

ANALYSIS OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN TURKEY FROM THE STRATEGIC
MANAGEMENT PERSPECTIVE AND APPLICATION OF IBN HALDUN UNIVERSITY

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to examine and assess Ibn Haldun University, which aims to be in a different place in the higher education area by having distinctive targets based on the social dynamics of Turkey in today's rapidly transforming and changing world, with regard to Strategic Management Factors. Based on this, we will assess Ibn Haldun University, which finds insufficient to address education completely with the acceptance of the West, tries to establish a system with its own values within the scope of the strategic management model. Each society has sub-systems based on their systems. The systems such as education, economy and law are the subsystems which should be shaped based on the dynamics of a society. Trying to apply these areas by merely copying from other societies will cause great problems for that society. At this point, it is important to examine and assess the educational approach adopted by IHU is important in terms of analyzing university education systems in Turkey. Also, within the scope of this study, it is aimed that the comparison of the educational system applied in Ibn Haldun University with the other universities operating in Turkey becomes an eye-opening point of view in terms of the development of the higher education system in Turkey. In the study, SWOT and blue ocean strategies, which are among the Strategic Management applications, were used. The analyses made were discussed within the scope of IHU educational activities and views were presented on the activity areas of Turkey Higher Education Institutions based on the results obtained. Abovementioned Strategic Management applications were applied at IHU under different topics and they contributed to the assessment.

Key Words: Higher Education, Strategic Management, SWOT Analysis, Blue Ocean Strategy, Civilisation

1. INTRODUCTION AND LITERATURE REVIEW

Education has been the most important agenda of humanity for centuries with its various forms. The reason for this importance is the potential of education to change the phenomenon and events that it addresses. Education, without doubt, has become the most important factor shaping the present and future of people, societies and states.

The enlightenment philosophers who have stood behind most of the institutions, ideas and trends which are presented for the acceptance of humanity today with the title of "modern" and laid the foundations of them, human type who determines his/her own fate by using his/her own intelligence independent from all kinds of authorities and who live a good, virtuous life. According to the enlightenment philosophers, people should be equipped with correct information to get rid of not being mature, that is to use their intellect and education will provide this (Özgözlü, 2020). Almost all of the thinkers who have shaped the West of today, which dominates the world in both economic and scientific terms, were fascinated by an education fetishism and wrote works demonstrating their power with the importance of education and emphasizing that the lives of students should be completely controlled pedagogically



(Zabcı, 2016). Similarly, Islamic civilization has also given great importance to education and science from its early periods. "Read and Think" are among the most important orders given to humanity by the holy book Quran. The prophet of Islam has said "Seek knowledge even if you have to go as far as China, for seeking knowledge is a duty on every Muslim." (Beyhaki, 1410). Accordingly, scientists have been raised in many Islamic regions such as Andalusia and Buhara in every field of the era, while the west was under darkness and lighted the way for humanity and have had an important role by being a bridge between the West and Greek philosophy after the dark age of the west. (<https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/endulus>)

However, the changing conditions of the world unlinked the connections between the Muslim World and science and this has made science a product to be imported to these geographies. Then the world has reached a stage which has not been experienced before, and all the societies of the world have started armed fights to establish superiority over others and experienced World Wars. Muslim World, which took its share in a very painful way from these wars and had bad days in economic terms, found the chance to behave itself towards the beginning of the 21st century. After the world wars, a rapid transformation occurred in the social, political and financial fields in some countries, including Turkey and except the Western World. These countries faced important changes in 20-30 years and struggled between protecting their traditions established by religious references from their past and modern world arguments -liberal democracy in political life, capitalism in the economic life and individualism in the social life- shaped and dictated by the Western World. Therefore, they neither could maintain their bonds with their past nor they could wholly adopt the rules and principles of modernity envisioned by the West. In a sense, education and the point of view for education have had, or it should have, a vital importance in terms of existence and sovereignty struggle for the geographies having difficulties in determining a clear civilization heritage that they will present to the future generations. Education demonstrates its effects mostly by concrete outputs and it sometimes demonstrates them in an abstract way. For example, the national income calculations were reviewed by a more realistic approach in the period after World War II and it was revealed that national income increase demonstrated an additional increase share which was not possible to be explained by the increase in the production factors. It was understood that this situation was caused directly by the increase in the education level. (Mosino:2002, 3) When viewed from the point mentioned in the assessment of Mosino, education is the basic and most important dynamic of a prosperous society in terms of both economic and other social gains.

