Journal of Kyzylorda Scholarly Review

P-ISSN:3006-0265 | E-ISSN:3007-4681. Published by the Open University of Kyzylorda

https://bulletin.ouk.kz/index.php/bulletin/index

Assessing the Readiness of the Northern Cement Directorate to Adopt the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) Model for Institutional Performance Evaluation

Lamia Mohamed Ghazal
Researcher, Institute of Technical Management, Nineveh, Northern Technical University, Iraq
lomy.mohamed@ntu.edu.iq

Abstract. With the emerging challenges of modern industrial institutions, there is a need for modern management models that would enhance the management of institutions and help attain sustainable institutional excellence that can measure institutional performance. The European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) model is considered one of the most widely-used and comprehensive institutional performance appraisal and improvement models in the world. This study aimed to find out whether the EFQM model can be used as an assessment tool for the Northern Cement Directorate's performance. The research was descriptive – analytical, using the case study method and checklist consisting of nine criteria of European Excellence Model, except interviewing administrative leaders and directorates officials. The focus was on an evaluation of the extent of implementation, documentation and performance gap of each criterion of the model. The results revealed a level of compliance with the requirements of the EFQM model that was very high. The Strategy criterion and the Processes, Products and Services criterion had the highest rates of implementation and documentation, both at 97%, followed by the Customer Results criterion at 96%, and the Leadership criterion at 95%. The gap for the 'Partnerships and Resources' criterion was 17%, for 'Society Results' 17% and for 'People Results' the highest at 19%. In overall conclusion, the results reveal that the Northern Cement Directorate has organizational and managerial capacities in order to implement the EFQM model as a tool for the evaluation of the institutional performance. This study contributes to the body of knowledge about evaluating the excellence of institutions in industrial organizations in Iraq and provides a set of practical recommendations regarding human resource management, knowledge management, enhancing institutional cooperation and continuous improvement.

Keywords: EFQM Model, Institutional Performance, Institutional Excellence, Performance Evaluation, Cement Industry, Iraq.

Journal of Kyzylorda Scholarly Review
P-ISSN:3006-0265 | E-ISSN:3007-4681
https://bulletin.ouk.kz/index.php/bulletin/index.php

Introduction

A world of fast change and instability caused by technological innovation, economic openness, and stakeholders' demands leads contemporary organizations to try to become more efficient in their managerial practices, which results in better performance and increases their chances to be able to operate and compete.

The use of financial and operational measures to assess institution performance has become more obvious, and a call for more comprehensive assessment models, which include strategic, organizational, human and operational dimensions, has increased. The European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) model is one of the most widely used of these models and provides a complete framework to assess performance, links the enablers to the results, and enables organizations to identify areas for improvement, as well as fostering a culture of excellence and sustainability.

Considering the current importance of using resources efficiently and enhancing the industrial process and product quality, this model is being employed as a vital part in the industrial organizations, particularly in the Iraqi industrial organizations, which is facing difficulties in developing their administrative systems and in enhancing their production efficiency.

The Northern Cement Directorate can use one of the institutions with capabilities to develop the managerial practices in the development of institutional excellence. However, a scientific investigation into its readiness for the use of the EFQM model is still needed. Thus, this study aims to evaluate the readiness of the Directorate to implement the model, to analyze the current condition of the managerial practices and organizational practices, and to measure the level of their alignment with the managerial and organizational practices of the model, so as to contribute to identifying strengths, weaknesses, opportunities for improvement, and improvement strategies for enhancing sustainable performance of the institution.

Section One: Methodological Framework of the Study

First: Research Problem

The current growing pressures on industrial organisations are due to technological developments, tougher competition and higher expectations from stakeholders, which require the use of advanced methods to measure and continuously monitor institutional performance. Implementing a quality management system or international standards does not necessarily give a full picture of institutional excellence or the ability to achieve sustainable results, however, many Iraqi industrial organizations have implemented a quality management system or international standards.

The main problem in the study is limited information on the degree of congruence between the managerial and organizational practices of the Northern Cement Directorate to the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) model, and the lack of systematic assessment of readiness of the organization to apply the model and evaluate the performance of the organization with its application.

Thus, the overall research question is:

How ready is the Northern Cement Directorate to use the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) model to assess the performance at their institution?

This main question is further divided into the following sub-questions:

1. What is the level of implementation of the EFQM model criteria within the Directorate?
2. What is the magnitude of the gaps between current practices and the model's requirements?

3. What are the main strengths and areas for improvement associated with the institutional excellence criteria?
4. Does the Directorate possess the necessary capabilities to implement the model effectively?

Second: Research Significance

The relevance of this study is due to the fact that the models of institutional excellence are currently being developed as advanced tools for performance assessment and constant improvement. The study also has its value based on targeting one of the Iraqi industrial organizations that is representative of one of the most important economic sectors, which leads to the scientific and practical value of its findings.

The importance of the study is seen in the following aspects:

1. Scientific Significance

- Develop a literature on institutional excellence and performance evaluation in the context of the Arabic language and enrich EFQM knowledge and enhance its use in the Iraqi industrial environment.

Creating a scientific basis of future studies on institutional excellence models.

2. Practical Significance

Inventory of the current situation of the institutional performance in the Northern Cement Directorate along with strengths and areas of opportunities for improvement in terms of internationally recognized standards.

- Providing assistance to decision makers for their improvement and continuous development plans to increase the use of institutional excellence and sustainability practices.

