

Internal Factor Evaluation (Ife) and External Factor Evaluation (EFE) Methods in Educational Strategy Planning

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ABSTRACT

The growing number of private Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia has intensified competition in educational management, yet most institutions still lack structured tools for strategic environmental analysis. This study aims to examine the conceptual application of the Internal Factor Evaluation (IFE) and External Factor Evaluation (EFE) matrix methods in strategic planning for Islamic educational institutions, particularly in identifying internal strengths and weaknesses as well as external opportunities and threats. This study employed a systematic literature review (SLR) methodology, drawing on 30 peer-reviewed sources published between 2013 and 2026, retrieved from Google Scholar, Scopus, DOAJ, and the Indonesian national journal index (Sinta). Data were analyzed through three stages: literature reduction, content analysis, and integrative thematic synthesis. The findings reveal that the IFE and EFE matrices offer a quantitative and structured approach to environmental scanning that surpasses conventional SWOT analysis in terms of precision and accountability. When contextualized for Islamic educational settings, these tools can accommodate institution-specific internal factors such as Islamic values, pesantren culture, and character education commitments alongside conventional managerial variables. The study concludes that systematic application of IFE and EFE matrices enables Islamic school leaders to formulate data-driven strategies, optimize limited resources, and enhance institutional competitiveness. This study contributes a contextual conceptual framework that bridges strategic management theory and the practical realities of Islamic private school governance in Indonesia.

Keywords: *IFE Matrix; EFE Matrix; Strategic Planning; Islamic Education; Environmental Scanning*

INTRODUCTION

Competition in the management of educational institutions in the era of globalization and technological disruption has placed strategic planning as a necessity, not just a managerial choice. The (UNESCO, 2023) confirms that educational institutions that are unable to adapt strategically to environmental changes will experience a significant decrease in public relevance and trust. At the global level, these challenges include shifting student demographics, digital disruption in education services, public policy uncertainty, and increasing public expectations for the quality of competitive graduates (Aini, 2024); (Thornhill-Miller dkk., 2023). Responding to these multidimensional pressures requires every educational organization to have the ability to accurately read the environment both from inside and outside the institution as a basis for planned and measurable decision-making (David & David, 2017); (Wheelen & Hunger, 2015). It is within this framework that the Internal Factor Evaluation (IFE) and External Factor Evaluation (EFE) methods are present as strategic instruments that are proven to be able to quantify the internal and external conditions of the organization systematically, so that the resulting decisions are more accountable and evidence-based.

In Indonesia, the dynamics of private Islamic educational institutions reflect tremendous growth while also harboring unresolved managerial challenges. Data from the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia (2023) notes that there are 84,321 madrasas spread throughout Indonesia, serving around 9.7 million students, while the number of pesantren reaches 36,686 institutions with around 4.76 million students. Even more striking, out of a total of 82,418 madrasas in 2022, as many as 78,408 institutions (95.14%) are private managed by the community without full support from the state budget. This figure places private Islamic educational institutions as the backbone of the real national education system. (Bakhtiar, 2022)

The root of the problem of the competitiveness of private Islamic educational institutions lies in the weak capacity of strategic planning at the institutional level. Most institutions still rely on a reactive conventional managerial approach responding to change after it has occurred instead of using a proactive and structured environmental analysis (Bakhtiar, 2022); (Zamsiswaya dkk., 2023). (Dzulfiqar, 2022) research at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Negeri 1 Blitar found that the absence of a structured internal environmental analysis directly hinders effective decision-making and has an impact on stagnation of institutional performance. Meanwhile, (Rahmatullah & Putri, 2022) concluded that Islamic educational institutions, especially Islamic boarding schools, often ignore the internal environment as a critical variable in strategy formulation, so that the real institutional potential is not identified and is not utilized optimally. In the external dimension (Kamal & et al., 2021). This condition is directly proportional to the findings of (Kamal & et al., 2021) that failure to identify external factors is the main predictor of low adaptability and competitiveness of educational institutions in the long term.