It doesn't seem possible that the education-related problems of the societies, especially the ones which have submitted to the West in a sense and suffer from the hegemony of the West by force or unconsciously, can be solved within the pace of life. The way to be followed for education will be a target that will be presented as a result of a serious and planned struggle, which is with strategy. Within this sense, the negative perceptions should be changed and fresh and independent ideas should be formed in minds. Higher education, in which human life is shaped to a great extent, is a very important threshold for this change. New and independent ideas and the individuals who know their essence, are in an endeavor of shaping their future towards this direction can only arouse in the educational institutions that have launched forth with this target. Otherwise, with a perspective of "it was ever so", without any awareness and difference, it is not possible that societies can reflect their essence.

It is certain that a society which has a rooted civilization like Islam civilization, has demonstrated the skill of carrying the humanity around for centuries, used the science and development also for the sake of other societies of the world, has developed a style of behavior, without being selfish, towards the other societies with a reference of a holy authority while managing and guiding humanity and define itself as Muslim in terms of belonging, is the successor of an ocean of science from Buhara to Cordoba will not leave education to the norms of the West which views science by a routinized, positivist point of view.

In our study, we will assess Ibn Haldun University, which finds insufficient to address education completely with the acceptance of the West, tries to establish a system with its own values within the scope of the strategic management model. Each society has sub-systems based on their systems. The systems such as education, economy and law are the subsystems which should be shaped based on the dynamics of a society. Trying to apply these areas by merely copying from other societies will cause great problems for that society. At this point, it is important to examine and assess the educational approach adopted by IHU is important in terms of analyzing university education systems in Turkey.



Also, within the scope of this study, it is aimed that the comparison of the educational system applied in Ibn Haldun University with the other universities operating in Turkey becomes an eye-opening point of view in terms of the development of the higher education system in Turkey.

2. SITUATION ANALYSIS

All the operating organizations should be managed. Rapidly developing and changing conditions of the world led the word 'strategy' to be included in the management area. That organizations use "Strategy" in their management approaches to maintain their existence and reach their targets have become an essential approach. Strategic Management is a Management Sciences field demonstrating the road map to reach the target. Strategy in management science is used with the meaning of "the ways to be followed by an organization to reach its targets". The strategic actions performed by businesses to be distinct from their competitors and come to the forefront in competition have resulted in the formation of a discipline firstly named as Strategic Planning and then Strategic Management. (Aktaş, 2019)

Strategic management which has become popular in the American schools in the 1960s has been discussed mostly as business policies. Today, strategic management, as we know it, has taken its roots in theoretical and application areas from the studies of academicians, businessmen and consultants of the 1960s and 1970s (Üsdiken and Çetin, 2001, p.119). It was named as Business Policy until the 1980s and then named as 'Strategic Management' by the suggestion of Schendel and Hofer (Eryılmaz, 2016).

With Strategic Management, the inner and outer environment of an organization is discussed comprehensively and, firstly, the weaknesses and strengths of the organization within itself are determined by the analyses made. Then, the opportunities and threats out of the organization are determined by the analyses made and strategic actions are established to have the organization reach the goals it has planned. The above mentioned analysis technique is the SWOT analysis. SWOT analysis is used as a situation analysis. SWOT analysis is also an analysis technique used to determine and estimate the future situation of an organization.

According to this second meaning, SWOT analysis is a future situation analysis. (Eroğlu, E. 2009:11.ünite s.3) In our study, the first of the two analysis techniques we applied in Ibn Haldun University is SWOT analysis. We discussed the performance of IHU from its establishment to today by SWOT analysis and we assessed the decisions of the university according to this analysis and also according to unique approaches. In SWOT analysis, the inner and outer situations of an organization are assessed and the weaknesses and strengths for the inner situation and opportunities and threats for the outer situation are determined. To determine the current status in detail, SWOT analysis, which is among the most common types of analysis in this field, was used.

Strengths

- A powerful management approach prioritizing academic development and supporting the use of technology,
- Devoted and solution oriented management personnel,
- Motivating mission, vision and values based on the values of the society,
- A science oriented, silent campus far from the city with a rich library capacity, wide working areas,
- An academic personnel studying at international level,
- An important potential for researchers with its research university identity,



- The number of academic personnel per student is at a high level, the students are qualified and devoted, there is a limited number of students and scholarship opportunities.