Third: Research Objectives

The primary objective of this study is to assess the readiness of Northern Cement Directorate to apply the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) model to assess institutional performance.

This is the main objective and can be subdivided into the following sub objectives:

To review the current status quo management and organisation in the Directorate based on the model's criteria.

2. To measure the levels of implementation and documentation of the EFQM criteria.

To pinpoint areas of weakness in the organization that are needed in the model.

To be aware of the strengths and areas for improvement of the organisation.

To offer practical suggestions that can facilitate the institutional performance development and improve opportunities for sustainable excellence.

Fourth: Research Hypotheses

With the theoretical frame of reference and previous research, the following main statements are tested in the research:

The First Main Hypothesis:

The Northern Cement Directorate is not well organized in adopting the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) model to evaluate the performance of institutions.

The 2nd Main Hypothesis:

The present management and organization structure of the Northern Cement Directorate is not very different from that of the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) model.

The Third Main Hypothesis:

The European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) model "The Enablers" criteria are not a part of the institutional results that have been achieved in the

Northern Cement Directorate.

Fifth: Study Boundaries

1. Spatial Boundary:

In this study, cement production industry was chosen as a field of application, and the Northern Cement Directorate of the Iraqi General Company for Cement was chosen as a representative of the cement production industry in Iraq.

2. Temporal Boundary:

Data collection, interviewing, data analysis and the final stage (the level of alignment of the Northern Cement Directorate with the criteria of the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) model) were the three phases of the study.

3. Human Boundary:

The study was conducted in Northern Cement Directorate comprising administrative leaders, department managers, division and unit managers, quality management participants and institution's performance participants.

4. Subject Boundary:

The study was limited to determining the readiness of the Northern Cement Directorate in application European Foundation of Quality Management (EFQM) model to assess the performance of the institutions, and was conducted by examining the European Foundation of Quality Management model (EFQM) based on nine criteria and measuring the extent of the implementation, documentation, and gaps of the institution involved.

Sixth: Study Model

The study adopted a model which showed that the more the Northern Cement Directorate is ready to adopt the EFQM model and achieve its institutional excellence, the better the results obtained in the institution.

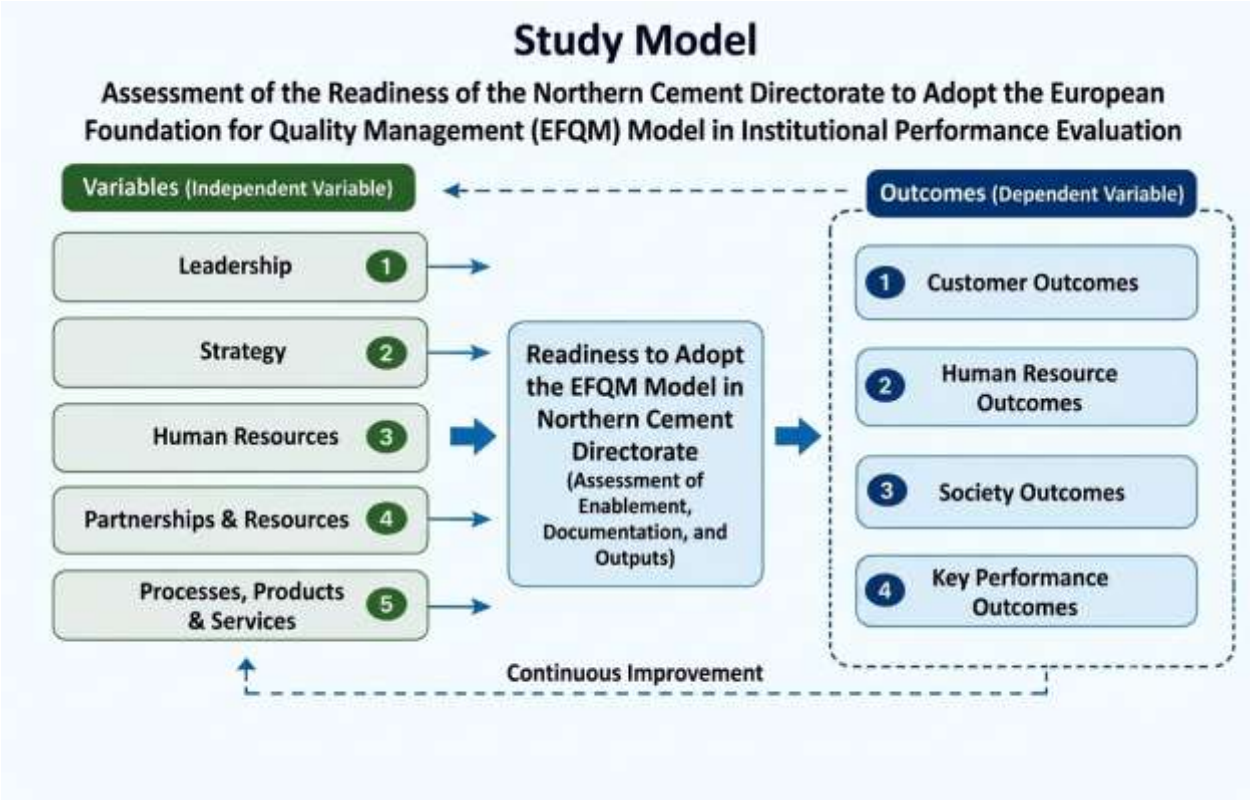

Figure 1. Study Model

Seventh: Scientific Contribution of the Study

The study is a scientific and practical contribution due to the application of the EFQM model in a new study area in the Iraqi industrial environment which has been implemented in an area that has not been widely investigated by researchers in the literature. It offers also practical evidence for the possibility of using the model for the purpose of assessing the performance and diagnosing organizational gaps in industrial organizations.

