingly competitive marketplace, many organizations did not know what the product of the AABFS was. This suggests that there were stronger competitors with clearer messages to potential students. Societal expectations were for practical projects in an MBA program to help students develop skills for use after graduation. The corresponding internal weakness of the AABFS program was that there were limited practical elements designed into courses to meet these societal expectations. The rapid pace of change in technology was also seen as a threat for a program already lagging behind competitors in this crucial area.

5.1.2 Input with SWOT

The strengths of the input evaluation component of the CIPP model included building theoretical knowledge and research skills. In these areas, the program compared favorably to other universities in the country because academic staff were viewed as having high proficiency.

However, there were corresponding weaknesses associated with these strengths. For instance, the AABFS program utilized a traditional style of teaching with limited time for student questions, lack of consideration for student viewpoints, and a slow pace of continuous improvement. A notable administrative deficiency was the inaccessibility of the Dean.

The opportunities of the input component of the CIPP model offered the potential to establish a life-long learning and research center, to add a thesis option, and to build relationships and partnerships with other universities and companies to strengthen the program. To enhance student skills, the TOFEL test could be considered as a program entrance requirement and while in the program, students could take part in seminars and debates as part of a continuous improvement process.

The threats of the input component of the CIPP model included the same threats noted in the context section, plus the poor security and economic situation of the country. This latter addition affected the ability to build a broad network of partners.

5.1.3 Process with SWOT

The strengths of the process evaluation component of the CIPP model included following the timetable as assigned and cooperation between employees at admissions and the finance department and students.

On the other hand, the weaknesses of the process component involved delaying the start time of the semester due to insufficient numbers of students, a weak communications channel for learning and sharing information, and lack of research tools. In addition, there was a lack of social activities in the AABFS program attributed to overly busy schedules of students.

The opportunities of the process component of the CIPP model were to hold seminars and debates for program continual improvement, to establish an academic club to share information and experiences, and to open new branches in different cities in Yemen. The threats for this section were the same as the previous section.

5.1.4 Product with SWOT

The strengths of the product evaluation component of the CIPP model included alumni with required competencies who are socially conscious. The program enjoys a good reputation and alumni have better opportunities for promotion in their current jobs or in finding new ones. Many students effectively apply what they have learned in the AABFS program in their daily

practice at work. In addition, the products of the program may be considered as an indicator of the modern development of the program. While positive signs were recorded in all of these areas, there was definitely room for improvement. The main weakness of the product component of the CIPP model was the failure of the program to adequately address the practical side of an MBA program demanded in the work environment.

The main opportunity of the product component of the CIPP model was to open a Doctorate of Business Administration (DBA) or Ph.D. in Business Administration. Additional thoughts were to improve the Arabic curriculum, offer opportunities for students to periodically meet with academic staff, use modern teaching techniques and technology, support teamwork building, utilize a diversity of learning resources, and organize a regular commencement for the program. The threats for this section were the same as the previous section.

5.2 SWOT Matrix Based on CIPP Model

The CIPP Evaluation Model (Stufflebeam, 2003) has been used to evaluate the MBA program in terms of context, input, process, and product with the addition of a SWOT Matrix (David, 2015). The SWOT Matrix next leads into generation of feasible alternative strategies to pursue. The four basic types of SWOT strategies follow.

5.2.1 Opportunities-Strengths

The strength of the academic staff in theory and research fits with an opportunity to fill a gap in the marketplace for advanced or specialized degrees (e.g. DBA, Ph.D., focused MBA), in coordination with the Ministry of Higher Education. This strength is also conducive to seminars and debates, a research center to develop student research skills, and an academic club to enhance student and alumni socialization opportunities and to turn an academic spotlight on continuous improvement of the vision, mission, and goals of the MBA program. Building the AABFS reputation as the most advanced academically oriented program in the country can also be leveraged to form partnerships with other universities and organizations. Alumni networks may also be used as an informal means to add a voice from practice in order improve students' business competencies, as these sorts of skills would have less emphasis in an academically oriented program. Along the same line of reasoning, by highlighting the academic strengths of the staff, the perceived weakness in the program's practical orientation can be minimized and left to competitors to exploit. Greater outreach and communication will be necessary to differentiate the AABFS program from competitors, as practical programs tend to be more generally marketable.

5.2.2 Weaknesses-Opportunities

David (2015) stated that the WO aim is to improve weakness by taking advantage of opportunities. Although the rapid pace of technological change was viewed as a threat in the preceding discussions and the AABFS program had definitely lagged behind on implementing technological tools, an opportunity is also present to improve communication for learning and administrative purposes.

In terms of learning technologies, internet access would open up a wealth of possibilities, such as an e-library and much greater access to both English and Arabic references and learning resources. Although a novel concept, social media platforms could in theory be used to support educational purposes and to establish a life-long learning center. More basic technologies of face-to-face student orientations and periodic meetings with academic staff would also help increase student knowledge of program expectations, requirements, and available resources. These traditional communication tools could go a long way toward creating a feedback channel for students to express their points of view and to have a voice in continuous improvement.