Weaknesses

- Its organizational structure has not been completed yet, as it is a newly established university,
- Technical departments, medicine and such programs are not included in the university,
- The academic base of the university has not been shaped yet,
- The transportation opportunities to the campus is limited,
- The values for which the university try to raise awareness has not found a response yet,
- It operates in the social sciences field in which there are limited employment opportunities for graduates,

Opportunities

- There is a need for qualified social scientists in the country,
- The target of being a research university in social sciences,
- The university operates in a centralized city, Istanbul, where its mission, vision and values can be actualized,
- The university adopts a socially comprehensive, comparative education model,
- It applies models alternative to single centered educational systems.

Threats

- The university is far from the city center so this makes difficult for the students to attend classes,
- The success rating is high and the quota is limited so it is perceived as a marginal institution,
- The center of the social sciences is the West,
- The students are unaware of the targets determined as the "Values" by the university,
- Turkey is a developing country and the society is not interested in the academic and scientific studies at the desired level.

The scope and items of the SWOT analysis performed for IHU were prepared after reviewing the SWOT analyses performed for the higher education institutions and IHU Strategic Plan 2020-2025, opinions of the employees and students, observations and the mission, vision and values topics presented by IHU.

When the strengths of the university were reviewed, it is observed that the management and organization structure open to development, work approach compatible with technology and devoted working performance are the triggering factors for the university to reach its targets. Also, that academic personnel adopts an international visionary identity will make a great contribution to IHU for becoming



a central research university. It is observed that the abundant number of academic personnel provides great convenience in accessing information and method learning. In addition, the campus and scholarship opportunities provided by the university play an incentive role for the hardworking researchers.

It is observed that the organizational structure is shaped in the direction according to the target of reaching the values such as "futuvvet (generosity, forgiveness, and bravery), independence, the target of being a research university, comparative education, global competition, open civilization". Considering that the above mentioned ideals are the efforts of getting strength from the dynamics of the society, IHU has presented an eye opening way in the higher education area. Because it is inevitable that a society, which has been the follower of the West in scientific terms for more than 2 centuries, needs the science to be produced with its civilization dynamics by showing up with the targets such as "Intellectual Independence, Open Civilization".

Together with its strengths, IHU also has weaknesses needing improvement as it is a newly established university. Universities are institutions providing employment for their graduates as well as being organizations producing science. Students attend universities with a job expectation. The social sciences fields, which have less employment opportunities for graduates compared to the technical departments such as engineering, medicine, pharmacy etc., may be mentioned to be observed as a disadvantage for IHU in the establishment and development stages. In addition, the factors such as that the campus is far away from the city center, high success ranking draw attention as compelling factors for a university. That the "values" ideals, which are addressed by Ibn Haldun University as awareness and included in the establishment purposes, are understood and adopted by the students needs time so this is considered to be the most important item among the weaknesses.

After this stage, we continue by evaluating the opportunities and threats which are the factors of the outer situation. Indeed, seeing that several centuries of Turkey and similar geographies have passed by following the West, needs a skill of awareness in this period. In the 21st century world, where the dynamics separating the nations have become quite nested, unfortunately, the West has become the center of science in the period of time we live in. This situation should not be considered as a jealous approach but an analysis. There is an education model in the base of the topics we include in the opportunities field in SWOT analysis, which IHU presents as "values" including the dynamics of Islam civilization in its base. Turkey needs scientists who are raised with its own social dynamics. This need may be defined as a disturbance of Muslims from the fact that many disasters such as oppression, crisis, poverty prevailing like a nightmare all over the world caused by the West and the resistance to it. The definition of "Open Civilization" included among the values of Ibn Haldun University in the IHU website is as follows: Open Civilization will enable the members of Islamic civilization to play a global role again and to pave the way for solutions to the problems of all humanity.