The study is methodologically comprehensive, not only because of the assessment of the degree of implementation of documents, but also because of the gap analysis, which is one of the first steps for the development of a practical framework that can be used in other industrial organizations which want to implement models of institutional excellence or in future research. The study outcomes also contribute towards knowledge regarding applications of EFQM model in the developing environment like the industrial sector in Iraq.

The instrument used to gather data.

The study was based on the questionnaire formulated using the criteria of the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) model which includes the nine criteria of the EFQM model allocated to the EFQM enablers and EFQM results. Data were further corroborated with personal interviews with administrative leaders to check the extent of implementation and documentation and to better interpret the results.

Ninth: Assessment Criteria

The nine EFQM model criteria Leadership, Strategy, People, Partnerships and Resources, Processes, Products and Services, Customer Results, People Results, Society Results and Key Performance Results were used to guide the assessment process. The degree of implementation and documentation was evaluated for each criterion and the difference between the situation and the needs of the model was determined.

Tenth: Data Analysis Methods

The data was analysed using the Gap Analysis approach where the level of implementation and of documentation of the various requirements of the EFQM model were calculated and the organisational gap (the difference between the two levels) was identified. The results were analysed in the form of percentages and weighted averages to illustrate the strengths and areas for improvement for the organisation studied.

Eleventh: Reliability Assurance Procedures

A checklist, adapted from the internationally validated EFQM model, was used to guarantee the reliability of the study instrument. Further, experts on management, quality and institutional excellence have reviewed and validated the instrument. Moreover, personal interview and official documents were used to verify the information and to enhance the credibility of the results.

Twelfth: Previous Studies

The European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) model has been discussed in the last years by a number of scholars from different angles such as EFQM and knowledge management, EFQM and sustainability, EFQM and institutional transformation, and EFQM and organizational excellence models. In a study of 113 organizations in Spain which had been awarded excellence by the EFQM, Bocoya-Maline et al. demonstrated the EFQM model is not only a tool for assessing performance, but also one to support the knowledge management processes and to make them measurable organizational outcomes.

In a similar way, Baig et al. emphasized the necessity of creating an architectural model

of the organizational excellence to help organizations implement the organizational excellence initiatives more integratedly, and that one of the problem in implementing organizational excellence is the lack of the single framework that connects leadership, organizational culture, processes and outcomes.

Martusewicz et al. introduced the change of strategy in the EFQM 2025 model and showed how the recent changes to the model further strengthened the concepts of sustainability, innovation, technology, artificial intelligence and data analytics and thus rendered the model more relevant to the changing business landscape.

The model is also cited in the official EFQM documents for its use as a managerial tool to lead change, enhance performance and develop a long term sustainable future; therefore, there is a potential for its application in industrial organizations in applied studies.

Similarly, Alanazi's study revealed that business excellence models can be used to develop strategic goals and link them to organizations' performance through examining some organizations that applied the models of excellence. This further reinforces the importance of linking EFQM criteria to strategic planning to measure institutions' performance.

Table 1. Comparison of Previous Studies.

Researchers	Year	Field of Study	Key Findings
Reda, Maha Abbas Mohammed	2023	Business Intelligence and Sustainable Performance in Asiacell Telecommunications Company	There is a significant correlation and impact relationship between the dimensions of business intelligence and sustainable performance, which confirms the importance of adopting modern management practices in enhancing institutional performance and achieving organizational sustainability.
Bocoya-Maline et al.	2024	EFQM and Knowledge Management	There is a strong relationship between the application of EFQM, knowledge management processes, and organizational outcomes.
Baig et al.	2025	Organizational Excellence	The critical need for an integrated framework that supports the implementation of institutional excellence.
Martusewicz et al.	2024	EFQM 2025 and Sustainability	The modern model heavily focuses on sustainability, innovation, and technology.
EFQM	2025	Official Framework of the Model	The model serves as a global tool for change management and performance improvement.
Alanazi	2025	Excellence Models and Strategic Goals	Excellence models assist in formulating strategic goals and

			linking them directly to performance.

Thirteenth: Research Gap

From literature review, it was discovered that there is a focus on research conducted on the study of institutional excellence models and its application in various fields. Most of previous studies, however, have been conducted in developed environment or have studied the consequences of the implementation of excellence models following their adoption in the organization. On the other hand, the number of studies conducted to assess the readiness of the Iraqi industrial organizations to use the EFQM model is still limited.

Rida (2023) Study

The study aims to examine the role of business intelligence in order to get a sustainable performance in Asiacell Telecommunications Company. It applied descriptive-analytical method and found that the correlation between the dimensions of business intelligence and Sustainable performance and the effect of them were significant. The present study is useful from the above research as it gives an idea about the need to adopt modern practices in management for improving the performance of the institution and differs from it because it evaluates the preparedness of the institution using the EFQM model as a tool to achieve this [1].

Furthermore, the majority of studies so far have focused on the outcomes of the implementation of the model, instead of diagnosing the level of model implementation or the gaps in the model documentation before full implementation and identifying the gaps in the organization. Therefore, an applied research is needed to quantify the level of compliance of the current practices in industrial organisations in Iraq with the EFQM model requirements, which will be expected to discover the strengths and opportunities for improvements from EFQM model. The distinguishing feature of the present study is that it involves concepts of harmony, harmony matrices, and harmony rule.

