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*Evolving Business
Excellence Framework
for Organization
agility.*

Manoj Dubey

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Evolving Business Excellence Framework for Organization Agility

*Manoj Dubey **

Abstract

An excellent organization demands agility and versatility, associated with change, innovation and coupled with robustness and resilience, implying stability, sustainable advantage and capabilities that may evolve over time. In the past decade, most companies adopted restructuring and re-engineering in response to environment challenges and demands, but nowadays the old approaches and solutions have lost their competency to deal with the organizational challenges and they are better to get replaced with new methods. The best and newest way of survival and success of the organizations is focusing on their organizational agility. The organizational agility is a wisely and complete response to the rapidly changing requirements in competitive markets and succeeding by the opportunities the organization gets.

Organizations in the past have used many quality tools / frameworks like TQM, ISOs, Six sigma, SWOT analysis, Activity based budgeting, Benchmarking, Earned value analysis, PESTLE Analysis, Value engineering, Concurrent engineering, SQC, QCC, Process re-engineering, Quality function deployment and so on so forth to address organization sustainability. The challenge was to ensure how these tools can effectively cater organization's requirement of future competitiveness since in many cases these tools were just adopted out of fancy. Later few methodologies like EFQM and BSC appeared as umbrella kind approach, which can check and trigger effectiveness of various approach towards organization agility. However in isolation EFQM and BSC lost their ground due to inherent limitation of flexibility.

The aim of current study is to find out gap areas in Business Excellence frameworks so that by addressing that gap area creative framework can be evolved to take care of the effective factors on organizational agility like drivers, capabilities and enablers (of the agility). It is expected that this study would be able to accelerate the organizations getting success and helping the future researchers.

The objective statement (The problem statements)

1. What are the key objectives that are central to the organization's overall future success, and how does it go about evaluating its achievement for each of these objectives?
2. What are the limitations of EFQM in addressing these objectives?
3. What are organizational drivers, capabilities and enablers of agility that can be supported by EFQM?

4. What would be creative form of EFQM to address organizational agility?
5. What strategies and plans an organization will be required to successfully implement these two models in tandem?

Design/methodology/approach - This paper provides a comprehensive review of the Business excellence frameworks/ systems/models developed in the last two decades, which helps to highlight the research trends related to Business excellence frameworks. The methodology for literature review from period 1995 to 2014. Journal sites like - Jstore, Ebscore , Emerald , HBR , Google scholar have been browsed with key words like – Business Excellence, EFQM, BEM, BE Model, Malcolm Baldrige , Performance measurement, organization agility, BSC, Sustainability , Business Excellence and competitiveness, ISO and BE models, TQM etc... Based on these search around 100 research papers were shortlisted for study. Research papers are from period 1995 to 2014.

Practical implications – The findings of this study are relevant to all different sized organizations in different sectors and industries for developing Business Excellence framework for organizational agility and achieving outstanding results.

Findings – This paper portrays the developments that happened in Business Excellence framework and an analysis that reveals the research trends carried out in the last two decades, indicating paradigm shifts such as from a financial perspective to an integrative perspective, from an operational perspective to a strategic perspective. However these frame works have many gap areas from effectiveness perspective. Few gap areas are – it lacks as strategic driver, it is not organization and country specific, agility drivers are missing in sub criteria, static and inflexible nature of framework etc.... These gap areas are to addressed with suitable performance and agility drivers.

Originality/value – Most of the research in this area is around implementation of EFQM / Malcolm Baldrige model in companies specially award winning companies (award instituted by organizers of these models). Some researchers have suggested broad level changes in model's main criteria and weightage of criteria. There is very limited work available in the literature that discussed evolution of robust model taking care of gap areas as identified in this literature survey.

Key Words: Business Excellence, EFQM, BEM, BE Model, Malcolm Baldrige , Performance measurement, organization agility, BSC, Sustainability , Business Excellence and competitiveness, ISO and BE models, TQM.

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Evolving Business Excellence Framework for Organization Agility.

