

A New Perspective on How to Achieve Performance Excellence: A Comparative Analysis of the American and European 2020 Model

رؤية حديثة لكيفية تحقيق الأداء المتميز: مقارنة تحليلية بين النموذج الأمريكي والأوروبي لسنة 2020

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Abstract

This paper provides a comparative analysis of the European and the American 2020 excellence models to clarify the models' similarities and differences and provide an understanding of both models' perspective on how to achieve performance excellence, for that purpose, an inductive and comparative analysis methods have been used.

The study concluded that both models indicate a different perspective on how to achieve performance excellence, as the European model proposed a new perspective; furthermore, the study outlined some shortcomings that must be considered and suggested some recommendations.

Keywords : performance excellence, EFQM 2020, MBNQA 2020.

ملخص

تقدم هذه الدراسة تحليلاً مقارناً بين نموذج التميز الأوروبي والأمريكي لسنة 2020 بهدف اكتشاف أوجه التشابه والاختلاف وتوضيح رؤية كلا النموذجين حول كيفية تحقيق الأداء المتميز، وذلك بالاعتماد على منهج تحليلي مقارن.

خلصت الدراسة إلى وجود اختلاف بين النموذجين في كيفية تحقيق الأداء المتميز، حيث أن النموذج الأوروبي اقترح رؤية جديدة، كما أوجزت الدراسة بعض أوجه القصور واقترحت بعض التوصيات.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الاداء المتميز،

.MBNQA 2020 ،EFQM 2020

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1. INTRODUCTION

The most important and common goal of all organizations is to ensure their survival and prosperity by achieving high performance and becoming a pioneer in their business, to that end, organizations adopt models that describe best practices to achieve performance excellence.

It has been reported by many researchers (Aydın & Kahraman, 2019, p. 53; Veselova, 2019, p. 893; AlZawati et al., 2020, p. 02) that the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) and the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award (MBNQA) models are among the most worldwide used frameworks for performance excellence, moreover, about 100 awards in 82 countries were designed based on these models.

Studies such as (2017، خلفي، p. 82) indicated that both EFQM and MBNQA models are similar in regards to the structure and the core criteria, However, the latest version of EFQM model reveal different structure and standards, furthermore, to the authors' knowledge, no research has been conducted yet to elucidate these differences and fulfill this gap, additionally (Aagaard & Edgeman, 2019, p. 320) stated that “organizations must understand the vision of excellence supported by the model they adopt”, to that end, this paper has been conducted to address the following question: What are the differences and similarities between the MBNQA 2019-2020 and the EFQM 2020 model? in order to clarify the contrast between the frameworks and to provide an understanding of both models' perspective on how to achieve performance excellence, the study also highlights different concepts of performance excellence and indicates some shortcomings, changes compared to the previous versions of both models and a few recommendations, the study is considered a recent study that is based on the latest version of the most adopted excellence models, in which a comparative analysis will enable decision-makers to adopted the best-suited model for their organizations, furthermore, the shortcomings indicating in this study will help the researchers to develop the frameworks.

The remainder of this paper is structured in four sections, the second section is a Literature background discussing the definition of performance excellence and describing the structure of both excellence models; the third section elaborates on the research methodology used; while the fourth

section describes and discusses the results of the comparative analysis between concepts and criteria, core values and assessment methods, as well as weight distribution for both models; finally, the fifth section represents conclusions derived from the research that includes some recommendations.

1.1 Literature background

With the increasing need for organizations to achieve performance excellence due to globalization, open markets, and competition, many researchers sought to define the concept of performance excellence which led to the emergence of various definitions depending on the researchers' perspective; for instance, (Evans, 2016, p. 07) defines performance excellence as an approach that ensures the improvement of overall organizational effectiveness and capabilities as well as creating a sustainable value for customers and stakeholders, others like (Allen et al., 2019, p. 02) define performance excellence from superiority perspective and stated that performance excellence is the ability to be excellent and maintain a high and recognized competitive position in the market in which the organization operates, while researchers like (عبد الصمد، 2016, p. 122) consider performance excellence the ability to be distinct from other organizations through innovation and competitive advantage.

Given the above, performance excellence is the ability to improve and ensure effective and innovative operations not only to outperform competitors and the organization itself but also to be discerned and maintain a leading competitive position.

