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Abstract

This study examines university strategies from the content perspective. Since the early 1980s, the pressure to adopt strategic management in universities and other higher education institutions has increased because of issues including reduced public funding, pressures and possibilities for internationalization, developments in teaching technologies, and demands for increased accountability to stakeholders. The study employs content analysis and multivariate statistical techniques to examine the written strategies of 13 Finnish universities formulated after the University Act 2010 that aimed at enhancing their competitiveness in the global arena. The studied organizations cover practically Finland's entire university sector. As a novel tool, the study introduces visual presentations of strategy and investigates to what degree the strategies conform to general content strategy frameworks, such as generic competitive strategies, strategic types, and value disciplines. The results indicate only light conformity with such frameworks. Finally, the study discusses the implications of these findings for both researchers and practitioners of management in the higher education sector.

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