

# Strategic Planning Process Impact on Management Functions, Employee Engagement and Team Cohesiveness: A Case of Small Enterprise in Myanmar

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**Abstract:-** This action research aims to construct the Strategic Planning Process as an organization development intervention (ODI) for small organizations in Myanmar. This is a case of a Small Enterprise in Myanmar. This study used mixed Methods, and Sample Size is 30. The researcher used a Structured Close-ended Questionnaire for Quantitative Analysis and Content Analysis methods for One-on-One Interview Questions. All the questionnaires were collected digitally with the use of Microsoft Office Form and perform the descriptive analysis and Paired Sampled T-Test with IBM SPSS software and interview questions were also coded and analyzed with the help of MAXQDA 2020 software to find the impact and determine the improvement of Management Functions, Employee Engagement, and Team Cohesiveness. The research Hypotheses are to determine whether there is a Statistically Significant Impact of Intervention and Management Functions, Employee Engagement and Team Cohesiveness or not. This study identified the current situation of the small company using SWOT analysis, Trust Index Survey, and McKinsey 7S Analysis. Strategic Planning was designed and implemented throughout the Intervention process, and the researcher proved the impact of OD Intervention (Strategic planning) on Management Functions, Employee Engagement, and Team Cohesiveness. A collaboratively created Vision, Missions, and Core Value of the company emerged. The finding and result show the statistically significant improvement of these three dependent variables at Pre and Post ODI in this study. Advice for small enterprises is to implement the strategic planning process at the beginning of the business life cycle to improve Management, engagement, and teamwork.

**Keywords:-** Strategic Planning, Management Functions, Employee Engagement, Team Cohesiveness, STEAM Education, Myanmar, Small Enterprise.

## I. INTRODUCTION

This action research site took place at August Myanmar Company which provides Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics (STEAM) Education in Myanmar. All the people from the organization participated throughout the Intervention. This study performs the quantitative survey research method using Structured Questionnaire with Likert

scale as research instruments. All the contents are validated through IOC Index, and the reliability test is performed through Cronbach's Alpha Score. Data are analyzed with SPSS software using Paired Sample T-Test. This also performs qualitative analysis with open-ended interview questions. Advanced mixed methods are used for qualitative research, and content analysis is performed using MAXQDA software. The ODIs at August Myanmar Company are mainly strategic intervention and human resource interventions to take over the critically needed problems. This research took place ODI to develop the vision, missions, core values, and strategies by engaging all the employees for the company and celebratedly create the outcome. The research analysis indicated that ODI has significantly improved management functions, Employee Engagement, and Team cohesiveness. STEAM Educators now better understand the importance of Strategies, management functions, and performing together to get better results. They also realized to build trust between each other and develop cohesiveness among the organization and individuals, and among each of the individuals.

### A. Background

August Myanmar Company was founded in 2013 as a Small and Medium Enterprise. In 2019, the company created a new strategic business unit (SBU) to distribute the STEAM Educational Product and Education Services into Myanmar, which is named as Myanmar Robotics and Coding Schools (MRCS). MRCS firstly introduced Korean Educational Robot into Myanmar Market, followed by the related educational services to the customers. According to the market response upon the products, MRCS tried to provide STEM Robotics and Coding Education to the local schools. MRCS started to recruit STEM Educators from various Technological and Computer Universities to provide the proper educational support to the students and customers. MRCS opened the first Training campus at Yangon Head office and then opened the first Training School and Office branch at Mandalay in April 2019.

As the demand for STEM education from private schools increased, the management team tried harder to recruit the education team to provide quality education services. August Myanmar Company has a department structure, and 30 educators and staff are currently working. The Academic Department is the primary department of the company where most of the employees are working under that department. There are a total of 22 Educators usually working as Master

Educator, Senior Educators, and Assistant Educators. Their function is to develop STEAM Lesson plans related to the products and ages, train educators from the schools using MRCS products and services and train the students at the company training school. They also have the responsibility to collaborate with their appointed schools, monitor their STEAM Education activities, and provide the Teacher training and polishing training for the educators from those schools.

According to the preliminary diagnosing to the company, August Myanmar is having lack of Vision, Missions and strategies and facing numerous performance decrease and motivation. There is also higher turnover rate and poor collaboration and teamwork. Therefore, this study aimed to analyze, design, and implement the appropriate Strategic Planning Process as an Organization Development Intervention and determining the impact of that ODI on Management Function, Employee Engagement and Team Cohesiveness variable.