Besides the different concepts of performance excellence, several excellence models appeared to guide the organizations in their journey of excellence, yet the EFQM model and MBNQA model are considered the most world wide adopted models.

1.1.1 European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) 2020

The EFQM model is a globally-recognized framework which was first launched in 1991, it provides a systematic mechanism for improvement, and allows organizations to benchmark their work practices versus the model's standards to understand and address gaps to achieves excellence regardless of the type of an organization (AlZawati et al., 2020).

The new EFQM model is redesigned "from scratch" based on design thinking and divided into three sections that answer to the questions from

the golden circle presented by Simon Sinek in 2009 (Longmuir et al., 2020, p. 09); each section contain a set of Criteria and a specific weights as presented below:

Fig.1. the EFQM 2020 model Framework



Source: Longmuir et al, 2020, p 04.

Direction: answer to the first question “why” the organization exists and the goals to be achieved?

Criterion1 Purpose; Vision & Strategy (100 points):

The new EFQM model argues that Stakeholders’ Needs must be considered when defining the organization’s vision and purpose that should also include contributing to the society in which it operates, furthermore, the organization’s vision and purpose should create sustainable value for stakeholders by being translated into a strategy and an effective Performance Management System (Iribarne & Verdoux, 2020, p. 53,57,62).

Criterion 2 Organizational Culture & Leadership (100 points):

The 2020 model emphasizes a culture of excellence and a leadership system that engages all individuals including key stakeholders in decision-making. (Nicolas & del Castillo, 2020, p. 03).

Execution: that answers to the second question “how” to reach those goals?

-Criterion1 Engaging Stakeholders (100 points):

Building and maintaining a relationship with key stakeholders will help the organization ensure their engagement in deploying the Strategy and creating sustainable Value (Iribarne & Verdoux, 2020, p. 87).

-Criterion 2 creating sustainable value (200 points):

Based on the model, organizations should focus on delivering sustainable value for key stakeholders, and constantly improve the products and services in regard to their changing needs (Longmuir et al., 2020, p. 18).

-Criterion 3 Driving Performance & Transformation (100 points):

Organization should manage improvement and change simultaneously to respond to the business environment that requires innovation and technology, knowledge management, and a convenient resources allocation (Iribarne & Verdoux, 2020, p. 128).

Results: which answer to the third question "What" are the current and the future results to be reached?

-Criterion 1 Stakeholder Perceptions (200 points):

Organizations should assess their key stakeholders' perceptions to adjust the organization's plans and operations in order to meet those perceptions (Longmuir et al., 2020, pp. 22–23).

-Criterion 2 Strategic & Operational Performance (200 points):

These results reflect how well the organization understands current and future needs of its key stakeholders and its ability to effectively allocate its resources and capabilities to meet their expectations and forecast the impact of this performance on future goals (Iribarne & Verdoux, 2020, p. 160).

1.1.1.1 Changes compared to the previous versions:

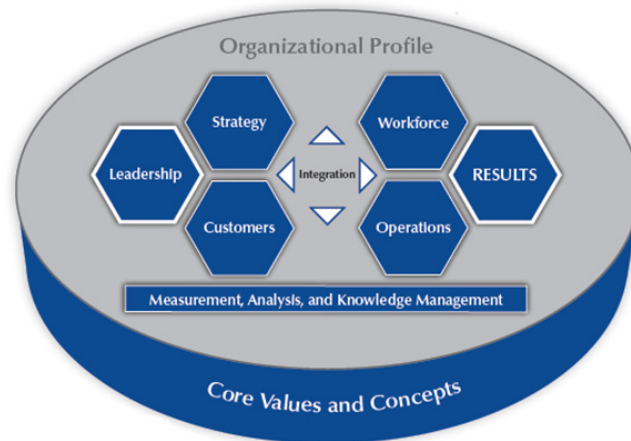
The organizations' purpose in the new model includes creating value for the society and contributing to its well-being, and it's supported not only by the strategy but by a culture that is now considered as a mean that serves the organization's direction, the new model emphasizes collaboration and involving all individuals relating to the organization in decision making, innovation and strategy development that is constantly updating to integrate the changes in the environment (Iribarne & Verdoux, 2020, pp. 31–44); the most significant changes appeared in the structure and criteria of the model, instead of nine criteria of the previous model divided into enablers and

results, the new model consists of seven criteria divided into three sections answering main questions for all organizations: Why?, how? and what?.