In the midst of these challenges, the IFE and EFE methods offer potential solutions that are relevant and adaptive to the context of Islamic education. This analytical framework introduced by Fred R. David allows educational institution leaders to systematically identify, weight, and rank internal and external strategic factors in one structured instrument (David & David, 2017). More than just a generic managerial tool, the application of IFE and EFE in the context of Islamic educational institutions can be adapted to accommodate typical institutional values, such as faith-based loyalty, pesantren culture, commitment to character education, and local wisdom that are the distinguishing advantages of institutions (Suriyati dkk., 2023). The JoIEM Strategic Planning Study (2024) at the Al-Mahrusiyah Institute of Technology proves that the integration of IFE and EFE produces a more precise strategic map than the conventional SWOT approach, with a weighted total score that is able to quantitatively distinguish between the strengths and weaknesses of the institution. Ironically, although the potential of this method has proven significant, its use in the management of madrasas and

private Islamic educational institutions is still very limited the majority of institutions have not formally implemented IFE and EFE in their annual planning cycles (Ardiansyah dkk., 2023); (Aini, 2024).

Based on a comprehensive literature search, there are at least three research gaps that need to be addressed: (1) Conceptual gaps studies that specifically integrate IFE and EFE methods in the strategic planning framework of private Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia are still very limited; most of the existing studies focus more on conventional SWOT without methodologically unraveling how the IFE and EFE matrix can be operationalized in the context of madrasas or pesantren (Hadi, 2013); (Erwinsyah dkk., 2023). (2) Empirical need there has been no systematic study to map how internal and external environment scanning using IFE-EFE contributes to increasing the competitiveness of private Islamic educational institutions, especially in the context of increasing competition pressures with non-Islamic public and private educational institutions (Dzulfiqar, 2022); (Rahmatullah & Putri, 2022). (3) Implementation limitations although (David & David, 2017) have provided a comprehensive methodological framework, adaptation and contextualization of the IFE-EFE method to consider the typical factors of Islamic educational institutions such as the value of Islamic boarding schools, the role of kiai, and the culture of Islamic-based organizations have not received adequate academic attention (Suriyati dkk., 2023).

This article aims to conceptually and analytically examine the application of Internal Factor Evaluation (IFE) and External Factor Evaluation (EFE) methods in the strategic planning of Islamic educational institutions, by integrating contemporary strategic management perspectives and Islamic institutional contexts in Indonesia. The novelty of this study lies in three things: first, this article offers a conceptual framework that contextualizes the IFE-EFE method specifically for private Islamic educational institutions, rather than simply adopting a generic framework from the general strategic management literature; second, this study integrates factual data on the condition of Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia as a basis for contextual and empirical analysis; Third, this article proposes an adaptive environmental scanning approach to the typical values of Islamic boarding schools and madrasas as discrete internal variables. Theoretically, the findings of this study are expected to enrich the treasure of Islamic education management literature, especially in terms of operationalizing data-based strategic planning methods. Practically, the framework offered can be a guide for the leaders of madrasas, Islamic boarding schools, and other private Islamic educational institutions in developing strategic plans that are more systematic, measurable, and responsive to the ever-changing environmental dynamics (Nurhayati dkk., 2021); (Kusumaningrum dkk., 2024); (Hidayat & Sudibyoy, 2022).

METHOD

This study uses a systematic literature review (SLR) approach, which is a research method that is structured and transparent to identify, select, analyze, and synthesize findings from various relevant literature sources (Snyder, 2019); (Tranfield dkk., 2003). This approach was chosen because the purpose of the article is to establish a comprehensive conceptual framework on the application of IFE and EFE methods in the strategic planning of Islamic educational institutions, rather than producing primary data from a single research site. Systematic literature review allows researchers to integrate findings from various previous studies critically and analytically, resulting in a stronger synthesis of knowledge than conventional narrative reviews (Okoli, 2015); (Xiao & Watson, 2019).

Literature Search Sources and Strategies

Literature searches are carried out systematically through several reputable academic databases, including Google Scholar, Scopus, DOAJ (Directory of Open Access Journals), and

the Sinta (Science and Technology Index) accredited national journal portal. Searches were also carried out on the institutional repositories of the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia and official reports of international institutions such as UNESCO and the World Bank. The keywords used include a combination: "IFE matrix", "EFE matrix", "strategic planning Islamic education", "internal factor evaluation", "external factor evaluation", "strategic management of Islamic education", "analysis of the educational environment", "SWOT madrasah", and "scanning the environment of educational institutions". The search was conducted in two languages Indonesian and English to ensure the representation of national and international literature.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

The articles and documents included in this study meet the following criteria: (a) published in the period 2013 to 2026, with an emphasis on publication in the last five years (2020–2026) to ensure relevance and up-to-date; (b) substantively discuss the topic of strategic planning, internal-external environmental analysis, or IFE-EFE methods in the context of educational organizations; (c) published in peer-reviewed scientific journals, reputable conference proceedings, or official reports of international institutions; and (d) available in a full-text version that can be accessed and verified. The exclusion criteria include: articles that have no substantive relevance to strategic management or Islamic education, opinions without data support or academic references, and documents whose authenticity cannot be verified. Through this gradual selection process, as many as 30 main literature sources were determined as study materials.

