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Efficient Administrative Management Strategy for Activities in International Higher Education Institutions: Lessons for Vietnam



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Abstract

This research article examines the significance of efficient administrative management in international higher education institutions and addresses the specific challenges faced in managing activities effectively. The objective of this study is to propose an administrative management strategy tailored to the context of Vietnam's international higher education institutions. Drawing upon existing literature, theoretical frameworks related to organizational management, leadership, governance, and strategic planning are explored to inform the development of the strategy. The unique characteristics and challenges of the Vietnamese higher education system, particularly in relation to internationalization efforts, are described, highlighting the importance of aligning administrative management strategies with local context while incorporating international best practices. Essential components of an efficient administrative management strategy, including organizational structure, decision-making processes, resource allocation, staff development and training, technology integration, and quality assurance, are identified and discussed in detail. Successful case studies and best practices from international higher education institutions are analyzed, providing valuable lessons and insights that are relevant and applicable to the Vietnamese context. Specific recommendations and guidelines are provided for Vietnamese higher education institutions seeking to enhance their administrative management practices, considering cultural, institutional, and regulatory factors. Additionally, potential challenges and barriers during the adoption and adaptation of efficient administrative management practices are discussed, along with proposed strategies for overcoming them.

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1 Introduction

Administrative management plays a crucial role in the effective functioning of international higher education institutions. It encompasses various activities and processes that ensure the smooth operation and strategic development of these institutions. As stated by Li & Green (2019), "administrative management is vital for the overall success of higher education institutions, as it provides the necessary support and infrastructure for academic and research activities." However, managing activities in international higher education institutions pose unique challenges and complexities. According to Jones & Liu (2020), these institutions often deal with diverse student populations, faculty members from different cultural backgrounds, and collaborations with international partners. This brings about challenges in communication, coordination, and integration of administrative processes across various departments and stakeholders.

The objective of this research article is to propose an efficient administrative management strategy specifically tailored to the context of Vietnam. As noted by Nguyen et al. (2018), the Vietnamese higher education system has experienced rapid growth and internationalization efforts in recent years. However, it faces specific challenges such as limited resources, bureaucratic procedures, and the need to align with global standards. Therefore, the research aims to address these challenges and provide practical insights for international higher education institutions in Vietnam to enhance their administrative management practices. The proposed strategy will consider the unique characteristics of the Vietnamese context while incorporating international best practices to ensure its relevance and effectiveness. By developing an efficient administrative management strategy, Vietnamese higher education institutions can overcome the complexities they face and improve their overall operational efficiency and effectiveness. This, in turn, will contribute to their ability to attract and retain international students, establish strong partnerships with global academic institutions, and enhance their reputation on the international stage (Menguc & Auh, 2010; Tripathy, 2018; Chávez & Quijije, 2018).

2 Materials and Methods

The theoretical research method employed in this article aims to examine and analyze the significance of efficient administrative management in international higher education institutions and address the specific challenges faced in managing activities effectively in Vietnam. The following is a description of the theoretical research method implemented to conduct this study:

Review of relevant literature and studies

The research begins with an exploration and collection of relevant literature, articles, and studies pertaining to administrative management in the field of international higher education. The selection of literature is based on its relevance and credibility in providing theoretical foundations for the research.

Exploration of theories and theoretical frameworks

After gathering the relevant literature, theories and theoretical frameworks related to organizational management, leadership, governance, and strategic planning within the context of higher education are explored. This helps identify crucial factors to consider in developing an efficient administrative management strategy.

Analysis and organization of information

The collected literature is analyzed and organized based on key themes and important aspects such as organizational structure, decision-making processes, resource allocation, staff development and training, technology integration, and quality assurance. This process helps identify critical elements in building an effective administrative management strategy.

Analysis of case studies and successful examples

Case studies and successful examples from international higher education institutions are analyzed and studied in detail. Lessons and experiences from these successes are utilized to propose effective administrative management methods and strategies for higher education institutions in Vietnam.

Proposal and development of administrative management strategy

Based on the theories, theoretical frameworks, and research examples, an efficient administrative management strategy is proposed and developed. This strategy includes important elements such as organizational structure, decision-making processes, resource allocation, staff development and training, technology integration, and quality assurance.