1.1.2 The Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award (MBNQA) 2019-2020 model:

The MBNQA model is recognized as a worldwide framework that is based on a systems perspective and focuses on improvement by providing a set of standards to assess and steer the organization's performance towards achieving sustainable results and enhancing competitiveness (NIST, 2019a, p. 02)

Fig.2. the MBNQA 2020 model framework



Source: NIST, 2019b, p. 01

The model is divided into three groups, each contain a set of criteria with specific weights as described below.

The Organizational Profile: the organizational profile describes the internal and external elements of the organization such as Product Offerings, vision, culture and values, competitive environment, strategic challenges and advantages, and organizational relationships, to identify strengths and weaknesses in addition to opportunities and threats and serves as a base for the rest of the criteria.(louann, 2019).

Process items (550 pts): which consist of 6 criteria as presented below.

-Category 01 Leadership (120 pts):

this category focuses on the senior leaders' behaviors that should reflect the organization's culture and values, in addition to the effectiveness of the governance system and the organizations' societal (NIST, 2019b, pp. 7–8).

-Category 02 strategy (85 pts):

this category defines the strategic structure of an organization that consists of the strategy development process in which key stakeholders are involved and strategy implementation that should recognize and respond to changes in the business environment (vinyard, 2019b).

-Category 03 Customer (85 pts):

Based on the model, organizations should focus on defining, meeting and even exceeding customer expectations and ensuring their engagement through constant measurement, analysis and an effective management of information (NIST, 2019b, p. 13).

-Category 4 Measurement, Analysis, and Knowledge Management 90pts:

The model focus on measurement and analysis to provide quality data on time and ensure responding to changes as well as improving the overall organizational performance (Hertz, 2019).

-Category 05 Workforce (85 pts):

the model focus on providing a supportive work environment and ensuring workforce engagement and development, moreover it considers workforce planning as part of the strategic planning in category 2 (louann, 2019).

-Category 06 Operations (85 pts):

based on the model, organizations should improve their products and ensure operations' effectiveness in terms of costs, security and cyber security, the model also indicated that operations should be agile and innovative in order to respond to emergencies (NIST, 2019a, p. 12).

Results items (category 7) (450 pts): this category defines the outcomes of the organization processes; and focuses on the following:

-Product and process results : (120 pts)

These results define whether the products and services conform to the requirements, in addition to the effectiveness of the organization's supply network, safety system, and precautions for responding to disasters, furthermore, organizations must monitor their processes and focus on cause and effect relationships between different operations (vinyard, 2019a).

-Customer results : (80 pts)

This category defines the organizations' performance from a customer perspective, by measuring their satisfaction compared with those of competitors in addition to their engagement to ensure that products and services respond to their needs and preferences (louann, 2019).

-Workforce results: (80 pts)

These results focus on measuring the workforce capability, engagement, development, and satisfaction as well as the organization's initiatives to provide a convenient work environment; Leaders attempt not only to measure the current workforce performance but also to predict their behavior (vinyard, 2019a).

-leadership and governance results : (80 pts)

These results will help the organizations to assess and readjust their leadership and governance systems, and to consider ethics, legal and Regulatory Environment as well as society well-being part of its excellence journey(NIST, 2019a, p. 13).

-Financial, market, and strategy results : (90 pts)

these results will identify the effectiveness of the strategy developed and the action plans executed in responding to the market requirements and increasing financial resources.(louann, 2019).

1.1.2.1 Changes compared to the previous versions:

the most significant change over the years is about the model focusing on overall organizational excellence rather than just on product and process quality; the early focus on customer satisfaction and voice of the customer has evolved to customer engagement and expectations including a strategic focus on market environments (Hertz, 2019), in addition, Workforce criteria in the current version focuses on reinforcing the organizational culture and addresses the relationship between performance management and workforce development, societal contribution replaced societal responsibilities to indicate the voluntary contributions to the social well-being (NIST, 2019b, p. 45), as for the results, the model added emphasis on leadership, governance, and strategy results (Hertz, 2019), briefly, The model updated criteria items based on business environment requirements and trends.

2. Methods

For the purpose of this research, an inductive Analysis method has been used to provide knowledge about frameworks of the two excellence models based on a literature review about EFQM for 2020 and the MBNQA for 2019-2020 which corresponds to the issuance period of each model.