### B. Literature Review

Thompson & Martin (2010) states that if companies are to succeed, they must adopt strategies appropriate for the circumstances they face, feasible regarding their resources, skills, capabilities, and desirable to their stakeholders. Companies fail when their strategies do not meet stakeholders' expectations or produce an undesirable outcome. The strategic management process is how Management defines the scheme or strategy for a business based on the company's strengths, weaknesses, and external environment. Good strategic planning must be provided by a clear purpose, long-term vision, the highest level of involvement, and planning, communication, and motivation reviews. Strategic planning could be defined as the process of developing and maintaining a strategic between the organization and its changing marketing opportunities. Kotler (1981). Strategic Management is the formulation and implementation of initiatives by top Management, taking resources and environmental opportunities into consideration that will allow the organization to achieve its goals. (Robbins, Coulter, and Randel, 2021). The vision is an attractive view of the future reality of the business, it can contribute to setting the direction for value-oriented business development as well as creating coherency among executives and employees. (Wittmann & Reuter, 2008)

A mission is a broad statement of an organization's purpose that provides an overall guide to what organizational members think is necessary. (Robbins, Coulter, and Randel, 2021) Strategic vision and Organization mission contribute to sending the organization in a particular direction by influencing the organization's strategy. Vision provides a business ambition, while Mission provides business principles. (Bob De Wit, 2020). Allison & Kaye (2015) defined Strategic Management as a systematic process through which an organization agrees on and builds critical stakeholder commitment to priorities that are essential to its Mission and responsive to the organizational environment. Where Katsiolouides & Abouhanian (2016) stated that Strategic planning guides the acquisition and allocation of resources to achieve these priorities. Strategic Planning is the process by which a system maintains its competitiveness within

its work environment by determining where the organization is, where it wants to go, and how it wishes to get there.

Henri Fayol (1916) identified five functions of Management that every manager performed in their daily work. These five functions are planning, organizing, commanding, coordinating, and controlling. (Wren & Bedeian, 2009)

Gallup organization defines employee engagement as the involvement with and enthusiasm for work. (Kompaso & Sridevi, 2010) Engagement provides benefits for both the organization, including enhanced commitment, loyalty, performance, greater synergy and productivity, and for individuals, including the sense of personal fulfillment, wellbeing, moral increment, and job satisfaction. Employee engagement refers to being psychologically involved in, connected to, and committed to getting their jobs done. (Dessler, 2019) Engaged employees "experience a high level of connectivity with their work tasks" and therefore work hard to accomplish their task-related goals. (Christian, Garza and Slaughter, 2011)

Group cohesion is expressed in the pattern of mutual attraction and repulsion in the affective relationships between group members. Several factors can strengthen cohesion within the group: success with the group task, good interpersonal relationships, group size, and the common enemy. (Gert Alblas & Wijzman, 2021). The term cohesiveness refers to the complex forces that give rise to members' perceptions of group identity and the attractiveness of group membership. The cohesiveness of a group has a major effect on the behavior of its members as higher cohesion amplifies the potency of group norms. (Bratton, 2020). Mullins and Mclean (2019) define the four factors which affect group cohesiveness and performance: membership, work environment, organization, and group development and maturity.

Patrick Lencioni (2012) reveals the four actionable steps to achieving long-term. 1) Build a cohesive leadership team, 2) Create Clarity, 3) Over-communicate Clarity, 4) Reinforce Clarity. The Five Behaviors model is co-created by Wiley Workplace Learning Solutions and Patrick Lencioni and driven from "The Five Dysfunctions of a Team" by Lencioni (2002). This model could enable individual and team members to get expected results whereas creating a collaborative, joyful working environment. These behaviors are known as 1) Trust, 2) Engage in Conflict, 3) Commit to Decisions, 4) Accountable, and 5) Focus on Achieving Collective Results. Bruce Tuckman, an educational Psychologist, defined the phrase of team development in "Developmental Sequence in Small Groups (1965)". These phases can be seen as forming, storming, norming, and performing. Then, a fifth stage, adjourning/mourning, was added. (Tuckman & Jensen, 1977) He identified these five-stage development processes which most teams follow to become high-performing.

### C. Objectives

The research objectives of this study are as follow:

- To analysis the current situation of August Myanmar Company in terms of Strategy, Management Functions, Employee Engagement, and Team Cohesiveness

- To develop and implement Strategic Planning Process as ODI for the August Myanmar Company.
- To determine the impact of ODI on Management Functions, Employee Engagement, and Team Cohesiveness.

