

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Royal International School was established in 1991 and is now considered to be a leading international school in Kurunegala in the North Western province. This Independent Guided Study report has three objectives. First, it is to explain how Royal International School was able to achieve continuous business growth in the international school sector of the education industry in Sri Lanka. The second objective is to study how the entrepreneurial orientation of the school's chairperson contributed to the continuous business growth; and third and finally, to explore whether the organisation's growth was also determined by adopting HR practices and by their customer value offering. The limitations in conducting the study were identified to be time, the reliability of qualitative data and the scarcity of quantitative data.

The literature review focused on the areas of continuous business growth, entrepreneurial orientation, human resource management and customer value. Business growth was interpreted as the growth in revenue and the increase in the number of employees. Entrepreneurial orientation focused on the behavioural characteristics of innovativeness, proactiveness and risk-taking. Human resource management focused on the specific practices of setting and communicating a vision, recruitment of the right people and the right fit and training and development of existing staff. Customer value explored the areas of emotional value, price and facilities management as sources of customer value creation.

The key drivers of entrepreneurial orientation, human resource practices and customer value; and the outcome of continuous business growth were discussed in the context of the literature reviewed. The demand for English medium education was identified to be the environmental moderating factor. The case study framework was developed after the discussion of the available literature in relation to the case at hand. The hypothesis that entrepreneurial orientation, human resource practices and customer value contributed to the business growth of RIS was supported through qualitative and quantitative research. The research methodology for the collection of primary data included the conducting of five in-depth interviews and one focus group discussion. The secondary data was sourced from internal company records.

The organisation Royal International School was introduced and an organisation narrative was built following the research findings. The narrative follows the growth of Royal International from its inception in 1991 and how the organisation built itself into a leading international school in the North Western province with a staff of over 300 and a student population of over 2,500 within a span of 28 years. The timeline of the organisation was introduced with several key events highlighted in regards to the key drivers of entrepreneurial orientation, HR practices and customer value and the role they each played in the continuous business growth of Royal International School.

The key drivers of entrepreneurial orientation, human resource practices and customer value were then discussed in connection to the outcome of continuous business growth. Specifically, the dimensions identified under each key driver were elaborated upon. Further, following the discussion of the relationship between the theoretical concepts of the drivers and the outcome; the relationship between each driver and the outcome in the context of Royal International School was also discussed. This discussion was supported by the main findings outlined by the research as well from the organisation narrative.

Following the discussion of the findings, there is enough reason to conclude that the continuous business growth of RIS was indeed supported by these key drivers to differing extents. Firstly, the entrepreneurial orientation demonstrated by co-founder and current chairperson Mrs. Sandra Wanduragala played a key role in driving the continuous business growth of RIS. Her vision, recruitment policies and her focus on training and development too contributed to the growth of the organisation. Finally, the emotional value placed on RIS by the parents as well as the level of school fees and the facilities available for the students too ensured that RIS would continue to grow as an organisation. This growth was further fuelled by the demand for English medium education in the North Western province and led to RIS achieving an average growth rate of 37% in revenue over a period of ten years as well as experiencing a large rise in the number of their employees; with both measures being a clear indication of continuous growth. The lessons learned from the report were also highlighted and four case study questions were included to facilitate further discussion.