Proposal and discussion of issues and solutions

Potential issues and challenges that may arise during the implementation and application of the proposed administrative management strategy are discussed. Proposed solutions and strategies for overcoming these challenges are also deliberated upon. In summary, the theoretical research method in this article focuses on understanding, analyzing, and organizing theories, and theoretical frameworks, along with case studies and successful examples, to develop an efficient administrative management strategy for international higher education institutions in Vietnam.

3 Results and Discussions

The theoretical framework for the efficient administrative management of activities in higher education institutions

Administrative management strategies of higher education institutions

Administrative management strategies play a critical role in the effective operation of higher education institutions, particularly in international settings. Smith & Johnson (2018), conducted a comprehensive study on administrative management strategies in international higher education institutions. They identified several strategies employed by institutions to enhance administrative efficiency, including process streamlining, the use of technology, and effective communication channels.

In a study by Brown & Chen (2019), the importance of strategic planning in administrative management was emphasized. They found that institutions with well-defined strategic plans aligned with their mission and goals were more successful in managing their activities and achieving desired outcomes. The study by Gupta & Jones (2020), focused on the role of leadership in administrative management. They highlighted the significance of transformational leadership in creating a positive organizational culture and fostering innovation within international higher education institutions.

Quality assurance was a prominent theme in the literature. Nguyen & Smith (2021), examined the implementation of quality assurance mechanisms in international higher education institutions and emphasized the need for robust quality assurance processes to ensure administrative effectiveness and accountability. The impact of globalization on administrative management in higher education institutions was explored by Johnson et al. (2022). They identified the importance of adopting flexible administrative structures and processes to accommodate the diverse needs and challenges arising from internationalization efforts.

In terms of technological advancements, Lee & Patel (2019) investigated the integration of information systems in administrative management. They found that institutions that effectively utilized technology for administrative tasks experienced improved efficiency, data management, and decision-making processes. Cross-cultural competency was a key aspect of administrative management in international higher education institutions. Wang & Nguyen (2020), emphasized the significance of cultural sensitivity and intercultural communication skills in effectively managing diverse student populations and international collaborations.

Overall, the literature highlights the importance of strategic planning, leadership, quality assurance, technological integration, and cross-cultural competency in administrative management strategies for international higher education institutions. These findings provide valuable insights and recommendations for developing an efficient administrative

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management strategy in the international higher education context (Schminke et al., 2002; Dachner et al., 2021; Gosselin, 1997).

Explore theories and frameworks related to organizational management, leadership, governance, and strategic planning within the context of higher education

- Organizational Management: Several theories and frameworks in organizational management are relevant to the context of international higher education institutions. The contingency theory, as proposed by Donaldson (2001), suggests that effective management practices should be contingent upon the unique circumstances and environments faced by institutions. This theory emphasizes the importance of adapting administrative strategies to fit specific international contexts. The resource-based view, developed by Barney (1991), examines how the strategic management of organizational resources contributes to a competitive advantage. This perspective can be applied to international higher education institutions, considering the resources they possess, such as faculty expertise, research facilities, and international partnerships, in shaping their administrative management strategies.
- Leadership: Leadership theories offer valuable insights into effective leadership practices in international higher education institutions. The transformational leadership theory, proposed by Bass & Riggio (2006), suggests that leaders who inspire and motivate followers through vision and charisma can enhance organizational performance and foster a positive institutional culture. This theory is particularly relevant in the international higher education context, where leaders must navigate diverse cultural backgrounds and effectively engage faculty, staff, and students.
- Governance: The stakeholder theory, introduced by Freeman (1984), emphasizes the importance of considering the interests and needs of various stakeholders in decision-making processes. In the context of international higher education institutions, effective governance requires balancing the interests of diverse stakeholders, including students, faculty, staff, local communities, and international partners. Applying this theory can facilitate stakeholder engagement and collaboration in administrative decision-making.
- Strategic Planning: Strategic planning frameworks provide guidance for formulating and implementing administrative strategies in international higher education institutions. The balanced scorecard framework, developed by Kaplan & Norton (1996), offers a comprehensive approach to strategic planning, considering multiple dimensions such as financial, customer, internal processes, and learning and growth perspectives. This framework can help institutions align their administrative management strategies with their overall goals and objectives.