A comparative analysis method has been used to analyze and elicited the similarity and differences between the two models.

It should be mentioned that the aim of this study is to highlight the differences and similarities in how to achieve performance excellence according to the EFQM and the MBNQA model, not to determine an ideal framework.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The comparative analysis has been conducted based on the literature review of both models which was limited due to the novelty of the models as well as the excellence models' official websites.

3.1 The general concept:

Both models aim to achieve performance excellence, although each has its own perspective on how to achieve it; The MBNQA model has a more focus on managing continuous improvement and making changes as appropriate, while the EFQM model focuses on managing change and transformation to enable organizations to constantly answer to the key stakeholders' needs, along with improving the organizations' performance. such a performance management system should have been taken into account by the MBNQA mode, as (Nicolas & del Castillo, 2020, p. 01)stated that defining a framework that helps organizations transform systematically and "change the way things work" is vital to ensure the organizations' survival in the so-called VUCA environment that is characterized by Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, and Ambiguity; if managers don't make the change voluntarily, they will be forced to, so the organization operates effectively and efficiently within its ecosystem.

The MBNQA model is based on a system thinking that considers the organization as interrelated units; on the other hand, the EFQM is based on a design thinking that is centered about human needs and desires, and concerns about collecting and analyzing market and customer data to help understand the market environment (Knight et al., 2020, p. 03); the need for

a performance management system to be based on both system thinking, that will ensure the integration and alignment of the organizations' operations, and design thinking that will help to determine customer needs, is vital for achieving performance excellence and organizations' continuity.

Organizations are different in terms of the nature of their activities, the business environment in which they operates..., therefore, it is not convenient to define a specific approach for all types of organizations aiming to achieve performance excellence, to that end, it has been reported by Russell Longmuir the CEO of EFQM foundation that “the biggest change for us on the model is around the model being more agile and adaptive” (Badavi, 2020), similarly, the MBNQA framework is adaptable to any organization, it does not prescribe how an organization should structure its operations, rather than that, the model provides an assessment for an organization based on a set of performance excellence standards and defines best-suited and the most effective approaches for that organization to achieve performance excellence (NIST, 2019b, p. ii).

3.2 The models' criteria:

The criteria of the two excellence models appear different; however, the details of each criterion signify some similarity; In general, both models' criteria are divided into 3 groups: processes and results items, in addition to the "direction" for the EFQM model and "organizational profile" for the MBNQA model, these two last criteria (direction, organizational profile) are similar in regard to identifying the Purpose, Vision, and Strategy of an organization based on Stakeholders Needs, as well as a leadership system based on collaboration, and an organizational culture of excellence, it can be said that both models answers to the "why" question from the Simon Sinek golden cycle, however, the MBNQA model added other items that set a context for understanding the organization and how it operates and serves as an initial self-assessment and a base for the rest of criteria, unlike the EFQM model which focuses only on the purpose and vision of an organization and how to be achieved.

Regarding the processes items, the EFQM model focuses on Creating Sustainable Value for Key Stakeholders and driving performance along with transformation while the MBNQA provides a wild range of criteria.

Another difference between the two models is that the workforce was

explicit more in the MBNQA model in which it is considered as a core criterion that focuses on ensuring the human resources' engagement in realizing the vision, as they represent the main actors in achieving the organization's goals, while the EFQM model mentioned the workforce as sub-criterion in the execution standard and doesn't pay much attention to it, additionally, both models emphasize the importance of stakeholders' consideration and engagement; whereas the MBNQA model focuses more on the customers as their satisfaction and dissatisfaction represent the main impact on the organization success.

In the current business environment, societal contribution is considered more than a compulsory act as it can enhance customer and workforce engagement in addition to the organizations' credibility and profitability, thus, the MBNQA model addressed the societal contribution in the leadership and the strategy criteria, as it emphasizes the importance of considering societal well-being as part of the organizations' strategy and operations, likewise, the EFQM model outlined the importance of Contributing to the Development, Well-Being, and Prosperity of the Society in achieving performance excellence in the direction criteria (purpose, vision and strategy) and the execution criteria (engaging stockholders).

As for the results items, since both models aim at achieving performance excellence, performance should be assessed based on 3 aspects: economic, societal and environmental known by "The overall performance", the MBNQA model indicated societal and environmental performance in the leadership and governance Results criterion, as for the economic performance, it represents most of the results items, similarly, the EFQM model results items focus on economic performance through strategic and operational performance, in addition, organizations' adopting this model will assess their societal contribution based on their community perception, accordingly, both models provide a holistic performance assessment.

