ABSTRACT

The present study has the objective to analyze the types of organizational strategies in the Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in the state of Rio Grande do Norte (RN), according to the model of Miles and Snow. Therefore, we used a descriptive study, a quantitative, with 32 institutions. The results of this study indicated the existence of prospective strategies, is also identified in order of occurrence, defensive strategies, analyzer strategies and reactive strategies.

Keywords: Organizational Strategy. Higher Education Institutions. Typology of Strategies

1. INTRODUCTION

With the organizational evolution, there is a environment design different from experienced in the last century. Changes have been presented quickly and disorderly (Hamel, 2000). Due to the process of internationalization of the economy, the distances between nations have been reduced and the transactions through the network has led organizations, in both the private and the public sector, to develop their strategies considering the global competition, for only thus manage to place in a world where the rate of change is what determines the guidelines of the organizations.

It is also observed that the organization, unlike what was worked on logic of relative stability, in which predominated the linearity and centralization, as a matter of survival is bound figure with its structure aligned their strategies. Thus the organizational managers need a systemic view of the interactions of the various sectors of your organization with its external environment, thus passing to play their role as active agents in the process of organizational change (Mintzberg, 2003).

Thus, this study highlights the current period of expansion experienced by higher education organizations in the country. By contextualizing this expansion of higher education in the state of Rio Grande do Norte - RN, according to the INEP (2009) in 2000 that had been registered with the Ministry of Education - MEC a total of 08 HEIs registered. These numbers in the state according to data from the E-MEC (2010) increased to 45 HEIs develop their activities in both the formal and distance education. This increase occurred following the national trend of expansion of higher education in Brazil.

In this context of changes experienced in higher education institutions throughout the country. The present study has the objective to analyze the types of organizational strategies in the Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in the state of Rio Grande do Norte (RN), according to the model of Miles and Snow

2. ORGANIZATIONAL STRATEGY - MODEL D AND MILES AND SNOW

Miles and Snow (2003) developed a taxonomy based on the idea that managers seek to create strategy that is congruent with the external environment of the organization, so organizations seek to achieve a fit between its internal configuration and its strategic positioning influences the external environment.

Mintzberg, Ahlstrand and Lampel (2000) argue that the development of the theoretical model proposed by Miles and Snow, was born of a study of companies in four industries (publishing of textbooks, electronics, food processing and health
services). The results of this study, it was concluded that it is possible to classify behaviors corporative according to the strategic direction and predict structural features that are associated with the strategy.

This way the typology of Miles and Snow (2003) is based on three main ideas: the first is the interaction with the environment, the second is the strategic choices, and the third is the process and organizational structure. This model proposes that companies develop patterns of strategic behavior relatively stable in search of a good alignment with the environmental conditions perceived by organizational management.

Beyond the question of adaptation to organizational process that is governed by the strategic choices of organizational managers, the model of Miles and Snow (2003) also addresses the issue of the company's relationship with its environment. Then according to the patterns of response to environmental conditions and the adaptive cycle, the authors propose a typology of strategic analysis consists of four generic strategies:

- Prospective - Guidance for learning; flexible and decentralized;
- Defensive - Guidance for efficiency; authority centered and tight control on costs.
- Analyzer - Balances efficiency and learning; strict cost control with flexibility and adaptability;
- Reactive - No clear organizational approach; project characteristics may change abruptly depending on current needs.

Each of these strategies has different characteristics to meet environmental diversity, for example, the technology configuration, structure, and method are consistent with those strategies (Miles, SNOW, 2003).

Thus, Mintzberg, Ahlstrand and Lampel (2000, p.234) state that "the typology of Miles and Snow is reduced to two basic forms (which seem to correspond to machines and adhocracy organizations), with the third being a hybrid and fourth, in fact, a collection of inappropriate responses.

This inconsistency pointed out previously by the authors of the reactive strategy adopted by some organizations, Miles and Snow (2003) point to three basic causes, the first being related to the failure to articulate a viable strategy, the second concerns the lack of binding and fitness technology, structure and processes with strategy and ultimately observe the binding of a strategy and management structure is not suitable to the environment.

Regarding the analytical strategy Miles and Snow (2003) argue that it is unique combination of prospective and defensive strategies. They propose that these two kinds of organizational strategy are the extremes of a continuum, leaving the analytical strategy near the middle of this continuum, thereby being an alternative strategy feasible.

Conant, Monkwa and Varadajan (1990) below summarize the dimensions of the adaptive cycle in relation to the strategic type characteristic of organizations according to the model of Miles and Snow.