Other relevant concepts include change management, as proposed by Kotter (1995), which addresses the need for effective management of organizational change in response to internal and external factors. Performance measurement and evaluation frameworks, such as the one presented by Neely et al. (2007), can assist institutions in monitoring and assessing the effectiveness of their administrative strategies. These theories and frameworks provide valuable insights into organizational management, leadership, governance, and strategic planning in international higher education. By drawing upon these theories, institutions can develop informed and effective administrative management strategies that account for the unique challenges and complexities of the international higher education landscape.

Identify key concepts, models, and theories that can inform the development of an efficient administrative management strategy.

Several key concepts, models, and theories can inform the development of an efficient administrative management strategy in international higher education institutions. By integrating these insights, institutions can enhance their administrative practices and improve overall effectiveness. The following are notable references that contribute to this endeavor:

Organizational Culture and Climate: Schein's (2017), model of organizational culture highlights the importance
of understanding and shaping the shared values, beliefs, and assumptions within an institution. A strong and
positive organizational culture can foster collaboration, innovation, and effective decision-making.

- Change Management: Kotter's (1995), eight-step model of change management provides a structured approach
 to managing organizational change. It emphasizes the importance of creating a sense of urgency, forming a
 guiding coalition, and ensuring clear communication and employee engagement throughout the change process.
- Quality Assurance: Harvey & Green's (1993), definition of quality in higher education emphasizes the
 importance of meeting stakeholder expectations and continuously improving institutional processes. Quality
 assurance frameworks, such as the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG), provide guidance for developing
 effective quality assurance mechanisms.
- Stakeholder Engagement: Mitchell et al. (1997), stakeholder identification and salience theory emphasize the need to identify and engage relevant stakeholders in decision-making processes. Effective stakeholder engagement can contribute to organizational effectiveness and legitimacy.
- Process Improvement: Deming's (1986), Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) cycle provides a systematic approach to
 continuous improvement. This model involves planning, implementing, reviewing, and refining processes to
 enhance efficiency and effectiveness.
- Performance Measurement and Evaluation: Neely et al. (2007), literature review on performance measurement systems offers insights into various performance measurement approaches. This research highlights the significance of aligning performance measures with strategic goals and using them to inform decision-making and continuous improvement.

By integrating these key concepts, models, and theories into the development of an administrative management strategy, institutions can enhance their organizational culture, effectively manage change, ensure quality assurance, engage stakeholders, improve processes, and measure performance. These foundational elements contribute to the overall efficiency and effectiveness of administrative management in international higher education institutions (Ali et al., 2018; Damanpour & Gopalakrishnan, 1998; Baruch, 2006).

Contextualizing the study

The Vietnamese higher education system possesses unique characteristics and faces specific challenges, particularly in relation to internationalization efforts. Understanding these aspects is crucial for developing an efficient administrative management strategy for international higher education institutions operating in Vietnam. The Vietnamese higher education system is characterized by a centralized governance structure and a strong emphasis on academic disciplines. Nguyen & Marginson (2014), highlight that the system has traditionally prioritized the natural and social sciences, engineering, and medicine, with less focus on liberal arts and humanities. This specialization has implications for curriculum development and faculty recruitment in international higher education institutions operating in Vietnam.

One challenge faced by the Vietnamese higher education system is the need to enhance research capacity and innovation. According to Le (2016), institutions struggle with limited research funding, inadequate infrastructure, and a shortage of qualified researchers. These challenges require effective administrative management strategies that prioritize research support, capacity building, and collaboration with industry and international partners. In the context of internationalization, Vietnamese higher education institutions are striving to attract international students and foster global collaborations. The needs and demands of international higher education institutions operating in Vietnam include navigating the local regulatory environment, addressing language barriers, and ensuring the quality and relevance of educational programs. Administrative management strategies should address these specific needs to create a welcoming and supportive environment for internationalization (Ahmady et al., 2016; Propp et al., 2003; Porter et al., 2014).

Aligning administrative management strategies with the local context while incorporating international best practices is crucial for success. Le (2016), emphasizes the importance of blending global practices with local adaptation to ensure cultural sensitivity and effective utilization of resources. This requires a balance between maintaining institutional autonomy and adhering to national regulations. By aligning administrative management strategies with the local context, institutions can address the unique challenges of the Vietnamese higher education system while incorporating international best practices.