**D. Hypotheses**

The researcher formulated the following research hypotheses based on the research questions for the study,

*H<sub>10</sub>*: The Management Functions has no statistically significant difference between Pre-OD Intervention and Post-OD Intervention

*H<sub>1a</sub>*: The Management Functions has a statistically significant difference between Pre-OD Intervention and Post-OD Intervention

*H<sub>20</sub>*: The Employee Engagement has no statistically significant difference between Pre-OD Intervention and Post-OD Intervention

*H<sub>2a</sub>*: The Employee Engagement has a statistically significant difference between Pre-OD Intervention and Post-OD Intervention

*H<sub>30</sub>*: The Team cohesiveness has no statistically significant difference between Pre-OD Intervention and Post-OD Intervention

*H<sub>3a</sub>*: The Team cohesiveness has a statistically significant difference between Pre-OD Intervention and Post-OD Intervention

**E. Action Research Framework**

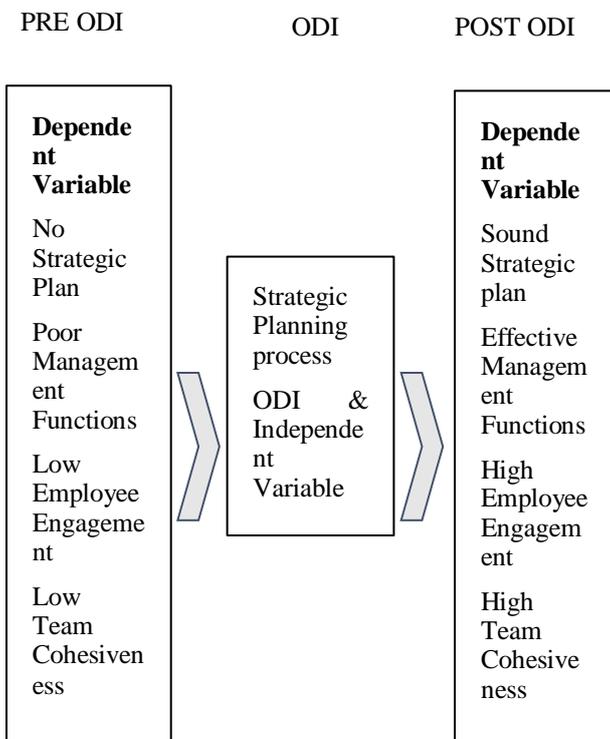


Fig. 1. Action Research Framework

**II. METHODOLOGY**

**A. Type of research**

The quantitative descriptive study was constructed with a five-point Likert Scale questionnaire and analysis with Paired Sample T-Test between Before and After Organization Development Intervention (ODI).

A qualitative study for Interview Questions with content analysis between Before and After ODI. (Management Function, Employee Engagement, and team cohesiveness)

**B. Population**

Total of 30 respondents from August Myanmar Company, which is the complete sampling for this case. (Based on a confidence level of 95%). 14 Men (47%) and 16 Women (53%) participated in this study. The following table shows the education Level of respondents of the study.

TABLE I. EDUCATION LEVEL OF RESPONDENTS

Education Level	Frequency	Percentage
Undergraduate	4	13
Bachelor's degree	17	57
Master's degree	7	23
PhD	2	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100</b>

**C. Reliability and Validity**

The research instruments used in this study are structured Closed Ended Questionnaires constructed from the previous research. There are total of 15 questions for Management Functions, 12 questions for Employee Engagement and 31 questions for Team Cohesiveness. There are also 15 Open Ended Interview Questions for Qualitative Analysis.

The instrument's reliability used in this study was determined through Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, obtaining the overall value of 0.964 in this study. They indicate total internal consistency as acceptable when collecting data from 50% of the sample size at another organization that is also practicing the same services.

The instruments to be used in this study also have been validated by five experts' opinions, including the Professors, Senior Management Personals and Advisors. Checking the IOC Index score and the questions which have very low IOC value were excluded when conducting the actual data collection.

TABLE II. RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY RESULT OF VARIABLES

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	No of Items	<.05 IOC Index
Management Functions	0.883	15	3
Employee Engagement	0.810	12	2
Team Cohesiveness	0.951	31	3

**D. Procedure**

This study was carried out by accessing the respondents from August Myanmar Company. The Action research model was employed in conducting this study to study the impact of ODI, which is also the independent variable, on Management Function, Employee Engagement, and Team Cohesiveness which are dependent variables. The Intervention was aimed to build the Vision, Missions, Core Values, and Strategies for the company. And determining the impact of IV on DV by implementing Strategic Planning Process. This process included three stages Pre ODI, Intervention, and Post ODI Stages.

**1) Pre ODI**

At this stage, the current problem occurring in the company are identified by SWOT analysis, Trust Index Survey, and McKinsey 7S analysis. Survey questionnaires were used to measure the respondent’s opinions on the current situation of the company. Then determine the IV value, and upon the diagnosis result, the OD Intervention is designed to create a

suitable strategic planning process and address the problems on Management, engagement, and teamwork.

**2) Intervention Stage**

The custom-designed Intervention was developed based on the suggestions and comments from the management team and educators. This Intervention has a series of training and brainstorming sections to formulate the strategic planning process and improve management function, employee engagement, and team cohesiveness.