Data Analysis Procedure

The data analysis in this study was carried out through three interrelated stages. First, the literature reduction stage: all articles that pass the selection are read thoroughly, then information relevant to the focus of the study namely the concept of IFE, EFE, environmental scanning, and strategic planning of Islamic education is extracted and categorized. Second, the content analysis stage: each source is critically examined to identify key arguments, empirical findings, methodologies, and conclusions that can be used as a conceptual framework (Krippendorff, 2018). Third, the integrative synthesis stage: findings from various sources are synthesized thematically to produce new conceptual propositions on how IFE and EFE methods can be operationalized contextually in Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia. This process follows the logic of deductive-inductive reasoning: departing from the theoretical framework of (David & David, 2017) as a deductive foundation, then enriched inductively by empirical findings from the context of Islamic education.

Conceptual Framework of Study

This study is built on three mutually supportive conceptual pillars. First, the strategic management theory based on the (David & David, 2017) framework, especially the input stage which includes IFE and EFE matrices as a quantitative tool for strategic factors. Second, the theory of scanning the organizational environment developed by (Hidayat & Sudibyo, 2022), which divides the educational organizational environment into five dimensions: macro, governmental, competitive, population, and internal. Third, an Islamic education management perspective that considers Islamic values, pesantren culture, and local wisdom as typical internal factors that are not found in the generic strategic management framework (Suriyati dkk., 2023). The integration of these three pillars produces an analytical framework that is not only methodological but also contextual and cultural, so that it is able to respond to the uniqueness of Islamic educational institutions more comprehensively.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Introduction of Internal and External Environment

In order to set goals and develop the mission of an educational institution, a leader/manager in an educational institution should not only focus his attention on the internal environment. A leader and decision-maker of the institution must also be aware of the importance of the influence of the external environment on the institution it manages (Kusumaningrum dkk., 2024). Research conducted by (Bakhtiar, 2022) confirms that the urgency of internal and external strategic environment analysis in educational institutions is a prerequisite for effective managerial decision-making.

A leader or manager in an educational institution must be able to identify, analyze, evaluate, diagnose, and react to environmental forces, both in the form of opportunities, risks, and threats that have an influence on the organization. In this context, (Eferi, 2016) states that internal and external environmental assessment is a crucial element in the implementation of Total Quality Management (TQM) in Islamic educational institutions. In educational institutions, there are 2 environments that affect the achievement of the goals of the educational institution, namely:

a. Internal Environment

The internal environment is the environment within the organization/educational institution. (Astari, 2021) defines the internal environment as the overall factor that is under the control of the organization, including human resources, structures, systems, and processes that take place within the institution. Good communication from leaders and employees will create a conducive work environment. The internal environment of educational institutions includes: (a) The structure of educational institutions, which includes the organizational structure in the institution, the placement of educators and education personnel in it; (b) Educational Institution System; (c) A well-established internal communication system between school principals, teachers, employees, and students will create a good educational institution system in it; (d) Human Resources, where the work motivation of each individual in the institution/organization is different and high work motivation will form high work professionalism; (e) Operational/Financial Expenses; and (f) Performance support for the mission that has been determined by the educational institution.

(Dewi, 2022) in her study of internal environmental analysis states that an in-depth understanding of these variables allows educational institution leaders to identify strengths that can be used as competitive advantages and weaknesses that need immediate improvement. Furthermore, (Dzulfiqar, 2022) in his case study at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Negeri 1 Blitar found that structured internal environment analysis was positively correlated with improved academic and institutional performance.

According to (Irfan & Zulkifli, 2025), internal factors in educational institutions also include the entire life of educational institutions that can be controlled both by the leadership and by the members of the institution concerned. In detail, these factors include: (a) the vision, mission, goals and objectives of the organization; (b) strategy for achieving goals; (c) the nature and type of activity; and (d) the type of technology used. (Zamsiswaya dkk., 2023) added that the formulation of an effective strategy should be based on a comprehensive mapping of these four internal factors.