Since Ibn Haldun University moves in light of the belief that historical experience and scientific accumulation of Islamic civilization can inspire us, it continues its academic activities with the vision of "Open Civilization," and presents, in front of youth, the ideal resurrection of our civilization as "red apple" or a vision of the future. To introduce the open civilization concept and its historical practices to the world; the first thing to do on this path is to create a civilization consciousness by recognizing our own civilization concept and theory, and then to give insight of world literacy taking into consideration the world's accumulation of leading civilizations." (<https://www.ihu.edu.tr/acik-medeniyet/>)

The effort of IHU to have Islam civilization gain a rich identity, as it was in the past, by addressing it, is praiseworthy. That this wish and effort steaming from the material tracks of this richness coming from the past, will lead an acquisition of a civilization beyond the target, will be understood when viewed from the point of sociology. The matter placed and explained beyond the richness of civilization may be explained as follows: We should not mix protecting some of our historical richness and the praising of Islam civilization into each other. The cultural richness in the past of Muslim societies is either the richness arising from shaping of material life just like the richness in the past of every society or it is the richness arising from the world perception of Muslims and their attitude towards the world which has not left any material trace. The first, that is the development presenting material existence, is not specific to Islam societies only and it is meaningless to make a comparison with the societies other than Islam societies. The second matter, that Muslims bring an interpretation to the existence of humanity on earth,



is specific to Muslims only and it presents a superiority which cannot be reached by any society other than Islam societies (Özel, 1995). The identification of the values produced by the humans who have gained the mentioned superiority with a view of civilization will certainly be a top ideal for humanity.

The last stage to be assessed within the scope of SWOT analysis is the threats factor. That the organization structure of Ibn Haldun University is new causes weaknesses and as well as threats. Also, the negativities such as attending is difficult for the students of postgraduate programs such as Management as the campus is far away from the city center, the limited number of quota accepted with high success ranking are among the threats felt in the first place. The points which IHU locates itself on and differentiates it from the other universities are much more important factors as a threat factor. The risk of these positions are very high. It has a strategically high risk when one tries to express itself to its addresses with a mission, vision and values which have not been presented before.

When the indicators produced in SWOT analysis are assessed, the strategy which Ibn Haldun University should follow will be protecting and developing the strengths. These sides, which will keep IHU distinct and niche position, will contribute to decreasing the effects of the weaknesses and threats on the institution and turning the negativities within the process into advantage.

3. BLUE OCEAN STRATEGIES

After the situation is determined in detail, in accordance with IHU's target of locating itself in a different area, blue ocean strategies were applied and the position where IHU wants to be at were evaluated. Blue Ocean Strategy suggested in the book named "Blue Ocean Strategy - How to Create Uncontested Market Space and Make the Competition Irrelevant" written by W. Chan Kim and Renee Mauborgne, academic members of France INSTEAD University, in 2004, is a strategy applied by many organizations but not named until these authors (Kim and Mauborgne, 2014; Becker, 2013; Lindic et al., 2012). Blue ocean strategy is a management strategy in which competition is left aside and the activities are focused on differentiation.

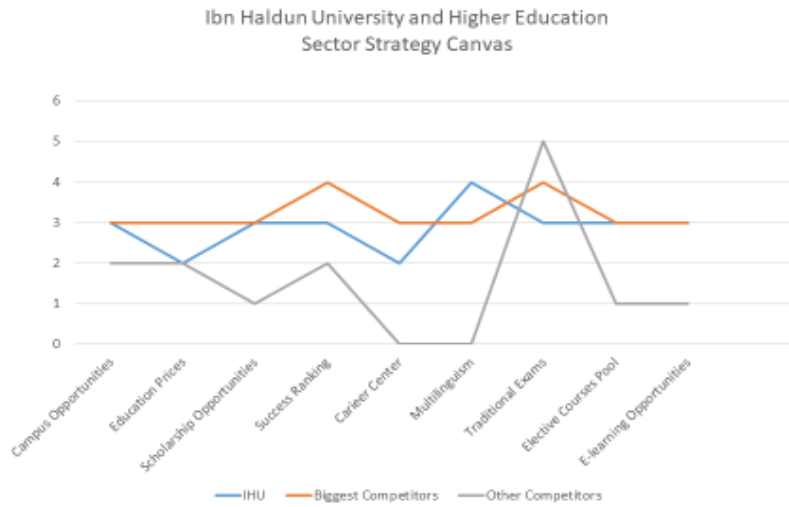
From this definition, blue ocean strategy is a management approach that can be used by all organizations. Ibn Haldun University, we assessed within the scope of our study, is among the most effective examples that applies this strategy in an educational institution.

