

AN INTRODUCTION TO BENCHMARKING IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to look in to the literature regarding Benchmarking, which are used in the world for several decades. This paper may give us the information about the topic. Main objectives were, to know about the term Benchmarking, to investigate the types and importance of Benchmarking in Higher Education, and to know the scope of Benchmarking.

INTRODUCTION

The term benchmark was originally used in surveying to denote a mark on a survey peg or stone acts as a permanent reference point against which the level of various topographic features can be measured. It has also acquired a more general meaning as a reference or criterion against which something can be measured. The first use of the term in an educational sense is accorded to R.K. Melton (1997) standards represent benchmarks with which students compare their ability and performance".

Xerox first applied the term benchmarking to a process of organizational self-evaluation and self-improvement. Faced with a rapidly declining market share in the early 1980, the company pioneered the method of comparing and evaluating its business process, products, and performance against competitors. The organizational learning acquired through this process led to dramatic reduction in costs and an improved share of the market. The methodology was transferred and adapted to all levels of education in North America in the early 1990, followed rapidly by Australia and more recently the UK and, to a lesser extent, continental Europe. (Schofield 1998)

Although universities are essentially not for profit, public service organizations they must generate sufficient income to support

and reinvest in the educational enterprise. Universities are in no doubt that; they operate in a series of competition local, regional, national, and global.

In the commercial world, benchmarking is used to identify new, innovative, and more effective ways of doing things to gain and maintain competitive advantage. In the world of higher education, gaining competitive advantages are an important motivating factor, but institutional reputation, based on such matters as standing, the public perception of the currency of awards and the employability of graduates are also important. In both the national and international market there, are clearly competitive advantages in establishing and maintaining a reputation for high quality education and research. Benchmarking is being used as a way of reinforcing peer groups and helping to maintain and enhance institutional reputation.

Objectives of the Study: To know about the term Benchmarking
To investigate the types and importance of Benchmarking in Higher Education
To know the scope of Benchmarking