

Strategic Renewal in Pre-University Education in Egypt: A Foresight Study
by

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Abstract

The research aimed to introduce a suggested proposal for strategic renewal of pre-university education in Egypt. It has followed the descriptive method to reveal the status quo of strategic renewal practices related to human, material and technological resources and services provided by pre-university education institutions in Egypt so as to identify the strengths that support strategic renewal and the weaknesses that hinder it. The research relied on the Delphi Technique as one of the future methods for exploring the experts' opinions concerning strategic renewal priorities in those institutions. A questionnaire was applied to a number of (31) educational experts from various faculties of education, and from the National Center for Educational Research and Development, as well as experts from the field via email and the WhatsApp application. The Delphi Technique was used over three rounds, so as to reach the highest percentage of agreement among experts on the questionnaire statements, which represent exploitative and exploratory activities proposed for strategic renewal related to the human, material and technological resources of pre-university education institutions and the services they provide. The research introduced a suggested proposal for strategic renewal of pre-university education in Egypt, including its premises, objectives and structure, the requirements for its implementation, the bodies involved in its implementation, and the obstacles to its implementation and ways to overcome them.

Key Words: Strategic renewal - Pre-university education- resources- services

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Introduction

The issue of renewal in policies and practices and rearrangement of priorities has become a pressing matter at all levels across various countries. This includes mechanisms that help educational institutions achieve their goals and implement their reform plans and programs, thereby meeting societal needs and ensuring the satisfaction of their beneficiaries. This contributes to the institution's distinction and increased competitiveness.

Strategic renewal has emerged as a process of change and adjustment in the strategic direction that determines the institution's long-term competitive capability. The goal is to achieve strategic alignment between its internal capabilities and the transformations occurring in the external environment (Sammut-Bonnici, Tanya & McGee, John, 2015).

Agarwal and Helfat (2009) define strategic renewal as the process, content, and outcomes of rejuvenating or replacing an institution's current features, which can significantly impact its long-term future prospects. Teece (2019) notes that this definition is broad enough to cover technological, organizational, and managerial aspects of change within an institution. The changes made can be incremental, radical, proactive, or reactive.

Strategic renewal includes changes in the organizational structure, resources, and strategic capabilities. It may involve the redevelopment of financial, organizational, human, and social capital (Sammut-Bonnici, Tanya & McGee, John, 2015), as well as the formulation of strategies that enable institutions to exploit available opportunities, diversify their outputs and services, and renew their strategic activities to ensure adaptability, survival, improvement of products and services, and achievement of strategic objectives (Hassan & Al-Hamiri, 2022).

There are numerous attributes and characteristics that educational institutions seek to change or modify to achieve strategic renewal, notably human, material, and technological resources, as well as the services provided to their beneficiaries. Hasson's study (2021) indicated that strategic renewal involves a set of developmental activities (exploratory and investment-oriented) aiming at modifying organizational practices, contributing to keeping pace with environmental changes and achieving an advantage over competitors.

Strategic renewal in the educational institutions involves two main dimensions. One dimension is related to investing in current resources and improving existing services by making some changes or adjustments, known as exploitative strategic renewal. The other involves exploring new resources and offering new and innovative services that lead to proactive changes affecting future expectations, known as exploratory strategic renewal.

There have been numerous attempts to renew and change the pre-university education sector in Egypt, focusing on developing its human, material, and technological resources, as well as improving the services provided to its beneficiaries.

Upon reviewing the strategic plan for pre-university education (2014-2030), it is evident that the ministry is moving towards renewal in pre-university education through the optimal utilization of its available resources, the development of its current human resources represented by school leaders and teachers, the improvement of its current material resources including buildings and school equipment, and technological resources, as well as enhancing the current services provided to beneficiaries.

The MOE's agenda in the comprehensive education development program (the national project for restructuring the educational system in Egypt), approved by the Cabinet and announced by the minister in August 2017, is based on the initial success and momentum achieved through innovative solutions. These solutions include the establishment of the "Knowledge Bank," a digital website featuring educational, research, and cultural resources

suitable for a wide range of users, and the "Teachers First" initiative, a program aimed at changing teacher behaviors in the classroom (The World Bank, 2018).

The "New Education System" 2 (EDU 2.0) was launched in September 2018, in parallel with the launch of the Knowledge Bank, relying on digital transformation and technological infrastructure as crucial factors for the continuity of the educational process (The Cabinet, 2022). In light of the strategic objectives of Egypt's updated Vision 2030, the M.O.E's vision is defined as: providing education and training according to global quality standards, accessible to all without discrimination, through a new comprehensive system that develops all elements of the educational process, integrates information and communication technology in teaching practices and evaluation systems, and prepares teachers and learners capable of thinking and innovation (M.O.E , Executive Plan 2022/2026).

The aforementioned points indicate attempts by the MOE in Egypt to induce some change and renewal in human, material, and technological resources, as well as in the services provided to beneficiaries, with the aim of developing the pre-university education system.

Research Problem:

Despite the efforts made by MOE to introduce some changes and innovations in the pre-university education system, the status quo indicates many shortcomings and weaknesses that negatively impact the achievement of strategic renewal in both its exploitative and exploratory dimensions in pre-university education. These aspects can be observed through several documents and the results of some previous studies.

A World Bank report showed the limited scope of school management authority regarding the school budget. School principals still have reservations about using transferred funds, and there is rigidity in reallocating them to other important expenditure items, such as teacher training, teaching materials, and educational tools like laboratory equipment and chemicals. Principals still adhere to a compliance and control model, and there is no legal, institutional, or professional environment that supports the principal's role in the professional development of teachers or broader school improvements (The World Bank, 2018). This weakens the optimal investment of current human and material resources in schools and hinders the exploration of new and innovative resources.

In the context of assessing the actual performance of school management, the results of a study conducted by Ahmad & Azab (2021) and another by Azab (2020) revealed several weaknesses, including:

- lack of networked learning communities as one of the modern methods in the professional development of school leadership.
- reluctance of school leaders to innovate and experiment, adherence to traditional, routine work procedures that lack flexibility. There is also weak incentives for individuals to take risks, initiate, innovate, and renew.
- suboptimal investment in as information and communication technology in the performance of school leadership administrative processes such as planning, decision-making, monitoring, and evaluation.
- prevalence of an organizational culture characterized by rigidity and resistance to change.
- weak technological infrastructure necessary to enhance administrative work in the school, including computers, internet networks, software, and administrative applications.
- lack of a school database covering all aspects of school work.
- poor infrastructure of schools, including buildings, laboratories, libraries, offices, furniture, and equipment.

The results of Azazi's (2020) study revealed some problems related to the implementation of the new education system 2.0, including the insufficient number of teachers to achieve the objectives of the new education system, inadequate teacher training, and the weak technological means available in schools. This has led to difficulties in conveying information to students, especially since the new curriculum relies on the use of technology such as computers and the internet.