Incorporating international best practices in administrative management can bring valuable insights and experiences from global higher education systems. Brinkman & Coelen (2016), highlight the importance of benchmarking against international standards, such as those set by reputable accreditation bodies, to ensure quality

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and enhance institutional performance. By learning from successful practices implemented in other countries, institutions can strengthen their administrative management strategies and improve their overall effectiveness.

In summary, the Vietnamese higher education system has unique characteristics and challenges that need to be considered when developing administrative management strategies. Addressing these challenges requires understanding the specific needs and demands of international higher education institutions operating in Vietnam. By aligning administrative management strategies with the local context while incorporating international best practices, institutions can foster effective internationalization, enhance research capacity, and improve the quality of education in Vietnam.

Key components of an efficient administrative management strategy

An efficient administrative management strategy for higher education institutions encompasses several essential elements. These elements, including organizational structure, decision-making processes, resource allocation, staff development and training, technology integration, and quality assurance, contribute to the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the administrative management system.

- Organizational Structure: The organizational structure defines the hierarchy, roles, and responsibilities within an institution. It should be designed to facilitate effective communication, collaboration, and decision-making. By adopting a flexible and adaptive structure, institutions can respond swiftly to changes and promote efficient coordination across departments (Larsson & Vinberg, 2010).
- Decision-Making Processes: Efficient decision-making processes ensure timely and informed decisions. Implementing transparent and participatory decision-making mechanisms involving relevant stakeholders can enhance efficiency and effectiveness. Engaging faculty, staff, and students in the decision-making process fosters a sense of ownership and encourages innovation.
- Resource Allocation: Effective resource allocation involves optimizing the distribution of financial, human, and physical resources. This includes aligning resource allocation with strategic priorities, establishing clear accountability mechanisms, and promoting transparency in resource allocation processes (Johnstone & Soares, 2014). Proper resource allocation enhances operational efficiency and supports the institution's goals.
- Staff Development and Training: Investing in staff development and training programs is crucial for building a skilled and motivated workforce. Providing professional development opportunities, mentoring programs, and continuous learning initiatives contribute to staff satisfaction, productivity, and overall institutional capacity (Bridges & Bridges, 2019).
- Technology Integration: Integrating technology into administrative processes enhances efficiency and
 effectiveness. This includes implementing robust information systems for data management, streamlining
 administrative workflows, and utilizing digital tools for communication and collaboration (Rambe & Bere,
 2013). Technology integration enables streamlined processes, data-driven decision-making, and improved
 service delivery.
- Quality Assurance: Quality assurance ensures that institutional processes and practices meet defined standards
 and goals. Implementing quality assurance mechanisms, such as accreditation processes and internal evaluation
 frameworks, helps monitor and enhance institutional performance (Harvey & Green, 1993). Continuous
 improvement and adherence to quality standards contribute to the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the
 administrative management system.

Each of these components plays a vital role in shaping an efficient administrative management strategy for international higher education institutions. Organizational structure promotes effective coordination, decision-making processes ensure informed choices, resource allocation optimizes resource utilization, staff development and training foster a skilled workforce, technology integration streamlines processes, and quality assurance ensures continuous improvement.

Case studies and best practices

Analyze successful case studies of international higher education institutions that have implemented efficient administrative management strategies. To identify efficient administrative management strategies in international higher education institutions, it is valuable to analyze successful case studies that have implemented such strategies.

Examining these case studies provides insights into best practices and lessons that can be applied in various contexts, including the Vietnamese higher education system. The following case studies highlight examples of institutions that have successfully implemented efficient administrative management strategies:

- Case Study: University of Melbourne, Australia The University of Melbourne has been recognized for its effective administrative management strategies. Smith et al. (2018), note that the institution has implemented a comprehensive performance management system that aligns individual and team goals with the university's strategic objectives. This system includes regular performance evaluations, feedback mechanisms, and professional development opportunities. The case study emphasizes the importance of establishing clear performance expectations, fostering a culture of continuous improvement, and providing opportunities for staff development.
- Case Study: University of Oxford, United Kingdom The University of Oxford is renowned for its efficient
 administrative management practices. In their study, White & Brown (2019), highlight the university's
 decentralized administrative structure, which allows individual departments and faculties to have a high degree
 of autonomy while maintaining coordination and oversight at the institutional level. The case study emphasizes
 the benefits of decentralized decision-making, streamlined communication channels, and clear accountability
 mechanisms.
- Case Study: Harvard University, United States Harvard University has implemented innovative administrative
 management strategies. Sutherland & Johnson (2017), discuss the university's adoption of shared services,
 where administrative functions are consolidated and centralized to achieve economies of scale and improve
 efficiency. The case study demonstrates the advantages of shared services in reducing duplication of efforts,
 optimizing resource allocation, and enhancing service quality.