Methods

Section Two: Theoretical Framework

First: Institutional Performance

Institutional performance is one of the most central concepts in the modern management thinking and the institutional tool used to assess how well an institution can use its available resources to attain its strategic goals and objectives in an efficient and effective manner. Over the last decades the meaning of institutional performance has evolved considerably and is not just reflected in financial or productivity performance, but also in the various dimensions of the organization, human and strategic, that influence the capacity of an organization to achieve its objectives and to maintain its operation. The researchers found that institutional performance is related to an organization's ability to match its resources and capacities with the demands of the external and internal environment, thereby enabling the creation of value for the organization's stakeholders and its ability to sustain a competitive advantage. High performance organizations also have systems set up to measure and continuously monitor performance to identify deviations, to take appropriate corrective action, and to continuously improve performance. For digital transformation and

competition, the performance of an institution is increasingly dependent on the way in which an institution manages knowledge assets, develops and innovates, learns and grows as an institution, and uses information to inform decision making processes [2], [3], [4], [5].

The researcher believes that the criterion of institutional performance alone is the most comprehensive criterion that can evaluate the success of an organization because besides being used for continuous improvement, the criterion is also used to make an organization more competitive and efficient, in the use of resources, and can produce better and better results continuously.

Second: Institutional Excellence

Institutional excellence is one of the modern concept of management which has emerged in the context of fast changing business environment and a demand to enhance organizational performance and capability to compete and do business. It is the ability of an organisation to provide outstanding and fair performance that meets the expectations of its stakeholders through the effective and efficient use of its resources, processes and capabilities and with a focus on continuous improvement, innovation and the generation of sustainable value [6], [7].

Institutional excellence is rooted in a specific set of managerial principles, foremost among them are effective leadership, strategic planning, customer focus, knowledge management, employee empowerment, continuous improvement, and social responsibility, which can strengthen the ability of institutions to adapt to changing environments and be highly efficient and effective [8], [9].

The concept of institutional excellence is also associated with sustainability, good governance and digital transformation. Now it is not only about economic results, but also about considering the economic, social and environmental aspects, ensuring long-term benefit for all of the stakeholders involved [10], [11], [12].

Institutional excellence is seen as an ongoing process of appraisal and enhancement. Thus, other international frameworks are adopted to evaluate performance and strengths and weaknesses in organisations. One of the most widely-used models used in this context is the model of the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) [13], [14].

The research done in the past few years, points to the aspect of institutional excellence as one of the major parameters for sustainable competitive advantage by enhancing the quality of products and services, customer and employee satisfaction, supporting innovation, organization learning, sustainability and long-term growth [15], [16].

Institutional excellence is the researcher's view of an integrated managerial model that steers the activities and resources of an institution towards continuous improvement and the generation of sustainable value. Essential for any industrial organisation looking to enhance its efficiency, effectiveness and ability to meet the demands of the environment and competition today.

Second: Theoretical Foundations Explaining Institutional Excellence

A number of organizational theories in the modern management literature have tried to explain what makes organizations successful and what makes them unsuccessful,

and why some can be successful and others cannot, and why some organizations can be successful and others cannot; and in the modern management literature, some have tried to understand institutional excellence. One of the most prominent is the Resource Based View (RBV) which suggests that valuable, rare and difficult-to-imitate resources and capabilities form the basis for competitive advantage, and that competitive success relies on the effective use of these resources to deliver strategic goals and add value [6], [7].

In addition, the Dynamic Capabilities Theory also covers institutional excellence as the organization is able to continuously adapt and restructure its resources to cope with environmental and technological changes, leading to the development of learning and innovation and thus maintaining its performance success [10], [16].

However, in the Stakeholder Theory, excellence is not only about a financial return, but also about being related to the organization's ability to meet the interests of employees, customers, suppliers, society and government and to create viable relationships that create common value for all stakeholders [11], [12].

The total quality management (TQM), knowledge management and organisational learning concepts are also deeply integrated into the modern models of excellence, which view continuous improvement, innovation and knowledge sharing as integral elements of building organisational capabilities, and organisational efficiency and effectiveness [8], [17].

Hence, these theories underpin the current institutionalized excellence models, e.g., the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) model, which links the components of the organization's resources, capabilities, stakeholders and results in an integrated model for sustainable excellence.

The researcher holds that the development of a theoretical perspective of institutional excellence must take into account these theoretical approaches, as they possess a comprehensive framework on how organizations are able to excel and sustain their performance under today's business climate.

Third: The European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) Model

One of the more recent and popular model of excellence in the world is the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) model which gives a full set of criteria to evaluate institutional performance and identify areas for improvement. The EFQM was established in 1989 to develop a "tool box" of best practices, based on an organizational reference framework, to help organizations become increasingly competitive and create a culture of excellence. In the early 1990s the model was formally introduced as a process to enhance the continuous improvement of the institution and to evaluate institutional performance [14].

The model is designed on the premise that the organizational enablers can be managed well to achieve great outcomes. It is therefore useful to organizations to understand the link between how they operate and their performance in a holistic manner, linking performance drivers with the effects of performance, as is done in this study [13], [18].

The model has been a number of times updated in conjunction with the needs of the

modern business world with the concepts of sustainability, innovation, digital transformation, change management, and organizational resilience [14], [16]. It has also been shown to be accompanied by an integrated institutional system of excellence and organizational sustainability [13], [17] and it has been proven that implementation of its implementation leads to strengthening of the organizational learning, increase of knowledge management, enhancing the decision quality, increase in the process efficiency and formation of a culture of continuous improvement.