Manoj Dubey*

1. Introduction

1.0 Evolution of Business Excellence Model (BEM)

After the Second World War, the Japanese economy was ruined. Deming educated Japanese manufacturing companies to make use of statistical quality control techniques and helped in development of the ruined Japanese economy. Deming focused on market orientation, people involvement and continuous improvement and advocated the plan, do, check, act (PDCA) cycle for continuous improvements. A number of Japanese manufacturers practised his teachings and experienced quantum jumps in the quality and productivity of their products (Balvir Talwar, 2011). The Union of Japanese Scientists and Engineers (JUSE) introduced the “Deming Prize”, the first globally known business excellence model, in 1951 to honour Dr W.E. Deming (Union of Japanese Scientists and Engineers, 2006). The improved quality combined with the lowered cost created new international demand for Japanese products in the USA and Europe. By the mid-1970s, Japan was beginning to seriously undermine its American and other Western competitors first in cars, then in a whole range of electronic goods. In 1980, the National Broadcasting Corporation White Paper in the USA, entitled “If Japan can, why can’t we?”, featured Deming’s approach to quality. It became a trigger for the quality revolution in USA. In the 1980s, major corporations in the USA and other countries began to adopt Deming’s principles (Kume, 2002).

It was followed by global politico-economic turbulence during the 1980s and 1990s with the dismantling of the Soviet Union, economic liberalisation in China and India, democracy in Latin America and the rise of regional trading blocs. Subsequently, rapid growth in transportation, communication, and computerisation coupled with the use of the internet led redefine their management systems and policies to get an edge over competitors. With the objective of helping industries to enhance competitiveness in their respective countries, several national governments and industry associations came forward and established national and regional quality awards to serve as business excellence models (Talwar, 2008). The CAE Quality Award was introduced in 1984 in Canada. Over 300 private sector and public sector organisations have been recognised with this award since then (National Quality Institute, 2007). This was followed by the introduction of the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award (MBNQA) in the USA in 1987. MBNQA helped US industry in revitalising its competitiveness and slowly gained recognition as a de facto global standard on customer oriented management systems and practices.

The Australian Business Excellence Framework was also developed in 1987 to become the fourth globally known quality award. Its framework is reviewed annually to include the latest management practices. It was followed by the establishment of the European Quality Award in 1991 (called the European Excellence Award since 2004) based on EFQM model, with the support of the European Organization for Quality Management and the European Commission.

Its objective was to enhance the position of Western European companies in the world market by accelerating the acceptance of quality as a strategy for global competitive advantage. Simultaneously with Europe, several countries in Asia evolved their own business excellence models too, mostly using the EFQM and MBNQA as their reference (e.g. India in 1994, Singapore and Japan in 1995, Philippines in 1997, Fiji in 1998, Thailand in 2001). The CII-EXIM Bank Award in India is based on the EFQM model, the Singapore Quality Award is based on the Australian Excellence Award, EFQM and MBNQA, whereas the “Prime Minister Quality Award” of Malaysia has its own independent criteria (Talwar, 2008). Most European countries adopted the EFQM excellence model as the basis for national quality awards during the period 1994-1998; however, there has been a tendency towards home-developed national quality awards or modified EFQM models during the decade 2000 onwards. It is closely related to the political status, the law, the interaction and dependence between the state on one hand and the private and public sectors on the other, and finally the business and administrative philosophy (Mavroidis et al., 2007). A UNECE (2004) report says that there are at least 90 quality and business excellence awards in at least 75 countries. Miguel (2004) reports that NQAs are operating in at least 76 countries. In Europe alone the European Foundation for Quality Management believes that at least 30,000 organisations are using the EFQM model (Mann and Grigg, 2005). By consolidation of the above data and literature review, 100 BEMs/NQAs being used in 82 countries worldwide were identified for study.

2.0 How the concept of assessment born

By the early 1980s governmental and industrial leaders in the West were concerned by a lack of productivity leading to a failure to compete in world markets. In the USA, a national productivity study was legislated in October 1982 which led to the recognition of the need for a national quality and productivity award. The process to legislate the award led to the development of a bill which stated, inter alia, that it would help to improve quality and productivity by “establishing guidelines and criteria that [could] be used by business, industrial, governmental and other enterprises in evaluating their own quality improvement efforts” (Kevin Shergold and Deborah M. Reed , 1996). The Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award (MBNQA) was established on 20 August 1987 with a basic structure of seven categories for self-appraisal. The concept of self-assessment had been born!