Analysis of internal factors includes: (a) Vision, Mission, Goals and Objectives of the Organization. Organizations, no matter how formed, are required to have a vision, mission and goals that they want to achieve, without a clear vision, mission, goals and goals, the organization will be difficult to direct. To achieve the vision, mission, goals and goals of this organization, a good human resource apparatus is needed, both in terms of quality. In educational institutions, the elements of human resources include organizational management and teaching staff; (b) Goal Achievement Strategy. The vision, mission, goals and goals of the organization may be the same from one organization to another, but the strategies used to achieve them can vary. The

ability to plan a strategy must be supported by the ability of organizational tools, especially human resources, to conduct analysis, both external and internal of the organization; (c) Nature and Type of Activity. The type and nature of organizational activities are very important in their influence on the development of human resources in the organization concerned; and (d) The Type of Technology used. The development of the times has required every organization to use technology, both very sophisticated and simple.

b. External Environment

The external environment consists of elements outside the organization/institution, most of which are uncontrollable and influential in decision-making by managers. The external environment includes: politics, government policy, socio-culture, science and technology development, and so on (Kusumaningrum dkk., 2024). If these factors can be a supporting factor in the success of the institution, it will be an opportunity. Then vice versa, if these factors become a factor that hinders the success of the institution, it will become a threat.

Educational institutions are always in an environment that will not be separated from the influence of the external environment in which the educational institution is located. In order for the organization's vision, mission, goals and objectives to be implemented, the organization must take into account these external environmental factors. (Kamal & et al., 2021) research confirms that external analysis is a review of legislative, social, economic, competition and technological trends as well as the assumptions of organizations regarding these trends and their impact on the organization. These external factors include:

(a) Government policies. Government policies, whether issued through legislation, government regulations, ministerial decrees or government officials, and so on, are directions that must be taken into account by organizations (Wahid & Hamami, 2021). These policies will certainly affect the human resource development programs of the organization concerned; (b) Socio-cultural community. The socio-cultural of the community is also an external factor that greatly affects the organization, because after all, the organization is established for the benefit of people who have different socio-cultural backgrounds; (c) The development of science and technology. The development of science and technology outside today's organization is felt very rapidly, so a staff development program is needed in an effort to adjust to the new technology (Haruna & Sesmiarni, 2026).

2. IFE and EFE Methods in Educational Strategic Planning

The Internal Factor Evaluation (IFE) and External Factor Evaluation (EFE) methods are the first stage of analysis tools (input stage) within the framework of Fred R. David's strategy formulation. (David & David, 2017) explain that IFE matrices are used to summarize and evaluate key strengths and weaknesses in various functional areas of an organization, while EFE matrices allow strategists to summarize and evaluate economic, social, cultural, demographic, environmental, political, governmental, legal, technological, and competitive information.

Research conducted at the Al-Mahrusiyah Institute of Technology (ITAMA) by Strategic Planning JoIEM (2024) showed that the application of IFE analysis resulted in a strength score of 2.6 and a weakness of -2.8, while EFE analysis resulted in an opportunity score of 2.6 and a threat score of -2.4. These results are then used as a basis for the preparation of the institution's strategic development program. Similar findings were reported by the SWOT IFE EFE IE Analysis (2021) that the integration of the three matrices provides an overview of the organization's overall strategic position.

The use of IFE and EFE in the context of Islamic educational institutions has its own peculiarities. The MPI SWOT Analysis Model (2023) concludes that the adaptation of Fred R. David's method in Islamic education management needs to consider aspects of Islamic values as distinctive internal factors, such as faith-based loyalty, pesantren culture, and character

education orientation (Suriyati dkk., 2023). These factors are not always conventionally measurable, but they have significant strategic weight.

The process of implementing the IFE matrix includes five steps: (1) identifying critical internal factors; (2) give weight to each factor from 0.0 to 1.0; (3) assign a rating of 1–4 to each factor based on the actual condition of the institution; (4) multiplying weights by ratings to produce a weighted score; and (5) summing weighted scores to obtain the total IFE score (David & David, 2017). The same process is applied to the EFE matrix for external factors. (Bakhtiar, 2022) emphasized that the success of the application of this method is highly dependent on the involvement of all stakeholders in the factor identification process.