In Turkey, the higher education institutions are encouraged to differentiate and focus on specialties as a mission. Thus, in the Bingöl University, dated June 2015, and Ordu University, dated August 2015, meetings of the Higher Education Council, it was stated that the current organizations in the newly established universities are insufficient in the social and human capital development and they should keep away from the monotype education models ignoring differences: "In the following period, within the scope of our country's targets, these universities are expected to become integrated with the city or region they are located in and develop the financial, social and human capital. To achieve this, there is a need that higher education institutions review their missions, prefer institutional difference and diversity by leaving monotype aside, focus on their strengths and that some of our universities come to the fore in some areas by keeping their holistic university structure" (The Council of Higher Education (YÖK) Office of Press and Public Relations Announcement, 06. 08. 2015).

Higher education institutions which produce information and contribute directly to the social, human and economic capital of the society have difficulties in producing differentiation due to the factors such as assimilation, standardization and simlizing of missions which are considered to be negative in higher education which are caused by globalization. Most of the universities have preferred to imitate the leading universities of the world regarding the science produced and didactic methods or copied their systems exactly. Blue ocean strategy is the management approach which should be applied in the higher education institutions which have lost their autonomous structures. Universities should prefer the blue ocean mentality in the higher education arena in which the competitional area narrows gradually and the maneuver skill decreases (Selskab, 2017).

In the blue ocean strategies applied for IHU, the first step, sector strategy canvas was formed; the decrease, terminate, raise, create steps were followed and the IHU strategy canvas was prepared differentiating IHU from its competitors.





Graphic 1: Ibn Haldun University and Higher Education Sector Strategy Canvas

As seen in the strategy canvas the higher education sector was discussed with , *Campus opportunities, Tuitions, Scholarship and other opportunities, Success ranking, Career center, Multilingualism, Traditional examination system, Elective course pool, E-learning opportunities.*

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These criteria occurred by considering the fields included in the activities of universities."The greatest competitor" and "other competitors" seen in the sector canvas were scaled based on the universities operating in Turkey and they were located on the canvas.

After this point, the following step is the "four actions" process in the blue ocean application stage. After applying four actions process, it is aimed that the institution functionally reaches a level different from its competitors. Some of the factors accepted by the sectors without dispute will be terminated with this process, some factors will be reduced below their standards and some will be increased over their standards. The create stage is the most important and risky step of the four action process. In this stage, the dynamics which have not been seen in the sector before will be presented to the sector. The factors which have never been used by other organizations and the sector will experience for the first time have started to establish new values for the organization which uses the strategy and the organization sets sail towards the blue ocean.

Four actions were prepared as summarized in the table below. Based on the sector criteria, the decrease, terminate and increase processes were applied and then the last stage which is create step was applied. After completing the four action process, the new values and the new value curve shaped based on these values will be formed.

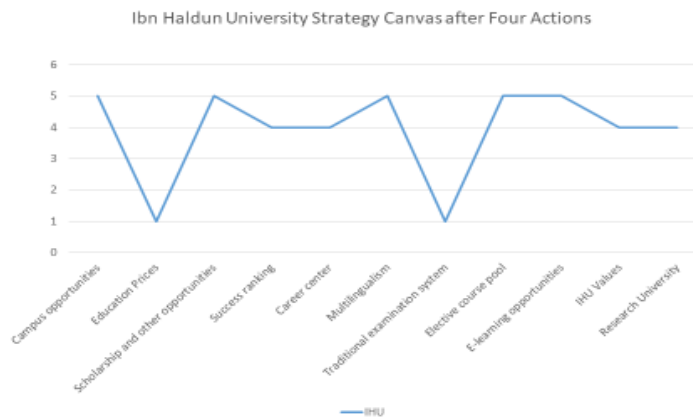
Terminate		Increase
Tuitions	New value curve	Scholarship and other opportunities
		Campus opportunities
		Success ranking
		E-learning opportunities
		Multilingualism
		Elective course pool



INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON EVOLVING TRENDS IN INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH & PRACTICES

Decrease	Create
Traditional Examination System	IHU Values
	Social Sciences Research University