It is evident that there is a shortfall in the investment of current human, material, and technological resources, and in the level of services currently provided in pre-university education in Egypt. It also highlights the failure to explore new resources or offer new and innovative services, which hinders the achievement of strategic renewal in its exploitative and exploratory dimensions in pre-university education in Egypt.

Research questions can be defined as follows:

1. What are the theoretical foundations of strategic renewal in pre-university education in light of contemporary changes?
2. What is the current state of strategic renewal practices in pre-university education in Egypt?
3. What is the experts' perspective about the suggested priorities for strategic renewal in pre-university education in Egypt?
4. What is the proposed perspective for strategic renewal in pre-university education in Egypt?

Research Objectives:

The main **aim** of the research is to introduce a proposed perspective for strategic renewal of pre-university education in Egypt.

Research Importance:

The proposed strategic renewal perspective aims to offer exploitative and exploratory guidelines related to the educational institution's resources and services. These guidelines are intended to aid policymakers and educational decision-makers in Egypt in enhancing the institution's readiness for the future and boosting its competitive edge.

Research Methodology and Tools:

The research follows a descriptive methodology and employs the Delphi Technique, a method used for forecasting and future planning. This technique was used to survey experts' opinions on the strategic renewal priorities for pre-university education in Egypt, ranking these priorities based on their importance and expected outcomes to develop a proposed perspective for strategic renewal.

Research Structure:

The research is divided into four sections:

1. Theoretical Framework: Discusses the theoretical foundations of strategic renewal, including its concept, requirements, dimensions, and associated activities.
2. Current Practices: Examines the current state of strategic renewal practices in Egyptian schools.
3. Field Study: Surveys expert opinions on proposed strategic renewal priorities.
4. Proposed Perspective: Introduces the proposed perspective for strategic renewal in Egyptian schools.

Section One: Theoretical Framework

This section addresses the theoretical underpinnings of strategic renewal, focusing on its concept, requirements, dimensions, and related activities.

First: Strategic Renewal Concept

Strategic renewal is a modern approach in strategic management literature, emerging in the mid-20th century with a focus on business renewal, innovation, and development of services or products to align with environmental changes. "Hofer & Schendel" were among the first to define the term in the late

In the 1970s, and as part of strategic management for organizations, and by the end of the 1980s with increased competition among organizations on a global level, organizations relied on strategic renewal to sustain their existence for as long as possible in light of environmental changes. Strategic renewal was described as the transformation of organizations to renew the core ideas upon which they were built (Al-Zalami and Al-Ziyadi, 2023, and Hassan and Al-Humairi, 2022).

The term "strategic renewal" consists of two words. The first is "renewal," which means updating, replacing, revitalizing, or restoring the strength of features or aspects of the organization that suffer from wear, aging, or decay, such as goals, administrative systems, services, resources, and others that have a decisive impact on the organization's future (Kearney & Morris, 2015). The second word is "strategic," which relates to long-term goals that have a critical impact on the organization's success or failure. This involves a future outlook for the organization, which relies on examining its current situation to understand the strengths that represent future opportunities that must be invested in, as well as the weaknesses that threaten and limit its chances of future success (Agarwal & Helfat, 2009).

Binns et al. (2014) described strategic renewal "as a set of practices that can guide leaders into a new era of innovation," which aligns with the definition by Kearney & Morris (2015) as a set of continuous innovations and creativity. Through the building of new core ideas, the organization transforms to overcome external and internal threats and constraints, improve and enhance performance, and eliminate traditional ideas.

A study by Youssef and Taher (2021) defined it as: a continuous process characterized by vitality and flexibility that continuously and gradually revives and updates the organization's competitive advantage through rethinking, reorganizing, restructuring, and reengineering processes to suit the conditions that arise from entrepreneurship and finding a balance between exploitation and exploration with the participation of leadership, which can be achieved through strategic awareness.

Schmitt et al. (2016) define strategic renewal as an administrative process aimed at modifying, updating, or replacing the current business model of an organization to address emerging environmental opportunities and risks, with the goal of ensuring the organization's long-term survival and prosperity (Schmitt, Barker, Raisch, & Whetten, 2016).

Strategic renewal can be described as a modern management concept and approach that organizations adopt to excel and outperform their competitors. This is achieved through adapting to both external and internal environments, investing in or exploiting available opportunities by allocating the necessary resources and capabilities, and exploring new opportunities with the required resources. This enables the organization to renew itself and continue excelling in its areas of distinction (Balawi & Alkshali, 2022).

Strategic renewal in educational institutions can be described as an administrative process that involves a set of developmental activities related to the institution's resources and services. It aims at renewing the institution's ideas and visions, adopting new methods to invest in and explore opportunities, and addressing threats and risks in response to rapid environmental changes. This contributes to the educational institution's distinction and prosperity.

Second: Requirements for Strategic Renewal

To achieve strategic renewal, managers need to periodically renew themselves by discarding old ways of working. This enables the reconstruction of an organization capable of addressing environmental complexities more effectively and swiftly (Dutta, 2019). This implies that managers must change their behaviors and embrace innovation rather than clinging to traditional and conventional practices at all organizational levels, and respond quickly to various environmental shifts and developments (Hassan & Al-Humairi, 2022).

Strategic renewal necessitates the development of managers' mental models in response to environmental changes. Leaders and managers are crucial in organizing values and aligning the institution with environmental changes. This is achieved by fostering creativity and innovation in strategic human resources, organizational learning, and establishing new infrastructure and advanced technology in the field of renewal (Vishlaghi et al., 2021). Additionally, changing employees' mindsets to align with the institution's new vision and ensuring active participation from all managerial levels in its implementation is essential (Hassan & Al-Humairi, 2022).

A supportive organizational culture that welcomes innovation, reconstruction, and the renewal of strategies and organizational processes strengthens strategic innovation areas in the institution. This encourages employees to drive change and renewal, thereby achieving competitive advantage and organizational excellence (Vishlaghi et al., 2021).

Strategic renewal also requires collective commitment to the transformation agenda and expanding renewal processes to involve leaders from multiple administrative levels within the institution. Establishing leadership communities helps in defining a clear vision for the institution's future. Leadership participation is essential for achieving strategic renewal due to its ability to expand the existing knowledge component both internally and externally, motivate employees, encourage and support innovators, provide intellectual freedom, solidify teamwork and human relationships, engage in necessary procedures and activities, discover and promote innovations, take risks and responsibilities, invest in intellectual and social capital, and build a system that enhances competitive capabilities and behaviors leading to the adoption of future prospects, and assess strengths and weaknesses to achieve sustainable competitive advantage and thus sustained strategic success (Binns et al., 2014).