3.3 The models' Core value:

The two excellence frameworks were supported with a set of principles and values as mentioned below.

Table1.Core values of the EFQM 2020 and the MBNQA 2019-2020 models

EFQM 2020	MBNQA 2019-2020
Consistency with Purpose	Systems perspective
Managing for transitions in order to ensure flexibility in adapting to changes.	Managing for innovation and by facts in order to create new value for stakeholders.
Focus on the future: The model aims to defining future scenarios and help the organization anticipate changes.	Focus on success and results that deliver and balance value for key stakeholders.
Organizational leadership and a culture of excellence and innovation.	Visionary leadership that should be set by senior leaders
Focus on stakeholders	customer-focused excellence and valuing people
Focus on understanding the ecosystem and consider all elements that must be considered in its transformation.	Organizational learning in order to ensure improvement, and agility to respond quickly to changes.
consider economic, environmental and societal sustainability	Emphasizing societal contributions, ethical behavior and transparency.

Source: Nicolas & del Castillo, 2020, p. 03; NIST, 2019a, p. 04.

Based on the MBNQA model, a performance management system that achieves performance excellence should emphasize Organizational learning that will ensure continuous improvement, and agility; additionally, a performance management system should steer the organization towards success by focusing on innovation and results that help deliver value for key stakeholders.

Furthermore, achieving performance excellence requires effective leadership and Customer-focus, and a decision-making process that involves all individuals related to the organization's business (workforce, customers, society...) and should be based on accurate measurements and analysis.

The model also emphasizes the importance of transparency and ethical practices, as well as societal contribution, which will increase corporate credibility and Improves its reputation, thus, drive benefits and opportunities to the organization.

On the other hand, the EFQM management perspective is based on the purpose in which appropriate operations are defined, the model provides in addition to assessment, a future-oriented management tool that helps managers understand the ecosystem and set proper transformations in order to adapt to the modern business environment.

3.4 Assessment method:

Regarding the MBNQA model, processes and results items are assessed based on different factors; Processes are evaluated based on four factors, namely (ADLI), while results item are based on four factors namely (LeTCI) as indicated below.

Table 2. Assessment method of the MBNQA 2019-2020 model

Processes assessment (ADLI)	Results assessment (LeTCI)
Approach: are systematic and provide an opportunity for maturity.	Levels of current performance.
Deployment: describe approaches implementation.	Trends: describes performance change
Learning: describe the ability for organizational learning.	Comparing to the competitors' performance, or benchmarks.
Integration: describe processes and results alignment and harmonization	Integration: the use of important results in decision making.

Source : NIST, 2019a, p. 03

The assessment method will measure the level of excellence achieved by the organization, the ability for organizational learning, and will able the organization to compare their performance against competitors, moreover, this assessment method will evaluate how the results are used in decision making and indicates weaknesses and opportunities for improving the approaches' alignment and implementation.

On the other hand, the EFQM model uses the RADAR diagnostic tool not only to estimate the organizational excellence level, but to aid discovering opportunities for improvement, RADAR refers to a set of factors that an organization should demonstrate as mentioned below

(Longmuir et al., 2020, pp. 31–32):

- Results that serves the achievement of its strategy, evolves in the right direction (trends) and used to support performance improvement and transformation as well as to predict future performance patterns (integration), and exceeds other organizations' results (comparisons).
- Approaches: integrated and aligned approaches that will deliver the required current and future results.
- Deploy these approaches appropriately in a way that implement the organizational directions with flexibility.
- Assess and Refine the deployed approaches to enhance learning and improvement.

The two excellence frameworks adopt the same factors in assessing results as both models emphasis on performance trends, comparison with competitors and other relevant organizations in addition to the integration of those results in decision making, moreover, the processes assessment factors are similar in both models as it is evaluated in terms of process integration and alignment as well as processes improvement and organizational learning, accordingly, both excellence frameworks adopt the same assessment factors yet suggest different labels.

3.5 Weights' distribution:

Based on the weights' distribution mentioned in the literature background, both models set scores on a 1000 point scale; regarding the MBNQA model, processes items receive a heavier weight (550 points) than does the results' weight (450 points), while the processes' and results' weights for EFQM model are equal with 400 points, however, the results represent 40% of the total weights as the direction criterion has 200 points, accordingly, both models focus more on how to attain the desired results.