The power of the model is that it's not only useful for measurement but to also pinpoint any gaps in the organisation, prioritize them for improvement, and concentrate resources on the areas where they will have the most impact. This has led it to become one of the most popular excellence models used in governmental, industrial and service organizations around the world [5], [8].

The researcher thinks that the EFQM model is suitable for assessing the performance of the institutions in the Iraqi industrial organizations because it relates with the factors that affect the performance of the organization and the end results of the work while taking into account the sustainability, innovation and digital transformation.

Fourth: The Criteria of the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) Model

The EFQM model is divided into two blocks: Enablers and Results, according to the principle of the excellence model, the excellent results are a consequence of the quality management of an organization's resources, processes and strategies [14], [17].

The Enablers are five criteria: Leadership, Strategy, People, Partnerships and Resources, and Processes, Products and Services. The criteria are the bases are used to support the operation of an organization and implement its goals by guiding the activities of an organization, building human resources, managing resources and relationships, and continuously improving processes [8], [9], [13].

The following Results are Customer Results, People Results, Society Results and Key Performance Results. These criteria are used to evaluate the degree of success of the different enablers based on customers' and employees' satisfaction, social responsibility and strategic and operational goals achieved [14], [17].

There is a relationship between enablers and results, which is integrated such that the improvement of enablers results in better and sustainable results. This allows the model to be used not only for evaluation but also for organizational diagnosis and prioritizing the improvement and making decisions on organizational development [13], [17].

Some recent research also affirms the integration as one of the best features of the model, as it can give an organisation a holistic view of the relationship between inputs, processes and outputs and lead them towards continuous improvement and organisational sustainability [5], [10], [16].

The researcher believes that the importance of the EFQM criteria lies in the relationship between the drivers and the result of performance and their ability to help the organisation to recognise good performance and identify areas for improvement, enabling it to develop in a sustainable way.

Fifth: The Relationship Between Enablers and Results in the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) Model

The European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) model is based on the relationship of interdependency of Enablers and Results. Enablers are the organizational practices and resources that the organisation has deployed to achieve its results and to achieve the results it believes it can attain from the stakeholders; Results are the outcomes that the organisation achieves; and the extent to which it succeeds in achieving the outcomes it expects from its stakeholders. The view of EFQM (2025) and Baig et al. (2025), the following factors are considered vital for achieving excellent results and sustainability: good leadership, clear strategy, capable personnel, partnerships and processes.

The Results are reflected in the Customer Results, People Results, Society Results and Key Performance Results, which show the ability to create real value for the organisation's stakeholders through the Enablers, and the Enablers are represented by five criteria: Leadership, Strategy, People, Partnerships and Resources, and Processes, Products and Services [17].

The key concept of the model is the continuous improvement of the enablers that leads to better outcomes and the even better outcomes can be used as feedback for the review and improvement of the organizational practices, the feedback can be used to achieve organizational learning, continuous improvement and enhance excellence and sustainability over time [8], [16].

Several studies have highlighted the awareness of the enabling factors for institutional excellence, such as strategic capabilities, strategic vigilance, information quality and leadership [19], [20], [21], [22]. Their results showed that these variables are important to enhance the performance of institutions and the implementation of new management practices. The present study is advantageous on the basis of the above because it helps to explain the readiness of Northern Cement Directorate to adopt the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) model. It differs from them, however, in that it is based on the assessment of the degree of readiness in the organisation and on an analysis of the gaps between the actual situation in the organisation and the needs of the European Excellence Model.

The researcher believes that enablers and results of the EFQM are at the centre of the EFQM model because the results are closely related to the quality of the managerial and organizational practices. Therefore, institutionalisation of enablers is the foundation of institutional excellence, sustainability.

Table 2. The Nine Main and Sub-Criteria of the European Model, Their Activities, and Their Relative Weights

No.	Main Criteria	Number of Sub-Criteria	Number of Sub-Activities	Relative Weight of Criterion (%)
1	Leadership	6	39	%10
2	Strategy & Policy	4	23	%10
3	Human Resources (People)	5	35	%10

4	Resources & Partnerships	5	27	%10
5	Processes Management	4	27	%10
6	Customer Results	2	5	%15
7	People Results	2	9	%10
8	Society Results	2	9	%10
9	Business / Institutional Performance Results	2	6	%15
Total	**The Total**	**32**	**180**	**%100**

Table compiled by the researcher from the annual report of the European Excellence Model presented by the Center for Management Consultancy (CMC) in cooperation with the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM).

Ghanhim, A. (2017). Excellence European Model. Together with the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) [23].

The European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) model is composed of nine main criteria spread across 32 sub-criteria and 180 detailed activities which are divided into two parts: Enablers and Results. It is evident that the relative weights of both Customer Results and Key Performance Results were the highest of 15% each, highlighting a focus on the outcomes and value to the customers. The other criteria were given a relative weight of 10% each, however, establishing the importance of leadership, strategy, people, resources, processes and results aspects for ensuring sustainable institutional excellence.

The researcher assumed that the distribution of relative weights in the EFQM model has been developed in a balanced manner, taking into account that both the aspect of practices in the institution and the aspect of the results that have been obtained are considered, thus giving the model a good capacity of diagnosis of the current state of the performance of the institution and a good opportunity to identify areas of improvement and further development of the institution.