Table 1: New Value Curve with Four Actions



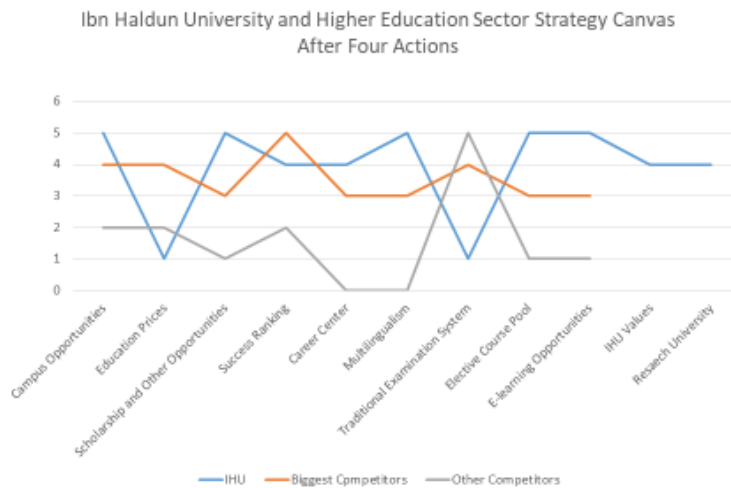
Graphic 2: Ibn Haldun University Strategy Canvas after Four Action

Two new criteria were prepared for IHU in addition to the criteria included in the assessment for the higher education sector. "The IHU values and social sciences research university" criteria prepared in this step is the blue ocean far away from competition, which IHU differs from. Tuitions were terminated within the scope of the four actions process. Tuitions, which pose a load for the students, in the state and foundation universities, have been eliminated and it has been provided that the students are focused on education.

In the other step of the four actions, the traditional examination system has been decreased. It is a fact that the midterm and final examinations lead students to rote learning and do not help a qualified learning. It is aimed that assessment and evaluation vary and the students focus on the meaning and target of the whole course but not the questions that may be asked in exams. The exams prepared with less number of questions and limited time will be insufficient in assessing the knowledge of the students and they are also insufficient in assessing the high level learning products such as analysis, synthesis, evaluation etc. (Türkyılmaz, 2007; Yılmaz, 2007).

After this step, the next step is to increase any kind of factors which affect the learning skills of students. The criteria such as scholarship, campus, e-learning opportunities, multilingualism, career center and elective course pool are increased and it is provided that the students have their education in a more qualified education atmosphere. It is aimed to reach the students who have demonstrated their success by keeping the success ranking rather high. Finally sector strategy canvas and IHU strategy canvas were combined and the area where IHU located itself and the blue ocean strategies were completed.





Graphic 3: Ibn Haldun University and Higher Education Sector Strategy Canvas After Four Actions

As seen in the new strategy canvas prepared with the four actions process, IHU was differentiated from the sector and formed a working area in the blue ocean far from competition. Although new criteria constitute a risk, these criteria appear as the desired targets when viewed in terms of Turkey. The civilization description target we have mentioned throughout the paper can only be achieved by taking such steps and taking risks. The target of IHU to become a research university in social sciences with its own social values will be the acquisitions which this geography needs most.

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4. CONCLUSION

The 20th century in which imperialist hegemony secured its position all over the world, mainly in educational, economical and cultural terms passed by being greatly damaged by the results of the West centered worldview. In the following process, the early period of the 21th century brought disasters to the geographies where Muslims lived, this period resulted in rebellions of peoples, change of the administrations and poverty. Also, the West people started similar insurrections, and the virtual welfare situation was traumatized for these societies. It is seen that this process will evolve to a stage in which various disturbances will gain strength and cause great reactions and continue.

One of the main topics discussed by Edward Said, the famous orientalist, is that the main aim of the imperialists is to form an East image and identity which fall widely behind the West in science, information and development. At this point, it may be observed that this effort has ended with success for the imperialist hegemonic powers. Together with the successful image propaganda, the West has succeeded to present serious concrete studies, comes before Islam civilization in the scientific area. This topic is also among the basic aims of our study. The mission, vision and values targets adopted by IHU were discussed within the scope of the study and various synthesis were performed with SWOT and blue ocean strategies and the basic issues discussed within the scope of the study were evaluated.

Finally, the target of IHU to become a central and assertive research university in social sciences has a great importance for both its own students, the other researchers studying in Turkey and the other universities. Also, the mission differences and the ideal of distinguishing in special fields which are set as a target by YOK for the universities were addressed within the scope of the study. Accordingly, the mission and values of higher education were separated from standards and explained from a different point of view with SWOT and blue ocean strategies, which are two important factors of strategic management. In the future, the studies to be conducted within this scope and with broader approaches create great hopes in terms of the contribution to the educational mentality and social dynamics of Turkey.



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