Strategic renewal also requires increased attention to the current skills and capabilities within the institution in line with environmental and technological changes, and encouraging individuals to become proficient in modern technologies for business development, so that the concept of strategic renewal is part of the training curriculum for all employees in the institution (Hassan and Al-Humairi, 2022).

It is evident from the above that there are several requirements to achieve strategic renewal in contemporary institutions, especially educational institutions, including:

1. Developing the mental models of school leaders, meaning renewing themselves and changing their behaviors, and moving towards the new and innovative to face environmental and technological changes and respond quickly to them.
2. Continuous efforts to motivate members of the school community and enhance their creativity and innovation, providing intellectual freedom, and enabling them to participate in defining and implementing the new vision for the school.
3. Developing the human resources of the educational institution (members of the school community) so that the concept of strategic renewal is included in the training

- curriculum, and encouraging them to become proficient in modern technologies to develop their work, which contributes to the strategic renewal of these resources.
4. Discovering and investing in the talents and competencies present in the educational institution to achieve strategic renewal.
 5. Utilizing the intellectual and social capital of the educational institution and solidifying teamwork and human relationships among school community members, enabling them to participate in necessary procedures and activities.
 6. Providing new infrastructure and advanced technology and investing it in the field of renewal.
 7. Adopting an organizational culture compatible with environmental and technological changes to explore and utilize material and technological resources, contributing to achieving a sustainable competitive advantage for the educational institution.

Third: Dimensions of Strategic Renewal

The current research addresses two dimensions of strategic renewal: the exploitative dimension and the exploratory dimension. Exploitation involves performing routine tasks and maintaining current activities, while exploration involves renewing organizational routines and creating new activities for the organization (Karhu & Ritala, 2019). It is essential for all organizations to engage in both exploitation and exploration to survive and achieve good long-term performance (Tuncdogan, et al., 2019). Maintaining organizational adaptation requires both exploiting existing capabilities and exploring new ones (Floyd & Wooldridge, 2012).

The exploitative and exploratory dimensions of strategic renewal represent the activities an organization undertakes to change its current trajectory by aligning itself with the environment in which it operates (Youb, 2021). Strategic renewal cannot be achieved by focusing on one set of activities without the other; it is an interactive and integrative process carried out through the efforts of both management and employees, aimed at directing activities towards achieving the organization's goals by adopting both exploitative and exploratory activities (Hasson, 2021).

This applies to pre-university educational institutions as they seek to achieve strategic renewal through balanced engagement in exploitative and exploratory activities. This involves reusing current and available resources and making some changes to them while ensuring their quality and efficiency to guarantee their current capacity for survival, alongside exploring and innovating new resources to make proactive changes to ensure their future sustainability. Each dimension of strategic renewal will be discussed as follows:

1. Exploitative Dimension of Strategic Renewal

Exploitative strategic renewal involves refining, expanding, and modifying the existing capabilities and processes of the organization and employing them to meet the needs of current beneficiaries and competition requirements (Al-Mowajda, 2021). According to Youssef and Taher (2021), exploiting or investing in opportunities represents the organization's ability to optimally use its existing resources. Balawi & Alkshali (2022) add that exploiting opportunities seeks to expand current knowledge and skills as well as broaden existing products and services. Exploitative renewal activities involve applying a defensive strategy focused on addressing all organizational issues facing the institution and enhancing the level of available expertise and capabilities (human, material, and informational), as well as working on developing, renewing, and adding value to them. This contributes to enhancing the organization's competitiveness. Consequently, the investment activities for strategic renewal center on modifying the existing functions, tasks, and duties within the institution's work (Hasson, 2021).

Similarly, pre-university educational institutions can engage in exploitative activities for strategic renewal by improving and developing their current resources, whether human, material, financial, informational, or technological, and using them optimally. This includes modifying the functions, tasks, and duties of school teaching staff, expanding their knowledge, and developing their current skills and capabilities, as well as expanding the school's current products and services.

2. Exploratory Dimension of Strategic Renewal

Exploratory strategic renewal is defined as the innovation of something new or the experimentation with new ideas and alternatives that motivate individuals and encourage them to use their expertise, capabilities, and future expectations to evaluate and explore opportunities faster than competitors (Youb, 2021).

Exploration activities aim to develop a new product, present innovative products, processes, or services, which requires new knowledge that differs from current knowledge characterized by research, diversity, and flexibility. Exploring new opportunities leads to the development of creativity and the maturation of modern ideas within the institution (Kazem, Obeid, & Makhif, 2015).

The above also applies to pre-university educational institutions, where they can practice exploratory activities for strategic renewal by enabling school management to access and integrate new opportunities into school operations, seeking out innovative human, material, and technological resources, experimenting with new ideas and alternatives, and pursuing new knowledge different from current knowledge. They can encourage teaching staff to use their expertise, capabilities, and future expectations to find new and innovative solutions to school problems, as well as providing new and unconventional services to students and members of the school and local community. This enhances the school's adaptability in the future and gives it a competitive advantage.

The exploitative and exploratory activities for strategic renewal include a number of organizational practices aimed at continuous change and modification of the resources and services of various institutions, including pre-university educational institutions, and can be discussed in the following context.

Fourth: Exploitative and Exploratory Activities for Strategic Renewal

Exploitative and exploratory activities for strategic renewal are linked to the human, material, and technological resources of the educational institution, as well as the educational and community services it provides. These activities include:

1. Activities Related to Human Resources of Pre-University Education Institutions:

Human resources are the essential element for the success of any institution and one of its fundamental assets that cannot be dispensed with or replaced. They consist of competent individuals capable of providing services to their institutions, and they control and manage other assets to achieve organizational goals (Youb, 2021)

Human resources in the school system include teachers, school support staff, students, parents, community members, and a wide range of social groups and other stakeholders (Usman, 2016). They encompass individuals who participate directly in the administrative and teaching-learning processes to achieve predefined goals and objectives (Okon et al., 2020).

Teachers are considered one of the most important intangible resources and human capital of pre-university educational institutions. They are crucial for performing functions, achieving goals,

providing services, and responding to changes. Therefore, it is necessary to invest in this resource, enhancing their abilities and skills to contribute to the strategic renewal of these institutions.

According to a study by Ali & Majid (2020), developing human capital is a strong determinant of strategic renewal through acquiring skills and knowledge and enhancing the ability of employees to engage in ambidextrous learning to exploit and explore learning simultaneously. This positively influences the strategic renewal process in the institution. Teece (2019) adds that new capabilities in the institution are developed by selecting and developing individuals and teams, then providing them with the necessary training and learning resources.