Results and Discussion

Section Three: Practical Framework

This section aims at presenting the findings of the institutional evaluation focusing on the criteria of the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) model and to explore the degree of overlap between the managerial and organizational practices of the Northern Cement Directorate and the EFQM model. The assessment process used the checklist that had been adopted in the Study and focused on the nine criteria of the European Excellence Model, aiming at quantifying the extent of implementation and documentation of each criterion and determining the organizational gaps for each criterion.

This part also aims to present and analyze the data collected from the involved personnel/people in the form of a conversation with the managers, departments, divisions and units to fill the checklists according to the criteria of the model, which is complex. This was achieved in a number of stages which together formed the methodology for the study:

1. The researcher used the official publication of the European Foundation and the guidance for the European Excellence Award criteria to show the checklists and items in relation to the actual situation of the Directorate as compared with the scores of these criteria. The statistical equation that was used in the field application was:

Percentage (%) = (ΣXi × fi) ÷ (Σfi × 6)

Where:

Xi: Weights

fi: Frequencies

6: The highest weight on the measurement scale used.

Purpose of calculating the percentage for each criterion: To express the extent to which the Directorate has achieved the implementation and documentation of these criteria.

Weighted Mean Equation:

$\bar{X} = \sum xi*fi \div \sum fi$

Result Equation:

The result is calculated using:

xi*fi

Gap Size Equation:

The gap size is calculated as:

Gap Size = 100 - Achieved Percentage

In analyzing the checklist for each criterion, the researcher used a **seven-point weighting scale**, whereby a weight was assigned to each checklist item, starting with **6**, which represents the highest weight on the scale. This weight is assigned to the item that achieves full compliance and complete documentation according to the European Excellence Model, as illustrated in **Table (3).**

Table 3. The Scale Used in the Checklists

No.	Scale Items / Paragraphs	Weight
1	Fully Implemented & Fully Documented	6
2	Fully Implemented & Partially Documented	5
3	Fully Implemented & Undocumented	4
4	Partially Implemented & Fully Documented	3
5	Partially Implemented & Partially Documented	2
6	Partially Implemented & Undocumented	1
7	Not Implemented & Undocumented	0

The table was compiled by the researcher by using weights given in the criteria of the European Model.

This is also a very important stage since it renders the theoretical model of the study applicable to the real condition of the institution in the study. The findings of the evaluation can be used to diagnose the strengths of the directorate, and the areas for development that need more attention in order to improve the level of institutional excellence. Furthermore the results contribute to the validation of the readiness of the directorate to implement the EFQM model with the aim of measuring institutional performance to support continuous improvement and as an integrated model.

First: Results of the EFQM Model Criteria Competitive Evaluation

Table (4) shows the overall evaluation of the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) model criteria by implementation percentage, documentation

percentage and gaps for each criterion of the model. Overall, the results achieved reflect the extent to which the administration and organizational practices of the Northern Cement Directorate are in line with the institution's requirement for excellence.

The purpose of this section is to give a picture of the results of the evaluation carried out at the Northern Cement Directorate taking into account the criteria of the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) model, and to specify the degree of alignment of the organizational practices adopted with the criteria requirements of the EFQM model. The objective of this data analysis was to diagnose strengths and areas for improvement in the percentages of implementation, documentation and gaps of the nine criteria of the model and to know the readiness of the institution to use the EFQM model as a tool to assess the performance of the institution and achieve the organizational excellence.

The results are presented first in a summary table indicating the level of implementation and gaps for all the criteria, before an integrative discussion of the results in the context of previous literature and the theoretical framework of the study, and after the drawing of conclusions and how these can be applied in practice.

Table 4. Results of the Comprehensive Evaluation of the EFQM Model Criteria

Criterion	Implementation and Documentation Percentage (%)	Gap (%)
Leadership	95%	5%
Strategy	97%	3%
Human Resources (People)	86%	14%
Partnerships & Resources	83%	17%
Processes, Products & Services	97%	3%
Customer Results	96%	4%
Human Resources (People) Results	81%	19%
Society Results	83%	17%
Key Performance Results	89%	11%

The preparation and analysis of the tables used the criteria set by the European Excellence Model in the performance assessment of the Northern Cement Directorate. The results of the study indicated that the Northern Cement Directorate has a high level of compliance with the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) model, between 81% and 97% of the integration and documentation of the model, which means that there is a good organizational and managerial foundation that allows the adoption of the model and application it in the evaluation of the performance of the institutions and the achievement of organizational excellence.

The highest implementation rates were for Strategy (97%), Processes, Products and Services criterion (97%) and Customer Results criterion (96%) and the lowest was for Leadership criterion (95%). The results show the clarity of the strategic direction, operational processes stability and the effectiveness of the top management support in quality and continuous improvement, which resonates with literature that highlights the role of leadership and direction in attaining institutional excellence (Baig et al., 2025; EFQM, 2025).

The results also confirmed that there was a positive correlation between the Results and the high implementation level of the Enablers criteria, which is consistent with the philosophy of EFQM model that the quality of the implementation of the organizational practices is correlated with the quality of the Results. This was reflected in the Key Performance Results criterion, which the Directorate scored 89% with, indicating that the Directorate's organizational skills are being positively expressed in results.

The next biggest gaps in performance were for the Partnerships and Resources criterion (83%) and the Society Results criterion (83%).The next largest gaps were in the People Results criterion (81% of implementation, 19% gap); and Partnerships and Resources (83% of implementation, 17% gap). The findings indicate that the areas where institutional improvement is required are all those identified by recent studies as key to institutional support for sustainable institutional excellence, namely human capital development, institutional partnerships and corporate social responsibility practices.