3.0 The general process of applying for Business excellence (BE) Award

The general process of applying for a business excellence award is summarised by Grigg and Mann (2008) as follows: Applicants begin by submitting an application detailing how their organisation functions and the results they have obtained from using the business excellence framework. Evaluator teams from the award administrator organisation review the application against the business excellence model criteria and principles. A number of finalists are selected, and these organisations are visited by the evaluator teams; during the visit, the applicants are given a feedback report on their application and the evidence of the site visit. A panel of judges then select the winners and runners up, who receive their awards at an annual ceremony. A more extensive description of the assessment processes for the majority of the business excellence awards is given by Chuan and Soon (2000). Awards are generally divided into categories, and can be awarded based on industry, organisation size, region or a combination of all of these (Grigg and Mann,2008). Due to the prestigious nature of the awards, it is important that evaluators are trained rigorously (Chuan and Soon, 2000). Training is therefore repeated annually to make sure the awards preserve their quality and consistency year on year.

4.0 Purpose of self assessment

The Business Excellence Model is based on the premise that customer satisfaction, people (employee) satisfaction and impact on society are achieved through leadership driving policy and strategy, people management, resources and processes, leading ultimately to excellence in business results.

The model is split on an equal basis between the:

- Enabler criteria, concerned with how an organization approaches its “business” in each of the areas described by the criteria and sub-criteria;
- Results criteria, concerned with what an organization has achieved and is achieving.

The model is not prescriptive below the level of the criteria. Thus, all of the criteria must be addressed but it is accepted that, on rare occasions, it is possible that a sub-criterion may be irrelevant in particular organizational circumstances.

The Business Excellence Model is appropriate to any organization and self-assessment can be applied throughout an organization. Self-assessment is a regular, comprehensive and systematic review of an organization’s activities and results against a tangible and relevant model which culminates in the identification of the organization’s strengths and areas for improvement which facilitates the development and prioritization of planned improvement actions which can be regularly monitored (Kevin Shergold and Deborah M. Reed, 1996).

5.0 Impact of adopting BE assessment

The impact of BE assessment is usually felt in a manner that organisations come to know about their blind spots similar to Johri's window. Over the past decade, the public sector in the UK has made great effort in adopting business excellence thinking. To what extent have such practices taken root and what has been their impact? Vas B. Prabhu et al (2002) has carried out detailed study by collecting data from 448 North-East England service organisations, of which 119 represent either education or the public services. In total, 28 practices and 19 performance measures were analysed. A full list can be seen in Prabhu et al. (2000a). The study show that BE assessment has thrown many blind spots for organisation under study, these aspects are - Role of leadership in developing service culture, Competitive positioning, Quality value, Customer orientation, Recognition and reward, Workforce flexibility, Employee involvement, Listening to staff, Employees satisfaction, Employees loyalty, relative to industry, Listening to the customer, Role of support functions, Current use of information technology, Service meeting customer needs, Speed of development relative to competition, Clarity of service concept, Quality procedures and framework, Problem solving, Real time handling of service problem / handling, Reliability, Accessibility, Staff responsiveness, Clarity of goal, Elimination of waste, Customer retention, Level of customer satisfaction, Value (quality /price). Market share (primary services / line of business), Cash flow, Operating costs. However some strength area were also noticed like - Skill and job training and education, Benchmarking, Strategies towards corporate social responsibility, Day to day team work, Shared vision, mission and goal. The natural fall out of such assessment process would be organisations making action pals to improve these weak areas.