Based on the dimensions of the adaptive cycle and the characteristics of the strategies presented in the model of Miles and Snow, researchers Conant, Monkwa and Varadajan (1990) constructed a questionnaire consisting of eleven questions, which seek to analyze and measure the types of strategy organizations.

3. METHODOLOGY

This research is classified as descriptive study. According to Collis and Hussey (2005, p. 71) this type of research "aims to understand phenomena by discovering and measuring causal relationships between them." Regarding the procedures of this study is classified as quantitative study, which according to Collis and Hussey (2005, p. 71) is a positivistic methodology that from a representative sample of the population allows inferences about this, besides "determine whether there is any relationship between different variables", requiring the researcher to identify the independent and dependent variables of your study.

The population consisted of 32 managers from 32 higher education
institutions that have physical office in the state of Rio Grande do Norte. Why cover all higher education institutions that have physical office in the state of Rio Grande do Norte, this study was classified as type census, not just using a sample.

The data of study were collected through a questionnaire, a total of 44 questions on a Likert scale, prepared based on the model proposed by Miles and Snow (2003), was adapted from the questionnaire by Conant, and Monkwa Varadajan (1990). This instrument was validated with accuracy rates higher than 0.7 Cronbach Alpha.

Thus, the determination of the results was performed by calculating the average over the 5-point scale ranging from 0 to 4, in which the middle point was considered to be 2 steps near this point regarded as a moderate presence a certain style, while above 2.5 standard was considered prevalent and below 1.5 standard was considered uncharacteristic, the variables that determine each type of strategy. Besides the calculation of the mean difference tests was performed between the mean as the T-Student test for paired two samples for means and standard deviations of the analysis.

After the analysis of organizational strategies, were analyzed the influence factors of general characteristics of institutions in relation to managers' perception of the type of your organization's strategy. For these analyzes was used the statistical tests: Spearman correlation, ANOVA F-test and T-Student test. All statistical tests were analyzed correlation alpha considered significant at 5%.

4. STRATEGIES AND RELATIONS WITH THE GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF HEIs.

When analyzing the results of the medium identified the presence of both predominant and moderate of the four types of generic strategies in which the forward-looking strategy with the highest incidence in the IES condition with 52% incidence of defensive strategy followed with 35% of cases, the strategy analyzer showed 10% occurrence and reactive strategy presented only in 3% of cases.

Thus we observe how the main types of strategies adopted by the state to the HEIs-prospective strategies and defensive strategies, exhibit distinct strategic positions at the ends of the theoretical model. According to Miles and Snow (2003) as a group presents a more aggressive stance to innovate and take risks in relation to its environment defensive group of HEIs is presented more conservatively valuing stability seeking efficiency and development of internal controls that result in educational services with high quality to its customers.

These two strategies are justified by the prevailing local market profile observing the geographical location of institutions which are inserted in locations of greater stability as is the case of HEIs that are located within the state which have a constant public may be present strategically defensively (CONANT; MONKWA; VARADAJAN, 1990). Unlike this reality of losing stability by institutions inside observe organizations that are located in the state capital which are inserted in an environment where competition for customers is presented in a more fierce due to the high concentration of institutions vying for same audience, in this context seek a more strategic posture prospective one time the search for differences is a matter of survival in this type of market (MOREIRA, 2007).

Another situation that can justify the predominance of the defensive strategy in institutions that operate both within and in the state capital is the type of service (travel) that offered by HEI, when only one that offers specific type of educational services that differentiation may permit a more defensive approach since this organization is able to maintain a constant public. We also observe the presence of prospective strategies in public institutions is due to the current state of expansion and diversification experienced by those institutions which now expand their limits and going places offers differentiated achieved a significant market share in the discussion (CONANT ; MONKWA; VARADAJAN, 1990).

It has been identified analyzer strategy. This strategy is seen by Mintzberg, Ahlstrand
and Lampel (2000) as a medium between prospective and defensive strategies the author highlights this approach as being balanced. Organizations that adopt this second type of strategic Miles and Snow (2003) seek to maintain its stable business innovating according to the opportunities identified in the market, based on these authors can say that institutions of Rio Grande do Norte presenting this strategic typology, seek maintain a balance between efficiency in the provision of educational services with the existing creative development of new educational services.

According to Miles and Snow (2003) the presence of this strategy will be common in organizations that are already consolidated in the market place with an audience finds and are looking to expand marginally your business. It is observed that search, by offering new educational services and the opening of undergraduate courses didn’t not offer by its competitors yet.

Therefore, we identified an institution with a predominance of reactive strategy, this second strategy Miles and Snow (2003) is one way that organizations have to react to the threats and opportunities of the environment in a way momentary. Thus, the HEIs showed that this strategic typology may not have long-term planning, not providing the organization with an explicit mission or goal, which leads to identify actions that that institution has only satisfaction that their immediate needs. That is, this institution develops its activities with little professionalism without a defined direction, succeeding at times, but ran a serious risk of embitter your bankruptcy.