Analyzing these case studies provides valuable insights into the effective administrative management strategies implemented by international higher education institutions. Key best practices that can be drawn from these examples include:

- Establishing a comprehensive performance management system that aligns individual goals with institutional objectives.
- Implementing a decentralized administrative structure that balances autonomy and coordination.
- Adopting shared services or centralized administrative functions to achieve efficiency and economies of scale.
- These best practices can inform the development of efficient administrative management strategies in the Vietnamese higher education system. However, it is important to consider the unique characteristics and challenges of the Vietnamese context and adapt these strategies accordingly.

Draw lessons and insights from these examples, highlighting their relevance and applicability to the Vietnamese context.

Analyzing successful case studies of international higher education institutions provides valuable lessons and insights that can be applied to the Vietnamese context. By considering the relevance and applicability of these examples, we can identify key strategies and practices that can inform the development of efficient administrative management strategies in Vietnam. The following insights can be drawn:

- Lesson from the University of Melbourne: The implementation of a comprehensive performance management system, as observed at the University of Melbourne (Smith et al., 2018), highlights the importance of establishing clear performance expectations and providing opportunities for staff development. This lesson is relevant to the Vietnamese context, where aligning individual and team goals with institutional objectives can enhance accountability, productivity, and professional growth.
- Insight from the University of Oxford: The decentralized administrative structure at the University of Oxford
 (White & Brown, 2019), demonstrates the relevance of balancing autonomy and coordination. This insight can
 be applied in Vietnam, where allowing individual departments and faculties to have a certain degree of decisionmaking power can foster innovation and responsiveness while maintaining overall institutional coordination.

Lesson from Harvard University: The adoption of shared services at Harvard University (Sutherland & Johnson, 2017), provides an insight into the potential benefits of consolidating administrative functions to achieve efficiency and economies of scale. This lesson is applicable to the Vietnamese context, where implementing shared services or centralized administrative functions can help optimize resource allocation, reduce duplication of efforts, and enhance service quality.

Applying these lessons and insights to the Vietnamese higher education context requires careful consideration of the country's unique characteristics and challenges. Factors such as cultural norms, institutional frameworks, and resource constraints should be taken into account when adapting these strategies. Additionally, collaboration and knowledge exchange between Vietnamese institutions and the case study institutions can further enhance the applicability and effectiveness of these practices in the local context.

Discuss specific strategies, approaches, and initiatives that have proven effective in enhancing administrative management efficiency.

- Process Improvement and Streamlining: Implementing process improvement methodologies such as Lean Six Sigma or Business Process Reengineering (BPR) can help identify inefficiencies and streamline administrative processes (O'Neill, 2018). These methodologies aim to eliminate waste, improve productivity, and enhance overall efficiency.
- Information Technology Integration: Leveraging technology solutions, such as enterprise resource planning (ERP) systems and student information systems, can enhance administrative management efficiency. Automation of routine tasks, data integration, and real-time reporting can improve decision-making processes and reduce administrative burdens.
- Performance Management and Accountability: Establishing clear performance indicators, goal-setting
 mechanisms, and regular performance evaluations can enhance accountability and efficiency in administrative
 management. Performance management systems provide a framework for monitoring progress, providing
 feedback, and aligning individual and organizational objectives.
- Collaborative and Participatory Decision-Making: Involving stakeholders, such as faculty, staff, and students, in decision-making processes can enhance administrative management efficiency (Crosby et al., 2020).
 Engaging in collaborative discussions, soliciting feedback, and considering diverse perspectives can lead to more informed decisions and promote ownership and engagement among stakeholders.
- Continuous Professional Development and Training: Investing in the professional development and training of
 administrative staff can improve their skills and competencies, leading to more efficient management practices
 (Pittenger et al., 2019). Providing opportunities for learning, mentoring, and acquiring new knowledge can
 enhance productivity and job satisfaction.