The organization-wide training and workshops were implemented within two months as the intensive Intervention. A total of 10 sections performs with over 30 hours of participation of all the employees from the August Myanmar Company. There were also the oneself Talk section and Interview section in this Intervention. Several group activities were performed to construct and develop the strategic plan for the company. The best proposed Mission, visions, core value, and strategies were selected from the proposed solutions came out from the group’s activities. The following table shows the series of interventions carried out in this study.

TABLE III. ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT INTERVENTIONS

No	Activities	Description	Duration
1	Section 1	Mission, Vision, and Core Value	Half Day
2	Section 2	Team Building & Team Alignment	Half Day
3	Section 3	Group Dynamics	Full Day
4	Section 4	Principle of Management	Half Day
5	Section 5	Employee Engagement	Half Day
6	Section 6	Strategic Management and Planning	Half Day
7	Section 7	Strategy Formulation	Half Day
8	Section 8	Employee Self Talk	Half Day
9	Section 9	Forwards to the Positive Organizational Change (Appreciative Inquiry)	Half Day
10	Interview	One on One Interview	15 Mins for each

**3) Post-ODI Stage**

The Strategic Planning Process was formulated, and implemented after the Intervention and the impact of OD interventions on the targeted variables were measured to identify any changes in the focused variable in terms of management function, employee engagement and team cohesiveness. Data on Pre and Post ODIs were collected, analyzed, and compared using the same questions set at the Pre ODI stage. The outcome of the study and the changes of the variable was presented in this stage. The final section was one-on-one interview between all employees and the researcher, to conduct the qualitative data analysis.

Q12 and Dyer Team Assessments for Employee Engagement and Team Cohesiveness.

**III. FINDING AND RESULTS**

After successfully designed and implemented the Strategic Intervention, August Myanmar Company has the Vision, Missions, Core Value and Strategies for their future. These are collaboratively created with the total engagement of all the employee at the company.

The result of the Quantitative analysis of the variable in this study was analyzed using Paired T-test at Pre and Post ODI. The differences in t-value were presented in the following table.

TABLE IV. PAIRED DIFFERENCES OF VARIABLE AT PRE AND POST ODI

Variable	Mean		Improve	Rate	Differences	
	Pre ODI	Post-ODI			t	p Sig
Management Function	3.36	4.07	0.71	21%	-9.589	.00
Employee Engagement	3.61	4.17	0.55	15%	-7.36	.00
Team Cohesiveness	3.35	4.03	0.67	20%	-15.88	.00

Note: 95% of Confident Interval

Qualitative Content Analysis has been applied to open-ended interview answers in this study, and computer-aided text analysis tools have been used to examine and analyze the qualitative contents. The following table shows the words primarily used to answer interview questions conducted before and after OD Intervention. The frequency of words indicated a significant increment of positive comments between Pre and Post ODI.

TABLE V. FREQUENCIES OF WORDS AT PRE AND POST ODI

Words	Frequencies	
	Pre ODI	Post-ODI
Team	101	135
Learning	69	77
New	45	51
Communication	38	43
Trust	36	40
Plan	43	32
Skills	29	44
Training	33	34
Knowledge	26	38
Good	23	44
Teaching	26	27
Teamwork	22	26
Sharing	25	23

According to the result of the quantitative analysis, all variables have less than 0.5 p-values, and findings of the qualitative analysis, it can be concluded that all values are significantly significant between pre and Post ODI.

For the hypotheses testing, the substantial value in Management Function, Employee Engagement, and Team Cohesiveness was a significantly positive impact at Pre and Post ODI. Therefore, alternative Hypotheses Ha1, Ha2, and Ha3 were supported, where null hypotheses of H01, H02 and H03 were rejected.

#### IV. DISCUSSION

The objective of this study is to construct the Strategic Planning for the Small Enterprise to get the better improvement on Management, Engagement, and Teamwork. The result of this study found that small enterprises need to clearly define Strategy, including Vision, Mission, Core Value, and Strategies as the critical strategic plan for the company, which will lead to a significant positive improvement in Management Function, Employee Engagement, and Team Cohesiveness. It's also important that Small Enterprise need to perform the important stage of Strategic Planning, which is Strategy Formulation, and it needs to be done with the all-inclusive engagement and collaboration of employee so that there will be the functional smoothness, engagement of all people, and higher cohesiveness of team members.

Organizational Development Intervention is not a one-time practice. However, it is a continuous process, and the strategic planning process is not also just a planning process, which needs to be followed with the implementation and control process. The researcher believes that strategy is the most critical element for any of the organization, although there are several problems found out in the Pre ODI stage. The management or leadership team will always need to plan ahead and make the necessary changes to respond to the environmental impact for the company.

This study will be used as the guidance to practice for all small enterprises facing poor employee performance, lower engagement, and weak teamwork. For the further study, the sample size could be expanded in conducting at the more prominent organization and taken more time for Intervention to study for the more extended period.

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