The weights' distribution regarding the processes items for the MBNQA model shows a focus on leadership as it represents the steering wheel for all organizations' processes and activities, while the EFQM model emphasizes more on creating sustainable value, and considers sustainability as a major aspect that modern organizations should take into account along with delivering value, change and enhancing performance.

Regarding the results items of the MBNQA model, the product and process results receive the highest points (120 points), which reflect the

importance of this criterion as it translates the goals and strategies of the organization into practice to deliver value to key stakeholders, as for the EFQM model, weights' distribution of the results are equal for both stakeholders perception as well as strategic and operational performance.

Based on the weights' distribution, the MBNQA model asserts that a strong Leadership that is manifested through products that answer to the requirements in addition to effective processes should be the main focus of organizations aiming to achieve Performance excellence, whereas the EFQM model considers that creating sustainable value, that coincides to the stakeholder's perceptions and delivers the required strategic and operational results is vital for achieving performance excellence.

3.6 The models' disadvantages:

Before summarizing the results of this study, it is worth mentioning that prior studies indicated some shortcomings regarding the previous version of both model, that were not addressed in the latest version of the models; in a study conducted based on the perceptions of 200 managers about the criteria weighting in one of the excellence models, it was concluded that organizations should define their own weights for each criterion based on their own organization's situation and characteristics, in addition, peoples criteria (workforce, partners, suppliers...) should be highly considered in any context (Gómez-Gómez et al., 2016, pp. 74 & 94), regarding the criteria (de Petris & Hitpass, 2017, p. 02) stated that "some of the criteria are rather subjective" such as Leadership criterion which affects the assessment and making it difficult to identify proper actions to be taken in order to refine or reinforce the criterion assessed; the authors also added that "all the excellence models specify a method on how to conduct their assessments, but little is said about the way they should be performed", and both MBNQA and EFQM model provide only a guidance of self-assessment, which consider an assessment survey.

In addition, most of the criteria of both models don't recommend any performance indicators, despite the fact that quantitative measurements provide a more accurate assessment of the standards.

4. CONCLUSION

The study identified notable differences between the EFQM and MBNQA models; and despite sharing a common goal of achieving

performance excellence the two models suggests different perspectives on how to attain that goal.

The EFQM model considers that achieving performance excellence requires creating sustainable value for key stakeholders as well as managing change and transformation along with driving performance, while the MBNQA model emphasizes on improving performance and knowledge management, as well as effective leadership that is demonstrated through product and processes results, furthermore, the EFQM model represents a strategic and future focus framework based on design thinking while the MBNQA is an overall performance management framework based on system thinking.

Regarding the structure, the EFQM Model has a simpler structure compared to the MBNQA Excellence Model, as it outlined the three major questions of all organizations why, how, and what?; another deference is that the EQFM model focus on stakeholders while the MBNQA focus on customers, and the workforces are underestimated in the EFQM model.

As for the similarities, both models focus on defining the purpose, vision, and the strategy of an organization and provide an agile, adaptive framework that is considered as an instructive and an assessment tool that provide a holistic performance evaluation based on the same assessment factors for processes and results, yet assign different labels; additionally, both frameworks promote a culture of excellence, societal contribution, and adopt a more collaborative and open management system.

It is worth mentioning that the EFQM model added a new perspective to the process of achieving performance excellence, which is managing change and driving performance simultaneously; change should be considered inevitable due to not only a constantly but rapidly changing business environment, thus, organizations should adopt change proactively.

The study presented some of the disadvantage indicated in prior studies about the previous version of both models that was not addressed in the new versions namely: weights distribution, subjective criteria, unclear assessment method, and the study added deficiency in performance indicators.

Both models should consider these shortcomings and adopt standers and requirements for achieving performance excellence based on the new business environment characteristics, furthermore, assessment should be based on a quantitative method using performance indicators to ensure accurate measurements of the organizations' excellence maturity, and an objective assessment should be develop, to enable organizations to assess the subjective criteria of the models; additionally, excellence models should adapt their frameworks to suit virtual organizations as the world is evolving more and more towards digitization; as for the academic field, more studies should be conducted to investigate the effectiveness of the new perspective on how to achieve performance excellence presented by the EFQM model.

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