A learning organization is a contemporary approach to human resource development in schools, focusing on acquiring and developing knowledge, sharing new ideas and information among school leadership, teachers, and the surrounding community. It provides an opportunity to experiment with ideas and modern technology in solving educational problems collectively, creating a conducive environment for creative ideas, leveraging learning energies in the school community, and disseminating them among employees (Hafez et al., 2023).

Järvi & Khoreva (2020) indicate that talented individuals in an institution act as catalysts for strategic renewal. They generate innovative and unconventional ideas, drive change by developing and implementing new processes, models, and roles. Here, talent management plays a crucial role in providing suitable conditions for fulfilling responsibilities, equipping individuals with necessary skills, placing them in positions where they can exercise these skills, and developing new businesses, products, and services to contribute to strategic renewal.

The school can achieve strategic renewal through engaging in exploitative and exploratory activities related to its human resources, including leadership and teaching staff. This can be accomplished by providing them with necessary training and learning resources, developing plans and programs to enhance and improve their performance quality, imparting them with skills and knowledge, fostering their ability to learn effectively, and adopting modern approaches for their development such as the learning organization approach. This approach aids in sharing, exchanging new ideas, knowledge, and information among them, allows for the employment of technology and new ideas, and sets a plan for talent management and investment in human resources with unique capabilities and creative skills within the school.

2. Activities Related to Material Resources of Pre-University Education Institutions:

The material resources of pre-university education institutions include infrastructure such as school buildings, classrooms, lecture halls, libraries, laboratories, facilities, equipment, and tools, in addition to financial and structural capabilities.

Maintaining high-quality school infrastructure is of utmost importance. Given the aging of school assets over time, budget constraints, and the rapid growth in student numbers, many public schools strive to maintain the required level in the long term. They employ various maintenance strategies for school infrastructure, including securing adequate funding and increasing the available budget for maintenance activities, having robust asset management plans, and involving the private sector as the main factors governing the success of school infrastructure maintenance (Herath et al., 2023).

The implementation of a maintenance management system in schools aims to improve their efficiency and competitiveness. It is used to identify and meet the needs and expectations of stakeholders, indicating the necessity for schools to have autonomy in managing their interests and facilities according to their needs and capabilities. Schools can manage maintenance activities effectively as a priority, which can be more beneficial in terms of time and cost (Setyoko et al., 2022). Various strategies are used for school infrastructure maintenance,

including clear key performance objectives for maintenance quality. Partnerships between the public and private sectors, such as Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) and Private Finance Initiatives (PFIs), have shown outstanding performance and significant improvements in the school infrastructure maintenance process in some countries (Herath et al., 2023).

Additionally, schools can enhance parental involvement in efforts to develop school infrastructure, contribute to providing its resources and needs, overcome challenges, and invest their potential in supporting school programs (Riyada Al-Fikr, 2022).

The above indicates that the school can invest its current material resources, primarily the infrastructure, which includes buildings and facilities. Schools should develop a plan to maintain and preserve these resources, in addition to seeking new material resources that contribute to achieving the school's strategic renewal.

On another front, institutional managers initiate changes in organizational structures to foster innovation and address new opportunities arising from changing environments. These structural changes enhance collaboration between organizational units and increase the institution's ability to balance exploring and exploiting new opportunities emerging from changes. The structure is simplified through processes that reduce the functions or business units overseen by management by merging or eliminating those units (Bock et al., 2012). Simplifying the structure enables organizations to use their resources in new paths, improving the effectiveness of those resources and enhancing organizational performance (Ahmadi & Osman, 2017).

Similarly, such changes can be implemented in pre-university educational institutions by restructuring the school. This could involve establishing, eliminating, or merging departments or sections that are redundant or have overlapping responsibilities. Such restructuring helps the school invest its resources in new paths and improve its effectiveness.

3. Activities Related to Technological Resources in Pre-University Education Institutions:

Information technology (IT) resources are fundamental for educational institutions as they determine the stock and flow of information and knowledge within the organization. IT resources in an institution encompass hardware, software, information systems, databases, computing systems, communication technologies, and interactive platforms. Sometimes, these IT resources are referred to as technological business intelligence and IT infrastructure. They are also called strategic resources because they help the organization achieve long-term competitive advantages (Bamel & Bamel, 2018). Additionally, technological resources are defined as a diverse set of tools used to communicate, create, disseminate, store, and manage information. These include computers, the internet, broadcast technologies (radio and television), remote prompts, and telephones (Usman, 2016).

In pre-university educational institutions, technological resources comprise the technological infrastructure, such as laboratories, computers, internet networks, software applications, and databases. Educational institutions can leverage modern technologies to be more flexible, innovative, and capable of renewal. Investing in technological resources aids in completing various administrative and organizational tasks, facilitating the availability and electronic exchange of information among staff members. This goes beyond traditional databases to data warehouses. Administration relies heavily on electronic means such as electronic archives, emails, electronic directories and journals, voice messages, electronic monitoring and tracking systems, virtual environments, electronic conferences, networked organization, matrix organization, and knowledge-driven organization (Attwa, El-Atriby, & El-Haroun, 2023). Technological resources also help solve numerous problems and provide

opportunities for information and experience exchange. Moreover, utilizing management information systems can alleviate the burdens on school leaders, thereby improving and developing their performance (Khalil, 2014).

School leadership can invest in technological tools such as websites, social media accounts, or forums to enhance communication and encourage stakeholders, including parents and the local community, to use these tools. This facilitates faster and more efficient communication (Aurelian & Tse, 2017). Additionally, students can use information and communication technologies to submit their work, create documents, and presentations to demonstrate what they have learned, and then share these with other students, their teachers, and via email with people around the world (Usman, 2016).

1- Activities Related to Services Provided by Pre-University Education Institutions

The institution's ability to achieve a competitive advantage cannot be complete without focusing on the services it provides through its various resources. Resources hold no significance unless they are transformed into services that align with the changing needs of beneficiaries and the surrounding developments and changes .

School services encompass the range of service characteristics provided by the school administration, demonstrating its ability to meet the diverse needs of students. Indicators for measuring school service variables include the quality of services offered by the school to meet the expectations of students and their parents. These services include school facilities and infrastructure, qualified academic teaching staff, the methods and activities of teaching and learning they use, adequate curricula and educational resources, and a friendly and welcoming administrative team (Tupari et al., 2023).

Many schools make their facilities available outside of school hours for a variety of uses and for many beneficiaries. School buildings are invested in providing a range of activities, including after-school activities, homework clubs, breakfast clubs, summer camps, and sports activities, as well as for recreational and community purposes (Ireland Department of Education and Skills, 2017). Multi-purpose facilities in schools (such as halls and classrooms) may be available to the community during or after school hours (Usman, 2016).