6.0 Benefits of the quality awards

Several organizations have reported that with implementation of BEMs / NQAs, their process orientation, customer orientation and improvement orientation have improved. Winners of BEMs / NQAs have not only improved their product quality, but have also reported improvements in market share, sales, profits, employee morale and competitiveness as a result of implementing these models (Lakhe and Mohanty, 1994; Hendricks and Singhal, 1997). In a study of 120 award winners, it was observed that the winners outperformed other companies similar in size and operating in the same industries over an 11-year period (British Quality Foundation, 2003). The Centre of Quality Excellence (2005) reports that:

[. . .] *three years after receiving an award, the award winning companies outperform similar companies by an average of 36 per cent for share value, 17 per cent for sales, 5 per cent for sales over assets, 4 per cent for capital expenditure over sales, 20 per cent in assets and a better reduction in costs by 1.4 per cent.*

Winning a quality award offers significant publicity opportunities, particularly to organizations that use quality to achieve a marketing edge. In addition, it raises the profile of the organization and generates pride for the employees. Awards are perceived as a symbol of quality and business excellence. As such, the companies' efforts in the award application process will serve as positive feedback for any prospective customer looking for reliable companies which can supply quality products and services. As a nation, one of the main purposes of having quality awards is to raise quality consciousness among industries and the general public. Another purpose is to facilitate the sharing of experiences and to encourage cooperative behaviour among businesses. Quality awards assist organizations to understand their present performance so that future progress can be targeted. They also provide valuable external opinions in the form of feedback from the examiners. The feedback provides organizations with objective information about current organizational performance and helps to identify areas of improvement (Pui-Mun Lee, 2002).

7.0 The EFQM model

In Europe, one of the most used models for self-assessment and strategic change is the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) excellence model (fig 7a), which is based on following eight fundamental concepts:

- (1) Results orientation;
- (2) Customer focus;
- (3) Leadership and constancy of purpose;
- (4) Management by processes and facts;
- (5) People development and involvement;
- (6) Continuous learning;
- (7) Innovation and improvement; and
- (8) Partnership development and public responsibility



Fig 7a – EFQM model pictorial view.

The EFQM stresses in their training material that an assumption behind the model is that the results of the organization are achieved through excellent performance in the enabler criteria. An organization achieving excellence in the enablers will experience sustainable developments through improved customer, people, society and financial results. EFQM website: <http://www.efqm.org/efqm-model/the-need-for-a-model>).

The European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) was founded in 1988 with the objective of helping European companies to become competitive in the international marketplace. One of the first decisions of this foundation was to create the European quality prize, following the example of the American MBNQA (Conti, 2007). The pillars of these prizes are quite similar since all of them are based in the TQM philosophy. However, there are some differences between countries. According to Tan (2002), in less developed countries these prizes give less importance to aspects such as social responsibility and more to leadership. In Europe, the model attaches more relevance to social impact and human resource management. Successive versions of the EFQM Excellence Model have been developed. The main reason for these revisions is to be in line with the business situation. A clear example is the evolution of the MBNQA from a mere quality assurance system to a quality management system (Tan, 2002). The EFQM model assumes that, in order for an organization to be successful, whatever its sector, size, structure etc. it should have a good management system. In this sense, the EFQM model is a tool that can be used to structure the management system of an organization, by way of self-assessment. Self assessment consists of a regular comparison of activities and results of a company with the excellence model (Conti, 1993; Hillman, 1994) and it contributes to identifying strong points or improvement areas that consequently could help to establish improvement plans that should be integrated in the organizational strategic plans (Porter and Tanner, 1996; Ritchie and Dale, 2000). The scientific literature generally finds a positive relationship between the use of self-evaluation and company performance (Ahmed et al., 2003; Brown and Van der Wiele, 1995; Finn and Porter, 1994; Samuelsson and Nilsson, 2002; Van der Wiele et al., 1996) The EFQM Excellence Model is a non-prescriptive framework based on nine criteria (see Figure xxx). Five of these are “Enablers” and four are “Results”. The “Enablers” criteria cover what an organization does. The “Results” criteria cover what an organization achieves. “Results” are caused by “Enablers”. The model, recognizing there are many approaches to achieve sustainable excellence in all aspects of performance, is based on the premise that excellent results with respect to performance, customers, people and society are achieved through partnerships, resources and processes. The arrows emphasize the dynamic nature of the model. They show innovation and learning helping to improve enablers that in turn lead to improved results. This structure assumes the existence of interrelations among enablers and results and the fact that having success in an isolated area is not enough to achieve excellence (Naylor, 1999). Adebajo (2001) affirms that this model incorporates the “quality of management” principles while largely leaving the “Management of quality” issues to individual organizations.