Finally, the results identified in this study will differentiate those identified in studies of Moreira (2007) who analyzed the occurrence of the strategies of Miles and Snow in private institutions in the region of the country, due to getting results indicate that the prevalence of defensive strategies (36.7%), followed by prospective (25%), analyzer (23.3%) and reactive (15%), ie, the HEIs of the south have a more conservative strategy profile concerned with the stability and efficiency their internal processes, that institutions in the state of Rio Grande do Norte.

Identified typologies, strategies for each of the organizations will be analyzed the relationship between the variables related to the general characteristics of the institutions and the organizational strategies. For this analysis phase analyzes were performed Spearman correlation statistics for the variables of time of existence of the organization, number of undergraduate courses offered and number of employees, ANOVA with Tukey's test for the variable mode of courses offered and Student's t test for the administrativ nature of the institutions studied.

By observing the results of the Spearman correlation does not identify any statistically significant variables of time of existence of the organization, number of undergraduate courses offered and number of employees in relation to strategy typology of organization studied. Thus it can be stated that these statistically variables shown do not influence the strategic types.

Regarding the difference of means test Anova, which according to Collis and Hussey (2005), this test is indicated to identify the difference of means involving more than two variables. For the analysis of the above table was identified significance level or p-value significant at 5% (sig. ≤ 0.05, reject the null hypothesis that the means are equal). Thus the observed p-value significant at 5% for prospective and reactive strategies. A discussion of this result becomes possible from the Tukey test performed, which allows identifying which differences between the means that achieved a p-value significant.

Thus, we found the results of the Tukey test the difference between the means of institutional arrangements concerning prospective and reactive strategies. With respect to prospective strategy identified that institutions offering courses only in the model of distance education, had higher scores for the factors forming the prospective strategies that organizations that only operate distance education.

This difference average is justified by the innovative nature of the organizations that offer distance education courses in which they
can identify within this typology by Miles and Snow (2003) that considers the formative elements of flexibility, prospective strategy and innovation using technology multiple skills of technical staff in dealing with the variety, these features were easily identified in the teaching institutions working through a technological tool like the internet.

Another possible observation is the relation to reactive strategy that just as the strategy discussed earlier presented a p-value significant at 5%. When analyzing Tukey test, identified that institutions operating in the classroom education and distance learning showed higher scores for the factors forming the reactive strategies than those who work only in the distance education.

As in the previous analysis identified that the constituents of the reactive strategy differ significantly from the elements present in HEIs that operate solely in the form of distance learning why we identified the presence of a higher average for institutions that operate classroom education and distance learning.

To verify the influence of the nature of organizations in relation to the values assigned by managers for strategic typologies of their respective organizations held the Student's t test, comparing the mean values assigned by managers of higher education institutions for public and private the various types of organizational strategies. The results showed no statistically significant differences between the averages of groups of strategies so denies the hypothesis that the administrative nature of the HEIs exerts some kind of influence on the strategic typology of organizations.

Finally, we will close the discussions about organizational strategy affirming the importance of using the information obtained from the analysis of strategic typologies identified in institutions to strengthen the process of decision making at all organizational levels in order to enable managers of HEIs that operate in the state know in general positioning of the companies that act as providers of educational services in market of Rio Grande do Norte.

5. CONCLUSION

On studying the strategic typologies that have been adopted by higher education institutions, we observed the occurrence of the four strategies proposed by Miles and Snow (2003), the predominance of prospective strategies and defensive strategies. This result demonstrates the predominance of two groups of HEIs with different characteristics, the first; there are organizations that sit in an innovative way with focus on the learning process and a second group more conservative operative presenting centrality and efficiency of internal processes.

Regarding the general characteristics of the institutions, including the administrative, time in the market, quantitative undergraduate courses offered, number of employees and type of runs courses, topics related to the cultural styles and strategic types of these institutions, identified that these characteristics had little influence on the strategies of HEIs of Rio Grande do Norte. The only case identified with statistical significance at the 5% level ANOVA was performed to organizational strategy in relation to the operating mode of the courses offered by HEIs, so that the details of courses offered in person and distance influenced the strategies looking and defensive.

Finally, it is still as recommendations for future studies to identify organizational factors that may influence or be influenced by the generic strategies of the organization, in order to identify them at the macro level in relation to other factors pertaining to the organizational environment and its interaction with agents. For elaboration of these studies proposes the use of causal models to identify multiple relationships interdependencies

REFERENCES