Schools can utilize several mechanisms to activate the services they provide to beneficiaries, including parents and the local community. These mechanisms include building databases for the local community that encompass the characteristics of the area and neighborhood where the school is located, communicating with parents and community members through phone calls, preparing a periodic school newsletter, producing some documentary films or pictures of school events and sending them to parents, informing parents of the school's vision and mission, sending a school activity calendar to the families of students, and contributing to addressing social issues that harm the community. These efforts help to improve and develop the level of school services (Riada al-Fikr, 2022), contributing to achieving the school's strategic renewal in both its exploitative and exploratory dimensions.

It is evident that strategic renewal in its two dimensions can be achieved in pre-university educational institutions through the practice of both exploitative and exploratory activities related to the institution's human, material, and technological resources, as well as the educational and community services it provides to its beneficiaries. This can be accomplished in a balanced manner by improving and developing current resources and services, making some changes while ensuring their quality and efficiency, to guarantee the institution's current survival. Additionally, there is a focus on exploring and innovating new resources and services to make proactive changes, ensuring the institution's sustainability in the future. This

approach helps the educational institution keep pace with environmental changes, distinguishing itself and thriving.

Section Two: The current state of Strategic Renewal Practices in Egyptian Schools

First: Current Practices of Renewal Related to Human Resources in Egyptian Schools

The Ministry of Education and Technical Education has made several attempts to engage in some renewal activities related to investing in and developing school leaders and teaching staff in pre-university education institutions in Egypt. One significant effort is the launch of the "Teachers First" program, considered a fundamental part of the Egyptian learning community supported by the Egyptian state in 2015. By May 2018, over 45,000 teachers from 10 different educational directorates had participated in both core and extended practice communities (Cabinet, 2022).

The government's action plan for 2016-2018 (Education Axis) included enhancing school administration performance (leaders, managers, and deputies) and providing sustainable professional development opportunities for teachers (Ministry of Education and Technical Education, Strategic Plan 2022/2026, 2022). In December 2020, the ministry signed a memorandum of understanding with "CARE International" to contribute to training teachers in general and technical education on the latest teaching methods (Cabinet, 2022).

Despite these efforts, the actual situation indicates a weakness in exploitative activities and an absence of exploratory activities related to strategic renewal in human resources in Egyptian schools. The ministry's strategic plan highlighted that school overcrowding and funding shortages resulted in a significant decline in quality. This issue is exacerbated by a shortage of well-qualified and well-trained teachers (Ministry of Education and Technical Education, Strategic Plan 2022/2026, 2022).

A study by Abu Khalil and others (2024) identified some deficiencies in achieving professional development for teachers due to the absence of clear vision and goals for training, the repetitive nature of training programs, the lack of trained personnel to conduct training, neglect of follow-up on teachers post-training, resistance by some teachers to new methods, and inadequate coordination between faculties of education and the Ministry of Education. Another study by Ibrahim, El-Sayed, and Abdel Rahman (2021) found several deficiencies related to human resource investment in schools, including weak encouragement for staff to hold workshops to exchange ideas and best practices, and insufficient attention by directorates and schools to identify and reward creative individuals both financially and morally. Additionally, a study by Azab (2018) found that schools lack innovation and renewal values in educational and administrative practices and lack a supportive and motivating climate for sharing professional knowledge, exchanging experiences, and mutual learning.

Second: Current Practices of Renewal Related to Material Resources in Egyptian Schools

Between 2014 and 2020, around 4,500 school building projects were completed, equivalent to 68,200 classrooms, while 1,091 projects, equating to 17,300 classrooms, are currently underway. The number of classrooms increased from 466,400 in 2013/2014 to 518,600 in 2020/2021, while the number of pre-university students rose from 18.6 million in 2010 to 24.4 million (Cabinet of Ministers, 2022). Additionally, mobile smart classrooms were introduced in 2020/2021 as a temporary solution to classroom density issues (Ministry of Education and Technical Education, Strategic Plan 2022/2026, 2022). A report by the Transparency and Community Participation Unit at the Ministry of Finance and UNICEF Egypt indicated investments directed towards the Educational Buildings Authority for creating 25,000 classrooms

across all educational stages (Ministry of Finance and UNICEF Egypt, 2022). The pre-university education budget for the fiscal year 2023/2024 amounted to EGP 392.4 billion, an increase of EGP 75.4 billion from the previous year (Ministry of Finance, 2023).

Despite official documents emphasizing investment in material resources for schools and the Ministry's efforts to improve and develop these resources, actual conditions reveal weaknesses that negatively impact the strategic renewal activities related to material resources in Egyptian schools. The strategic plan for pre-university education noted a lower expenditure rate on the public education sector compared to international benchmarks (Ministry of Education and Technical Education, Strategic Plan 2022/2026, 2022). A study by Ahmed and Abdel Salam (2022) found a lack of attention to school infrastructure and an absence of aesthetic features in school buildings, laboratories, yards, and facilities. Another study by Eid, Hanna, and Hussein (2022) highlighted the need for solutions to issues in school buildings, such as maintenance, partial and complete renovations, new constructions, and internal equipment.

Third: Current Practices of Renewal Related to Technological Resources in Egyptian Schools

One of the priority strategic goals identified by the education sector, which the Ministry aims to achieve, is integrating information and communication technology into the educational process and developing the technological infrastructure of schools. All general secondary schools have been equipped with interactive screens, various technological tools, high-speed internet, numerous platforms alongside the Egyptian Knowledge Bank, a unified email system, and Microsoft Office for 20 million students. Schools have also been equipped with electronic laboratories (Ministry of Education and Technical Education, Central Administration for Planning and Quality, Executive Plan 2022/2026, 2022). Each first-year secondary student has received a tablet device equipped with 4G technology, with curricula linked to the Knowledge Bank, alongside the implementation of electronic exams and the "open book" system, replacing the "booklet" system and incorporating electronic correction and testing. The new system aims to transition students from rote learning to engaging in activities and understanding (Cabinet of Ministers, 2022).

Despite the issuance of official documents and the ministry's attempts to implement strategic renewal activities related to technological resources, the current state indicates the presence of several weaknesses that hinder the effectiveness of these activities, whether they are investment or exploratory in nature within schools. The results of Azab's study (2018) revealed the poor utilization of the Knowledge Bank by staff and their weak perception of its effectiveness in improving their performance and spreading knowledge. There is also a weak ability among school leaders and teachers to comprehend updates and use technology, alongside weak technological infrastructure and poor employment of modern techniques to support cooperation and communication within the school. This is confirmed by the findings of Ibrahim, El-Sayed, and Abdel-Rahman (2021), which indicate a weak basic communication infrastructure within schools.