This means that mere quality assurance aspects, related mainly to production process control, are assumed and companies will probably count on other systems such as ISO 9000, or six sigma to focus in those aspects.

8.0 EFQM Model – as systematic performance measure tool

The European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) Business Excellence Model is widely recognized as a representative theory to improve traditional total quality management (TQM) by expanding the narrow quality-oriented concept into a holistic management concept. The EFQM model, an integrative business system, covers all management activities composed of input, process, and output (Black and Crumley, 1997; Seghezzi, 2001).

The EFQM Business Excellence Model is a framework to assess organizations for the European Quality Award that aims to develop awareness of the importance of quality in the intensified global market (Evans and Lindsay, 2005). The objective of the EFQM model, proposed in 1992, is to support organizations to achieve business excellence through continuous improvement and deployment of processes (Andersen et al., 2003). The model's important assumption is that excellent performances (e.g. customer and financial performance) are derived through five enablers (e.g. leadership, people and processes). On the basis of the premise, the model is divided into two areas – i.e. enabler and results – and allocates balanced weights (50-50) between the two areas.

In organizations, the EFQM model is widely used in different ways:

- as a tool for self-assessment;
- as a way to benchmark with other organizations;
- as a guide to identify areas for improvement;
- as the basis for a common vocabulary and a way of thinking; and
- as a structure for the organization's management system (European Foundation for Quality Management, 2006).

The EFQM model has been explored in terms of different tools for systematic performance management (Wongrassamee et al., 2003), self-assessment (Tar'1, 2006), teamwork development (Castka et al., 2003), integration issues (Davies, 2008), and benchmarking (Castka et al., 2004). Among them, self-assessment is regarded as one of the most interesting topics for both researchers and companies implementing the EFQM model (Hillman, 1994; Samuelsson and Nilsson, 2002; Black and Crumley, 1997). This is because the self-assessment enables organizations to identify their strengths and areas for improvement. Based on the outcomes of the self-assessment, organizations can gain more objective and holistic views by comparing their results with other organizations. At the operational level, the outcomes also encourage managers not only to determine which key areas should be managed, but also to monitor a variety of activities in a controlled manner.

The quality-award models (the EFQM and the MBNQA models) concentrate on evaluating organizational progress toward TQM (Biazzo and Bernardi, 2003); while ISO 9000 promotes companies to implement TQM-centred principles (eight), such as customer focus (Lewis et al., 2006).

The quality-award models cover all management areas, such as leadership and performance (Porter and Tanner, 1996). Companies should incorporate the quality-award models into corporate-wide issues and broad-range information sources (Czuchry et al., 1997).

9.0 Various BE models globally

To pursue excellence in an effective way and to recognize the performance excellence of the organizations, several countries established national quality awards (NQAs) / BEMs in the late 1980s and 1990s. A report of the UNECE (2004) says that there are at least 90 quality and business excellence awards in at least 75 countries. Major BEMs are the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award (MBNQA) of the USA, the European Quality Award (EQA), and Deming Prize of Japan. They have consolidated as worldwide references for achieving organizational excellence and are the basis of most NQAs / BEMs (Bohoris, 1995; McDonald et al., 2002; Hughes and Halsall, 2002; Zairi and Youssef, 1995; Miguel, 2001; Puay et al., 1998). In a study conducted by SAI Global, Martin Searle (2005) reported that the NQA of 53 countries are based on MBNQA. To evolve an international quality award, Kozo and Yoshizawa (2005) report that EQA is being used in 26 countries. In a comparative study of NQAs of 53 countries Tan et al. (2003) report that most NQA models are based on the MBNQA and EQA. In a literature review of 347, TQM survey-based research articles published between 1989 and 2000, Ismail and Ebrahimpour (2002) argue that, because of a lack of a universally accepted TQM model, many companies are putting their faith in quality award models and using them as guidelines. More research is needed to increase the credibility of these models as effective approaches in achieving performance excellence.