A further result of the findings was that there was a gap between the People criterion in the Enablers and the People Results criterion (14% gap and 19% gap respectively), indicating that practices in the workplace need not be reflected in employee outcomes. This is an invitation for improved programs of training and motivation, as well as programmes for measuring human performance and developing talent.

Overall the results show that the Northern Cement Directorate is ready to adopt the EFQM model and areas of improvement have been identified in human resources, partnership and social responsibility which will help the institution to develop and ensure its sustainability and excellence in the future.

The above analysis, gives the following summary of the results of using the EFQM model:

Having performed an analysis of the nine criteria of the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) model, an overall and holistic overview of the results was needed. In this context, the researcher had prepared the Table (5) which presents the evaluation results of the nine criteria, frequency, weighted mean, the percentage of implementation and the gap for each criterion. This will help to gauge the readiness of the Northern Cement Directorate and the areas that can be developed.

Table 5. Summary of the Results of the Nine Criteria of the European Model Applied in the Directorate

No.	Criterion	Weights / Frequencies (6 to 0)						Weighted Average	Implementation Percentage (%)	Gap Size
		6	5	4	3	2	1	0			
1	Leadership	27	11	0	0	0	0	0	6	%95	5
2	& Policy Strategy	20	2	1	0	0	0	0	6	%97	3
3	Human Resources	13	11	3	0	1	1	0	5	%86	14
4	Partnerships Resources &	22	2	0	3	3	2	0	5	%83	17
5	Processes Management	21	5	0	0	0	0	0	6	%97	3

6	Customer Results	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	6	%96	4
7	Human Resources Results	3	3	1	0	1	0	0	5	%81	19
8	Society Results	3	2	0	0	0	0	0	6	%83	17
9	Key Performance Results	4	1	0	1	0	0	0	5	%89	11
	Total									**807**	**193**

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on the tables of the calculated results for the nine criteria.

Based on the foregoing, the following hypotheses were tested:

First: Testing the First Main Hypothesis

The first main hypothesis stated that:

The Northern Cement Directorate is not well organized in taking up the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) model to evaluate the performance of the organization.

The results of the field study confirmed that the percentage of implementation and documentation of the EFQM model's criteria was between 81% and 97% indicating that the organizations were in a high state of readiness to implement the EFQM model. Based on this, the first alternate hypothesis is accepted, and the alternative hypothesis is rejected:

The Northern Cement Directorate is well organized to implement the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) model in the appraisal of the performance of an institution.

Second: Testing the Second Main Hypothesis

The second overarching assumption was that:

The present managerial and organizational practices in the Northern Cement Directorate do not have any significant differences to what is required by the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) model.

The results showed that there were some differences between the gaps from 3% to 19%, which means there are gaps between the organisations, and continuous improvements and corrective actions are needed.

So the alternative is accepted and the second main hypothesis is rejected:

The difference between the existing management and organizational approaches in the Northern Cement Directorate and the Northern Cement Model of the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) is found to be varied; however, this difference does not hinder the readiness of the organization to adopt the EFQM Model.

Third: Testing the Third Main Hypothesis

The third main hypothesis stated that:

"The Enablers criteria of the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) model do not contribute to the institutional results achieved by the Northern Cement Directorate."

The findings showed that the Enablers criteria **Leadership, Strategy, People, Partnerships and Resources, and Processes, Products and Services** achieved high levels of implementation and documentation, which was positively reflected in

Customer Results, People Results, Society Results, and Key Performance Results.

Conclusion

Section Four: Conclusions and Recommendations

First: Conclusions

The goals of the study were to check the feasibility of implementation of EFQM model in the Northern cement directorate as a guideline for evaluation of the performance of institutions and determining the opportunities for improvement. Based on the results of the study, the analysis and discussion, the main conclusions are:

1. The results showed that there is high level of consistency between the organizational and managerial activities of the Northern Cement Directorate and the EFQM model, which indicates the feasibility of implementing the EFQM model to evaluate the performance of institutions in the organization.
2. Implementation and documentation rate for all the model criteria were more than 80%, which indicates that the practice of institutional excellence was well institutionalized and institutional readiness was good.
3. The best implementation and documentation was for the Strategy criterion and Processes, Products and Services criterion (97% on each), there was clear direction for the organisation's strategy and there were stable operational systems that had documented work procedures.
4. The implementation rate of criterion "Leadership" was 95%, which means that top management has an important role in promoting quality activities in the institution, continuous improvement and directing the resources to achieve the goal of the institution.
5. The Customer Results criterion has scored very high with 96% and the Directorate has the capability to meet the customer needs and to ensure the quality of its products and services.
6. The study identified relative gaps in some of the criteria covered under People, Partnerships and Resources and Society Results, which could be developed and could help strengthen institutional excellence.
7. The People Results criterion had the greatest performance gap at 19%, indicating a need to enhance the way that employee satisfaction, participation and professional development is measured.
8. The results showed that there was a positive correlation between the high levels of the Enablers criteria and the improvements in the achieved results and therefore the fundamental assumption on which the EFQM model is based was verified.
9. In light of the above, the EFQM model was able to identify the strengths and areas for improvement in the organization, so it is appropriate to apply this model to the evaluation of the performance of the institutional units of the Iraqi industrial organizations.
10. The findings offer a practical evidence on the possible benefits of implementing internationally recognised institutional excellence models to boost institutional performance and increase competitiveness of industrial organisations.