Beyond the program, a coherent and appropriate technological strategy would improve efforts to market the MBA degree and could assist in collaboration with other schools, organizations, and companies. Greater awareness of alumni contributions to society could also be promoted through these channels.

5.2.3 Strength-Threats

The use of ST strategy helps in avoiding or reducing the impact of threats (David, 2015). The strength of the favorable reputation of the AABFS program fits with an opportunity among employers to establish objective criteria for job qualifications and promotions. A master's degree in general may serve this purpose, as society recognizes its value, so a specialized degree recognized by the Ministry of Higher Education should offer added value to employers.

The English language aspects of the educational program were rated as stronger than those in Arabic, therefore, best practices should be transferable to improve the Arabic sections. The strong theoretical aspects of the AABFS program can likewise be emphasized to attract client interest for jointly conducting practical student projects with industry as an extension of classroom learning opportunities.

5.2.4 Weaknesses-Threats

Tactics can be directed to reduce weaknesses and to avoid threats (David, 2015). As previously mentioned, the AABFS program has an internal weakness related to technology in the face of an external threat of rapidly changing technology and competitors who have embraced these tools to their advantage. Many of the administrative problems in the program could be helped with technology adoptions, assuming of course that the program directors could develop an appropriate strategy in this regard. Simple steps could be taken to develop an online admissions system and to provide a handbook and other essential program information in this format. Communication with the Dean and administrative staff could also be facilitated through technology. From these easy first steps, the online information platform could expand into teaching tools and self-directed learning. Many more educational resources could be accessed with an online platform, addressing both traditional and innovative teaching styles, and perhaps even helping to bridge the gap between theory and practice. An online learning platform could potentially transcend the country's security issues and make network collaboration possible through virtual means. Finally, in light of economic challenges, online tools to improve learning opportunities could spill over into creating business and collaborative opportunities in the broader society.

5.3 Scenario Matrix and Concluding Recommendations

The results of the combined CIPP and SWOT analysis lead into the final Scenario Matrix step to re-state the findings as a set of four plausible scenarios to indicate how the program can develop in the future (Wulf *et al.*, 2010). The four scenarios enrich the process of strategic planning by creative thinking, which leads to active engagement with possible futures. Based on the data and the results of the evaluation, four recommendations to further enhance the MBA program are apparent. These address program weaknesses to correct, active additions to make, external threats to the program, and strategic directions to improve.

The first recommendation is perhaps the root cause of all of the internal deficiencies and the inability to respond appropriately to external threats. The program lacks a comprehensive and coherent strategic plan to identify and guide necessary action toward goals. Clarity and detail are needed in the program's role toward meeting student ambitions, the expectations of society, and requirements of the marketplace. For instance, if the program directors decide to build upon the theory and research strengths of the academic staff in response to stakeholder needs,

then this path should be clearly mapped out in objectives and plans to achieve them.

Following from a clear strategic direction, the second recommendation to correct current weaknesses becomes evident. For instance, it is easier to explain the mission and goals of the program to students if they are first determined by the directors and shared with the academic and administrative staff. The educational objectives and all of the necessary program details (e.g. entrance requirements, courses, credits, duration of study, relevant technology adoptions) can then be revised, following from the clearly defined strategic direction. The content of the new student orientation can then be revised to communicate the requirements and opportunities of the AABFS program.

After setting a clear strategic direction and correcting current weaknesses, the third recommendation turns to additions, new program elements. The specific skills and knowledge conveyed by the program, as well as general skills for research and life-long learning will define the needs for establishing a new research center and for developing partnerships and relationships with other universities and organizations.

The fourth and final recommendation addresses external threats, which coincidentally have corresponding elements among the internal weaknesses. The CIPP and SWOT analysis revealed that information and communication technology is both a threat and a weakness. Therefore, again reflecting the newly clarified strategic program direction from the first recommendation, appropriate technologies must be chosen to enable the staff and directors to achieve their objectives.

In conclusion, several limitations were identified which may impact the ability to generalize the approach and the findings of this case of CIPP-SWOT program evaluation. More data from a broader purposive selection of interviewees could have improved the representativeness of the findings. In terms of the method, advances in the CIPP model since its origins in the 1960s have produced a much more comprehensive framework at the cost of greater complexity. In combining a simple SWOT concept with the original CIPP model, this study has proposed an easier approach to program evaluation at the expense of detail and depth of understanding. Further, a SWOT analysis utilizes the perceived strengths and weaknesses of a program as voiced by stakeholders in place of a more objective process of research on a program's external industry and broader environment. Therefore, blind spots are likely to occur in this expedited evaluation model, as the best set of informants cannot be expected to have sufficient knowledge and expertise to address all relevant factors. However, a competent strategist recognizes that every approach has limitations, and that it is prudent to follow even the most thorough of methods with additional research and analysis before deciding upon a course of action. This study has emphasized the need to approach a program evaluation with the understanding that informed action for improvement will necessarily follow. Thus, practice would benefit from designing a comprehensive process of evaluation and change from the outset.

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