Fourth: Current Practices of Renewal Related to the Services Provided by Egyptian school

Among the services provided by the ministry through pre-university educational institutions to their beneficiaries (Ministry of Education and Technical Education, Central Administration for Planning and Quality, Executive Plan of the Ministry of Education and Technical Education 2022/2026, 2022) are attracting students to school by taking several measures, the most important of which is the implementation of Activity Day (sports - cultural - artistic) at all educational levels, using scientific tools and methods to identify talented students in cooperation with the National Center for Examinations and Educational Evaluation, and supporting the integration of people with disabilities in the educational process.

Among the projects and activities targeted by the ministry to implement the government's work program related to entrepreneurship are organizing exhibitions for the productive school (Ministry - Directorate - Administration - School), and implementing productive school projects (Ministry of Education and Technical Education, Strategic Plan of the Ministry of Education and Technical Education 2022/2026, 2022). The investment plan for the education sector for the year 2023/2024, according to the Ministry of Planning and Economic Development, included ensuring the quality of educational services in public schools and universities, providing education services to middle-income segments, digital transformation in the education system, distributing 8.1 million tablets to secondary school students, and providing necessary training for teachers (Ministry of Finance, 2023).

Despite the efforts and attempts made by the Ministry to improve the services provided by the school to its beneficiaries, the current state indicates multiple areas of weakness in practicing exploitative activities related to educational and community services offered by the school, as well as the absence of exploratory activities associated with those services. The strategic plan for pre-university education pointed out the limited funding necessary to support spending on services and improve their quality (Ministry of Education and Technical Education, Strategic Plan of the Ministry of Education and Technical Education 2022/2026, 2022). The results of a study (Ibrahim, El-Sayed, and Abdel Rahman, 2021) revealed the school's weak capacity for continuous improvement of its educational services.

Section Three: Field Study to Survey Experts' Opinions on the Proposed Priorities for Strategic Renewal in Pre-University Education in Egypt

A survey form was administered to 31 educational experts from faculties of education at various Egyptian universities, from the National Center for Educational Research and Development, and from field experts via email and WhatsApp. The survey focused on the proposed priorities for strategic renewal in pre-university education in Egypt and was divided into two main dimensions (the exploitative dimension and the exploratory dimension). Each dimension included four axes representing activities related to (human resources, material resources, technological resources, and the educational and community services provided by the Egyptian school). The Delphi method was used over three rounds to achieve the highest percentage of agreement among experts, as follows:

First Round: A survey form was applied to gather experts' opinions, including an open question to present their suggestions on activities that can be implemented for strategic renewal in terms of exploitative and exploratory dimensions related to human, material, and technological resources of the Egyptian school and the educational and community services it provides.

Second Round: The expert opinion survey was administered again on the proposed activities for strategic renewal in pre-university education in light of the suggestions and opinions

provided in the first round. It included several statements representing exploitative and exploratory activities for strategic renewal. Experts responded by indicating the degree of importance (high - medium - low) by placing a (√) mark in front of the response that matches their views, or by deleting, rephrasing, or adding other suggestions. After receiving the experts' responses, statistical data processing was conducted by calculating frequencies and percentages for each statement in each axis and analyzing the data according to the following percentages:

More than 90%: Consensus

80% to less than 90%: High concentration.

70% to less than 80%: Medium concentration.

60% to less than 70%: Low concentration.

60% or less: Dispersion.

Third Round: Implementing a survey with the same experts on the proposed activities agreed upon in the second round to determine the importance level of each statement (high - medium - low) by marking (√) next to the response that aligns with their opinions, or suggesting its deletion or rephrasing. After receiving the experts' responses, statistical processing of the data was conducted using the same statistical methods, with the addition of calculating the relative weight of each statement in each axis and ranking them.

Section Four: The Proposed perspective for Strategic Renewal in Pre-University Education in Egypt

After surveying experts' opinions on the proposed priorities for strategic renewal in its exploitative and exploratory dimensions and the activities associated with each, the research proposed a vision for strategic renewal in pre-university education in Egypt as follows:

First: Objectives of the Proposed Perspective

The proposed perspective for strategic renewal aims to:

- 1- Formulate a systematic vision on the key dimensions and aspects through which strategic renewal in pre-university education in Egypt can be achieved.
- 2- Provide an integrated framework for strategic renewal in pre-university education, focusing on the essential components needed to achieve efficiency and effectiveness and enhance alignment with societal, knowledge, and technological developments.
- 3- Present a list of priorities according to two main dimensions (exploitative and exploratory) and their associated activities (human, material, technological resources, and services) that underpin strategic renewal in the educational context, considering its specificity and requirements.

Second: Structure of the Proposed perspective

The proposed perspective includes the strategic priorities for pre-university education renewal in Egypt, which have been reached through several sources including reviewing reports, official documents, and results of studies related to the current state, in addition to the results of experts' opinions surveys. The following figure (1) illustrates the main pillars of the proposed perspective for strategic renewal in pre-university education in Egypt, based on two dimensions: the exploitative dimension and the exploratory dimension of renewal, and the activities and sub-elements included in each dimension.