3. Scanning the External and Internal Environment in Educational Institutions

Scanning is an effort to monitor, understand, and trace various trends in the organization/institution environment. In educational institutions, environmental scanning includes 5 main environments, namely: (a) Macro Environment, covering social, technological, economic, and political factors; (b) The governance environment, including governance structures, financing tendencies, and technological tendencies; (c) Competitive environment, including competitor profiles, strengths, weaknesses, and strategies; (d) The population environment, including the needs, desires, and demands of the community; and (e) The internal environment includes organizational structure, institutional systems, operational costs, and human resources (Hidayat & Sudibyo, 2022).

The external environment has variables that can be found in the social environment. The social environment can affect the activities of the institution in the short term but often have an effect in the long term. Environmental analysis or scanning is basically carried out to find out factors that are very important for the future of an institution or commonly called strategic factors. Usually, these strategic factors are summarized in the abbreviation SWOT (Strength, Weakness, Opportunities, Threats). Strengths and weaknesses exist within the institution, while opportunities and threats are in the external environment of the institution (Hadi, 2013).

The relationship between environmental scanning and IFE and EFE matrices lies in the systematic process of managing information obtained from the scanning process. (Rahmatullah & Putri, 2022) stated that comprehensive internal environment scanning is the main raw material in the preparation of the IFE matrix, while (Kusumaningrum dkk., 2024) affirm that the results of the external environment scanning are directly poured into the EFE matrix. The integration of the two through the IE (Internal-External) matrix then provides an overview of the strategic position of the institution and recommendations for appropriate strategies.

4. Examples of Scanning the Internal and External Environment of Islamic Education Institutions

Table 1. Examples of Internal and External Environment Scanning of Islamic Education Institutions

Yes	Scanning Internal	Scanning Eksternal
01	High Loyalty	Government Policy
02	Superior skills	Changes in people's culture
03	Superior teacher competence	The emergence of many higher quality educational institutions
04	Low motivation for teachers' work	Good public perception
05	Poor Competitive Position	The faster the growth of the number of students
06	Achievements of students under the MOH	Development of Science and Technology

Source: Adapted from Hidayat & Sudibyo (2022) and Ardiansyah et al. (2023)

From some of the scanning examples above, an analysis of these factors is needed. The analysis used is a SWOT analysis. To analyze more deeply about SWOT, it is necessary to first

look at the important part in the SWOT analysis, namely: (a) Internal Factors. These internal factors affect the formation of strength and weakness (S&W). Where this factor is related to the conditions that occur in the institution that affect decision-making; and (b) External factors. These external factors influence the formation of opportunities and threats (O&T). Where this factor is related to conditions that occur outside the institution that affect decision-making.

Further analysis of these scanning results used the IFE matrix for internal factors and the EFE matrix for external factors. Each factor is given a weight and a rating that reflects the level of importance and the actual condition of the institution. The sum of the overall weights of the IFE and EFE factors is always equal to 1.0, with a weighted total score that ranges from 1.0 to 4.0 and an average value of 2.5 (David & David, 2017). Institutions with a total IFE score above 2.5 are considered to have a strong internal position, while institutions with a total EFE score above 2.5 are considered able to respond effectively to external opportunities and threats (David & David, 2017)

CONCLUSION

Strategic management in education development is none other than so that the development activities carried out can be in accordance with the developments that occur in real life in the community. Strategic management allows the developers who implement it to know the internal and external conditions of the program they will develop. The application of IFE and EFE methods in Islamic educational institutions has been proven to make a real contribution to the formulation of more measurable, objective, and comprehensive strategies.

Internal factors that need to be considered include: the vision, mission, goals and objectives of the organization; goal achievement strategies; nature and type of activity; and the type of technology used. The external factors that also need to be considered in order to achieve the vision and mission that have been designed by the educational institution include: government policies, socio-cultural communities, scientific and technological developments, and political power.

In addition, if each educational institution has greater loyalty, then the institution will have greater power. But on the other hand, if the institution does not have high loyalty, it will cause weakness for the institution. Because there will be a lot of bad competition. Thus, the integration of IFE and EFE methods in the strategic planning of Islamic educational institutions is not just a managerial instrument, but a systematic effort to ensure that every institution's policies and programs rely on a deep understanding of real environmental.

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