Second: Recommendations

Based on the results of the study, the following practical suggestions are recommended for the implementation of EFQM model and to improve the performance of the institution in the Northern Cement Directorate:

1. Implement EFQM model as a formal and periodic approach for the assessment and evaluation of institutional performance, identification of gaps and priorities for improvements.
2. Ensure the implementation of a comprehensive tool for measuring People Results, comprising People Satisfaction, People Commitment, Employee Involvement and People Training and Development Effectiveness.
3. Improve systems for human capital development by ongoing investments in training, talent management and knowledge and experience transfer mechanisms for workers.
4. Continue to strengthen strategic collaborations with academic, research and industrial institutions for innovation, encouraging knowledge sharing and improving institutional performance.
5. Develop institutional knowledge management arrangements using knowledge databases, knowledge documentation of expertise and best practice, as well as knowledge databases for decision making.
6. Enhance CSR and Environment Sustainability initiatives to strengthen Society Results and enhance the organisation's brand in stakeholder's perception.
7. Develop effective performance measures that integrate financial, operational, human and societal components for a comprehensive performance evaluation of institutions.
8. Regularly examine the effectiveness of the use of Institutional Excellence criteria and the institutional results with further development plans and institutional goals.
9. Make ongoing improvement plans based on the assessment results that address criteria that had the largest performance gaps, particularly People Results, Partnerships and Resources, and Society Results.
10. Future studies are recommended based on the EFQM model to other industrial organizations in Iraq to establish the foundation of knowledge about the situation of institutional excellence in Iraqi environment.

References

[1] M. A. M. Rida, "Business intelligence and its role in achieving sustainable performance: An exploratory study of the opinions of a sample of administrative leaders at Asiacell Telecommunications Company in Iraq," Iraq, 2023.
[2] A. Ferreira and D. Otley, "The design and use of performance management systems: An extended framework for analysis," *Management Accounting Research*, 2022.
[3] M. Franco-Santos and D. Otley, "Reviewing and theorizing the unintended consequences of performance management systems," *Accounting, Organizations and Society*, 2023.
[4] M. Bourne, S. A. Melnyk, U. S. Bititci, K. Platts, and B. Andersen, "Performance measurement and organizational performance: Contemporary perspectives and practices," 2023.
[5] H. Keathley-Herring, E. Van Aken, and G. Letens, "Implementing organizational performance measurement systems: Lessons and implications for excellence models," *International Journal of Productivity and Performance Management*, 2024.
[6] S. M. Dahlgaard-Park, "Core values and organizational excellence: Contemporary perspectives on business excellence," 2021.
[7] B. Talwar, "Business excellence models and organizational competitiveness: A

review of contemporary approaches," *Total Quality Management & Business Excellence*, 2021.
[8] E. Psomas, "Total quality management and organizational performance: A systematic review and research agenda," *The TQM Journal*, 2023.
[9] N. Zakuan, S. M. Yusof, T. Laosirihongthong, and A. M. Shaharoun, "Critical success factors of quality management implementation and organizational performance," *International Journal of Productivity and Quality Management*, 2021.
[10] L. Fonseca and P. Domingues, "Quality management and organizational excellence in the era of sustainability," *International Journal for Quality Research*, vol. 16, no. 1, pp. 1–18, 2022.
[11] L. Fonseca and A. Azevedo, "Sustainability and organizational excellence integration: Emerging challenges and opportunities," *Sustainability*, 2023.
[12] T. Dyllick and K. Muff, "Clarifying the meaning of sustainable business: Introducing a typology from business-as-usual to true business sustainability," *Organ. Environ.*, vol. 33, no. 2, pp. 156–174, 2020.
[13] A. Baig, R. Mann, J. Lockhart, and W. Macpherson, "The development of an organizational excellence architecture model to support the implementation of business excellence," *The TQM Journal*, vol. 37, no. 5, pp. 1242–1268, 2025.
[14] E. F. for Q. Management, "The EFQM Model 2025," European Foundation for Quality Management, Brussels, Belgium, 2025.
[15] J. Elkington, *Green Swans: The Coming Boom in Regenerative Capitalism*. Fast Company Press, 2020.
[16] J. Martusewicz, K. Szewczyk, and A. Wierzbic, "Strategic transformation and sustainability: Unveiling the EFQM Model 2025," *Sustainability*, vol. 16, no. 20, p. 9106, 2024.
[17] J. Bocoya-Maline, M. Rey-Moreno, and A. Calvo-Mora, "The EFQM excellence model, the knowledge management process and the corresponding results: An explanatory and predictive study," *Review of Managerial Science*, vol. 18, pp. 1281–1315, 2024.
[18] A. Calvo-Mora, A. Picón-Berjoyo, C. Ruiz-Moreno, and L. Cauzo-Bottala, "Contextual and mediation analysis between total quality management critical factors and organizational results through the EFQM model," 2020.
[19] M. A. Hanan, "Authentic leadership and its role in reducing job loafing," Iraq, 2021.
[20] M. A. H. Al-Kahrabji, "Quality of management information systems," Iraq, 2021.
[21] H. A. Al-Zubaidi, "The role of strategic capabilities in adopting the requirements of international standards," Iraq, 2021.
[22] Z. M. Majeed, "The role of the dimensions of strategic vigilance in adopting cleaner production," Iraq, 2022.
[23] A. Ghanhim, *Excellence European Model*. Center for Management Consultancy (CMC), in cooperation with the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM), 2017.