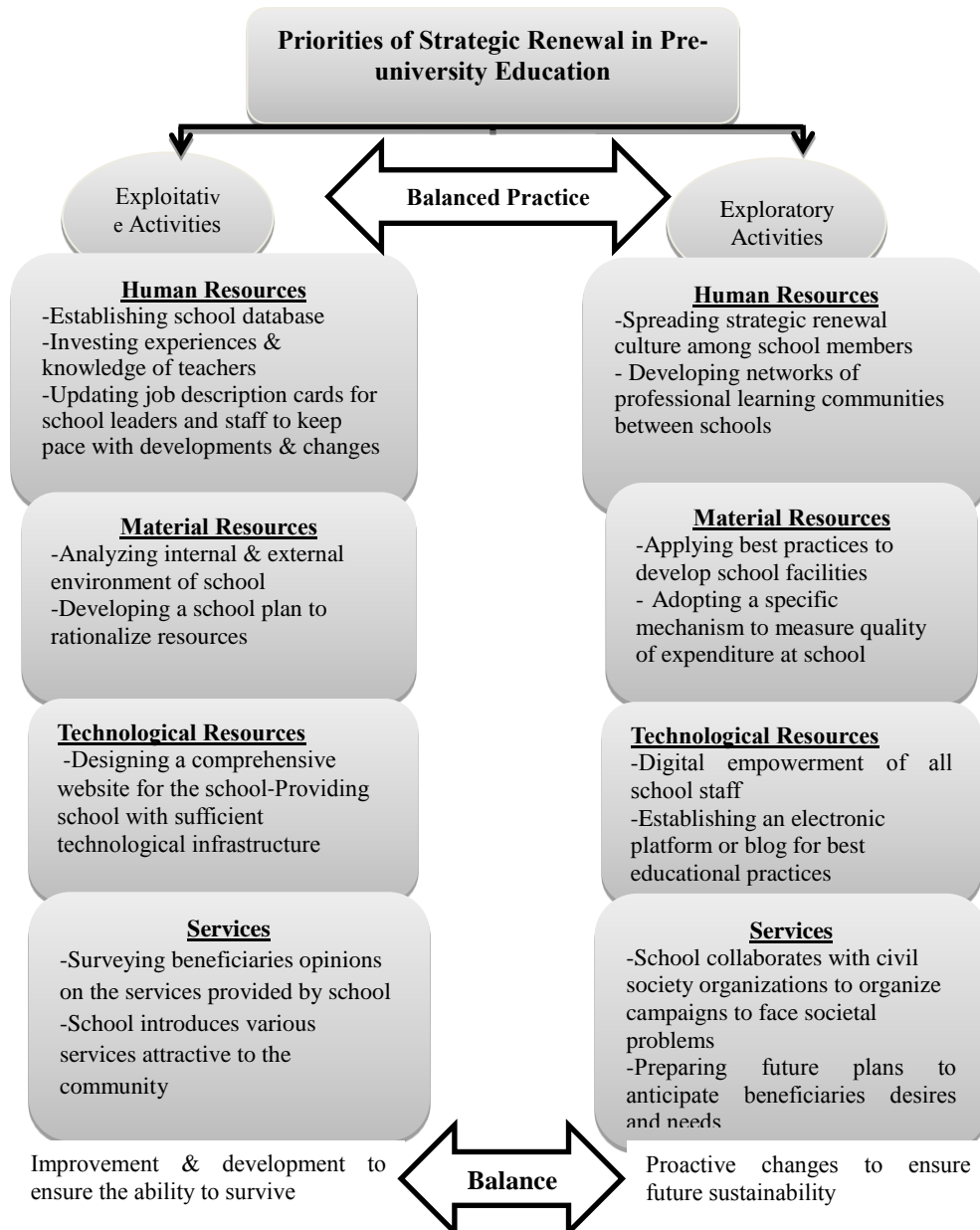


Figure (1) Proposed Perspective for Strategic Renewal

The previous figure illustrates the two main dimensions of strategic renewal and the four sub-axes contained within each, namely: human, material, technological, and service resources, and the activities associated with each. Pre-university education institutions can practice both exploitative and exploratory activities for strategic renewal in a balanced manner by improving and developing their current resources and services and making some changes while ensuring their quality and efficiency. This is to ensure their current ability to survive, along with focusing on exploring and innovating new resources and services to make proactive changes to ensure their sustainability in the future. The following priorities represent a set of activities and procedures that support development projects, plans, and strategic objectives stemming from monitoring needs and anticipating trends in the next stage, and then working in light of them as guiding paths to achieve the objectives of reform and development plans.

Table (1) The proposed priorities for strategic renewal in pre-university education

Resources and Services	Priorities of Exploitative Dimension Activities	Priorities of Exploratory Dimension Activities
Human Resources	1-Establishing a school-specific database containing all data regarding available human resources.	1-Spreading strategic renewal culture among members of school community so that it becomes part of the school's vision, mission, and goals.
	2-Investing the experiences and knowledge available to teachers studying abroad or appointed to leadership positions to support faculty members in the school.	2- Developing networks of professional learning communities between schools through networking to exchange knowledge and experiences among faculty members.
	3-Accomplishing tasks in the school according to diversified work teams with various specialties and experiences.	3- Establishing a unit for action research in schools to serve teachers and encourage them to direct their researches to contribute to solving school problems.
	4- Developing a talent management plan and investing in human resources with qualitative capabilities and creative skills in the school.	4- Forming a committee of experts from veteran teachers, distinguished school leaders, and benefiting from their experiences to support new faculty members.
	5- Updating job description cards for school leaders and staff to keep pace with environmental developments and changes.	5- Preparing a list of job competencies specific to each job in the school.
	6- Investing in technical guidance to develop functional competencies for school staff.	6- Identifying the professional skills and competencies needed by members of the educational community.
	7- Activating the role of training and quality units in schools to qualify faculty members for leadership roles.	7-Establishing specific and announced mechanisms for appointment in the school according to competencies.
	8-Allocating educational management for incentives and rewards for faculty members with innovative ideas and new initiatives.	8- Creating a bank of ideas and proposals at the school level to produce new ideas and innovations and implement them.
		9- Allocating a scientific entrepreneurship award to faculty members holding academic degrees such as master's and doctorates, recognizing their contributions in providing solutions to the problems of pre-university education.
		10- Allocating incentives, bonuses, and privileges as an innovative mechanism to attract and retain talented and outstanding human resources in schools.
		11- Establishing talent discovery centers for all types of talent (musical, athletic, scientific, literary, artistic, motor skills, etc.) among the human resources in schools.
		12- Integrating knowledge and creative experiences of school staff into the school's electronic organizational memory.
Material Resources	1-Analyze the internal and external environment of the school to identify its strengths and available opportunities and invest them.	1- Implement best practices and success stories in developing school facilities and equipment.
	2- Develop a plan for school to rationalize resources, prevent financial and educational waste.	2- Train students in entrepreneurship and encourage them to sell their products through the school's production unit, allocating a percentage of the profits to the school.
	3- Monitor the application of professional security and safety standards on school buildings and facilities.	3- Adopting a specific and transparent mechanism to measure the quality of expenditure at school.

Resources and Services	Priorities of Exploitative Dimension Activities	Priorities of Exploratory Dimension Activities
	4- Providing school with convenient mechanisms to communicate with the Educational Buildings Authority to ensure continuous maintenance of current school buildings to improve their operational efficiency and invest them.	4- Restructuring of school to allow for the establishment, elimination, or merging of departments or sections with low productivity or duplicative functions.
	5- Utilize the expertise of specialists from boards of trustees, parents, teachers, and members of the local community to participate in renovating school infrastructure.	5- Exploring material obstacles that limit strategic renewal and dealing with potential risks arising from them.
		6- Develop a plan to provide the necessary material resources for performance quality at the school and advertise it through its website.
		7-Forming a network of schools for mutual dependence on material resources.
		8- Using modern methods (such as cost-based accounting) to eliminate low-value activities or those that do not add value to the institution.
		9- Engaging school in establishing a database that includes the suppliers of material resources required by school (furniture, tools, devices) with appropriate quality and price.
Technological Resources	1- Designing a comprehensive website for the school to support communication within and outside it.	1- Digital empowerment of all school staff.
	2- Providing school with sufficient technological infrastructure (computers, peripherals, operating software, applications, databases, internet network, etc.) to accomplish the school's tasks and activities.	2-Providing programs to develop the skills of school staff related to artificial intelligence applications.
	3- Investing information and communication technology in all educational and administrative practices at the school.	3- Transforming school libraries into electronic libraries, equipping them with global databases, and making them available to school community members and students.
	4-Leveraging the school's website to disseminate its results and experiences of its teachers.	4- Establishing an electronic platform or blog for best educational practices to facilitate rich professional discussions among school staff members.
	5- Utilizing the school's website to share knowledge among school community members.	5- Providing institutional email with high capacity.
	6- Activating the use of available global databases through the Egyptian Knowledge Bank and updating them regularly.	6- Establishing a digital transformation unit at the school to educate school community members and parents about the goals and importance of digital transformation.
	7- Investing school technological devices to meet the shortage of teachers in certain specialties through teaching via networked classrooms with one teacher.	7- Using artificial intelligence applications in the school to identify opportunities and threats and explore them faster than competing schools to ensure strategic sovereignty.
	8-Utilizing the expertise of technology development specialists at the school to organize programs and courses for training school community members and enhancing their technology-related skills.	8- Enabling schools to establish community partnerships with private sector institutions specialized in designing programs to facilitate administrative tasks and control in the school.
	9- Expanding the establishment of virtual labs and using them in the teaching process.	