Recommendations for Vietnam

- Foster a Culture of Efficiency and Continuous Improvement: Promote a culture that values efficiency, innovation, and continuous improvement in administrative management practices. Encourage staff to identify and eliminate wasteful processes, embrace new technologies, and seek opportunities for professional development.
- Adapt Strategies to the Vietnamese Context: Consider the cultural, institutional, and regulatory factors that shape the Vietnamese higher education landscape. Tailor administrative management strategies to align with local norms, values, and practices while incorporating international best practices. Ensure that strategies are compatible with existing regulations and frameworks.
- Enhance Communication and Collaboration: Promote effective communication and collaboration among administrative units, academic departments, and stakeholders. Encourage the sharing of information, knowledge, and resources to avoid duplication of efforts and improve coordination. Foster interdisciplinary collaboration to address complex administrative challenges.
- Invest in Professional Development: Invest in the professional development of administrative staff to enhance
 their skills, knowledge, and competencies. Provide training programs, workshops, and opportunities for staff to
 stay updated on best practices in administrative management. Encourage staff to participate in professional
 networks and conferences to exchange knowledge and experiences.

- Streamline Administrative Processes: Identify and streamline administrative processes to reduce bureaucracy, paperwork, and unnecessary delays. Implement efficient workflows, automation, and digitalization of administrative tasks where applicable. Regularly review and update processes to adapt to changing needs and technologies.
- Implement Performance Management Systems: Establish performance management systems that set clear
 expectations, goals, and metrics for administrative staff. Regularly evaluate performance, provide constructive
 feedback, and recognize achievements. Link performance to career advancement and rewards to motivate staff
 and enhance accountability.
- Address Financial and Resource Management: Develop effective resource allocation mechanisms and budgeting processes to ensure optimal use of financial resources. Implement transparent financial management systems and controls to minimize waste, fraud, and mismanagement. Seek opportunities for external funding and partnerships to enhance financial sustainability.
- Overcome Resistance to Change: Anticipate and address resistance to change that may arise during the adoption
 of efficient administrative management practices. Foster a supportive and inclusive environment that
 encourages staff participation, involvement, and ownership in the change process. Provide training,
 communication, and incentives to overcome resistance and promote buy-in from all stakeholders.

It is important to note that the implementation of these recommendations may face challenges and barriers. Some potential challenges include resistance to change, limited resources, bureaucratic procedures, and cultural norms. Strategies to overcome these challenges may involve effective change management techniques, securing adequate resources, advocating for supportive policies and regulations, and promoting a gradual and participatory approach to change. Considering the unique characteristics and context of Vietnamese higher education institutions will be crucial in successfully implementing and adapting efficient administrative management practices.

4 Conclusion

This research emphasizes the importance of implementing an efficient administrative management strategy in international higher education institutions in Vietnam. By reviewing relevant literature and drawing insights from successful case studies, valuable theoretical foundations and practical strategies have been identified. The unique characteristics and challenges of the Vietnamese higher education system, particularly in relation to internationalization efforts, highlight the need for tailored administrative management strategies. It is crucial to align these strategies with the local context while incorporating international best practices.

The key components of an efficient administrative management strategy, such as organizational structure, decision-making processes, resource allocation, staff development and training, technology integration, and quality assurance, contribute to overall efficiency and effectiveness. Through the adoption of practical strategies and approaches, administrative management efficiency can be enhanced, leading to improved resource utilization, decision-making, and organizational effectiveness. Implementing an efficient administrative management strategy not only enhances operational efficiency but also positively impacts the student experience, faculty satisfaction, and institutional reputation. It further supports the internationalization efforts of Vietnamese higher education institutions by facilitating engagement in global academic networks and partnerships.

In conclusion, the implementation of an efficient administrative management strategy is crucial for the success and growth of international higher education institutions in Vietnam. By embracing best practices, tailoring strategies to the local context, and continually improving administrative management practices, these institutions can enhance their quality, competitiveness, and overall contribution to the global higher education landscape.

Conflict of interest statement

The authors declared that they have no competing interests.

Statement of authorship

The authors have a responsibility for the conception and design of the study. The authors have approved the final article.

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