Resources and Services	Priorities of Exploitative Dimension Activities	Priorities of Exploratory Dimension Activities
Services	1- Surveying the opinions of beneficiaries (students, school community members, parents, local community members) on the current services provided by the school.	1- The school collaborates with civil society organizations to organize campaigns to face societal problems such as violence, bullying, addiction, and corruption.
	2- The school provides various services (sports, cultural, and recreational) that are attractive to the community during summer vacations.	2- The school allocates honorary awards to parents and local community members who make outstanding efforts in serving the school and local community.
	3- Evaluating the quality of services provided by the school according to the gap analysis between capabilities	3- Developing future plans to predict the desires and needs of school beneficiaries.
	4- Adjusting the school's plans and strategic objectives to meet the needs and aspirations of beneficiaries.	4- Applying successful experiences of regionally and internationally competitive educational institutions in providing innovative services to beneficiaries.
	5- Simplifying the administrative procedures followed by the school so that services are provided to beneficiaries quickly and efficiently.	5- Offering diverse training courses to the external community such as foreign language learning, safe internet usage.
	6- Investing the experiences of psychological and social specialists in supporting parents and providing family counseling to the surrounding community, such as: raising awareness of how to deal with children, especially teenagers.	6- Generalizing electronic systems in all schools to provide services electronically to beneficiaries (such as application and registration systems for new students, transportation, training, consultations, complaints).
	7- Surveying the opinions of board members, parents, and teachers about suitable services needed by the community surrounding the school.	7- Establishing electronic platforms to facilitate communication with school beneficiaries.
	8- Developing organizational citizenship behaviors among teachers to encourage them to provide compensatory programs for students with poor academic achievement.	8- Electronic marketing of school products and new services.
	9- Developing social marketing skills among school community members to provide outstanding educational services.	9- Marketing graduates by activating career and academic counseling services at the school.
		10- Conducting survey studies to explore recent changes in the community surrounding the school and identify the services needed.
		11- Generalizing a unit to facilitate students' transition to the job market similar to vocational schools and activating it in general secondary education.

Table (1) includes a set of exploitative and exploratory activities for strategic renewal related to human, material, and technological resources, and services that represent urgent priorities to be currently implemented in pre-university education in Egypt. These activities have achieved a high level of consensus or concentration according to the experts' vision, indicating the urgent need to adopt them in the near future. They have been arranged according to their relative weight. Activities that received moderate or low concentration have been excluded as their implementation does not represent urgency or necessity for achieving strategic renewal in pre-university education in Egypt.

Third: Requirements for implementing the proposed perspective

There are several necessary requirements for the successful adoption and implementation of the proposed perspective, including:

1. Making strategic plans for pre-university education according to clear and specific standards, including development programs and projects aimed at renewal.
2. Establishing a comprehensive information system, utilizing decision support systems (DSS) to update databases and quantitative and statistical models, leading to proper planning to anticipate priorities.
3. Good investment in all support elements for renewal, such as the increasing willingness of the Ministry of Education and Technical Education to pursue reform, the shift towards digital transformation, and the rapid evolution of information and communication technology.
4. Creating a conducive climate for renewal in pre-university educational institutions by implementing the policy of decentralization effectively, granting schools sufficient autonomy, empowering their leaders, expanding their powers to achieve flexibility, and enhancing alignment with various developments and anticipating and adapting to expected changes and challenges.
5. Coordinating and integrating efforts among stakeholders in the professional development of school leaders and education members, including the Professional Academy for Teachers and the Leadership Preparation Center.
6. Developing professional development programs for school leaders and education members in terms of content, facilitators, and the necessary human, material, and technological resources for implementation, in line with expected innovations and changes.
7. Applying the principle of administrative transparency in pre-university educational institutions through clear and simplified work systems and procedures, facilitating the access and exchange of data and information among educational community members and involving them in educational decision-making.
8. Providing guidance manuals that outline the prioritization of strategic renewal for pre-university education, its sub-elements, and expected needs.

Fourth: Entities involved in implementing the proposed perspective

Several entities can participate in implementing the proposed perspective for strategic renewal in pre-university education in Egypt, under the supervision of senior leadership at the Ministry of Education and educational directorates. Some of these entities include:

1. The Human Resources Section and the Technological Development Section at the educational administration.
2. School boards of trustees, parents, and teachers at the school and educational administration levels.
3. The Professional Academy for Teachers and Leadership Development Center.
4. The General Authority for Educational Buildings.
5. Universities and educational research centers.
6. Civil society organizations.
7. Private sector companies specialized in information technology.

These entities collaborate and coordinate with school administration and leadership, as well as members of the school community, to implement priority exploitative and exploratory activities related to human, material, and technological resources for the school, as well as educational and community services, so as to achieving strategic renewal in pre-university education in Egypt.

Fifth: Obstacles to implementing the proposed perspective and ways to overcome them:

Obstacles to implementing the proposed perspective and ways to overcome them can be identified as follows:

1. Administrative centralization and bureaucratic procedures can be overcome by implementing school self-management, supporting the independence of school principals, granting them more administrative and financial powers in taking educational decisions.
2. Resistance to change and renewal by some members of school community can be overcome by promoting a culture of renewal through holding regular meetings between them and distinguished leaders in innovative activities, presenting successful experiences in their implementation, encouraging them to emulate them, and providing opportunities for them to attend international and local conferences that allow them to new and innovative ideas.
3. Lack of technological awareness among many members of school community and educational leaders can be overcome through continuous training, development, and enhancement of their skills related to employing modern technology in their practices within the school.
4. The high cost of the physical and technological infrastructure necessary to implement the proposed perspective, including devices, networks, applications, software, and qualified human resources, can be overcome by pooling the efforts of relevant entities and the voluntary efforts of some civil society organizations and the private sector.

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