10.0 Defining agility

Lack of agility and flexibility is one major concern of BE model as we have seen in shortcoming and gap area of models. Therefore it is prudent to discuss about agility and its trait. Sharifi and Zaing are earlier propagator of agility in organization and it was buzz word in manufacturing sector during late 90s. A conceptual framework is shown in figure 10.

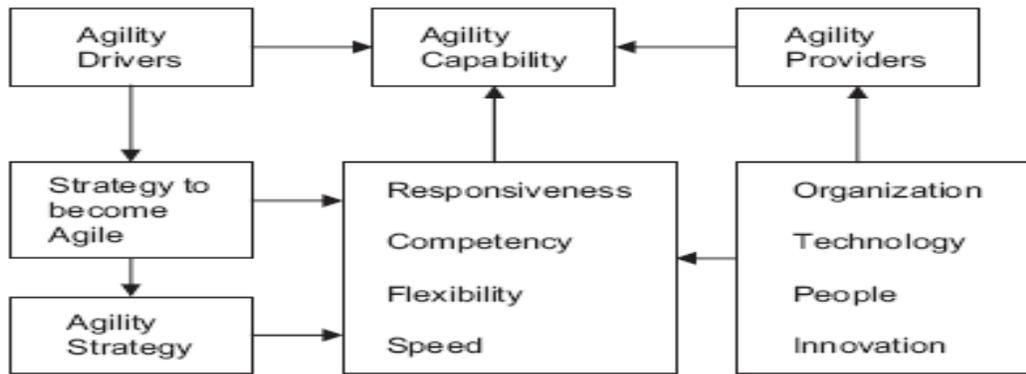


Fig. 1. A conceptual model for agile manufacturing proposed by Sharifi and Zhang (1999).

Fig – 10: A conceptual model of agility by Shariffi and Zaing, 1999

Agility is ability to sense respond to, and exploit anticipated or unexpected changes in the business environment. Such organization must be able to identify the environmental changes and regarding them as the growth factors.

Sharifi &Zhang (1999)

Successful exploration of competitive bases such as speed, flexibility, innovation, quality, and profitability through the integration of reconfigurable resources and best practices in a knowledge-rich environment to provide customer-driven product and services in a fast changing market environment. **Yusuf et al.,(1999)**

Agility is the ability to market successfully low-cost, high quality products with short lead times and in varying volumes that provide enhanced value to customers through customization. The ability of effectively responding to unexpected rapidly changing happenings is called agility, **Oleson, (1998).**

Agility drivers - Business environment as the source of turbulence and change impose pressure on the business activities of the company. These uncertainties, unpredicted changes, and pressures urge manufacturing organizations to approach appropriate ways that could lead them to a stable position and protect them from losing their competitive advantage. These are called agility drivers.

Change in social and legal factors, business network, competitive environment, customer needs, technology, and finally the drivers of internal performance have been determined as the agility drivers by Heligerzburgh *et al.*, (2005).

Sharifi & Zhang (1999) believe that the main driver of agility is change. In another study, they define three factors of organization's need to become agile, strategic intent to become agile, agility strategy under the cover of the main driver of agility that is changed and have mentioned them as the agility drivers.

Yusuf *et al.*, (1999) have identified five drivers for organizational agility as following:

- Automation and price/cost consideration;
- Widening customer choice and expectation;
- Competing priorities;
- Integration and pro-activity;
- Achieving manufacturing requirements in synergy.

Gangouli *et al.*, (2009) also have mentioned the following drivers:

- Price sensitivity;
- Change in customer preference;
- Change in technology;
- Change in social-economical scenario;
- Cost-benefit analysis by the customers;

Agility capabilities The abilities of agility include:

Responsiveness: Defining the responsiveness was started by Frrey in 1998. Responsiveness is ability of a company to gather information from its commercial environment and to detect and anticipate changes. In the other words, responsiveness is the ability to identify changes, respond quickly to them, and recover from them. This definition contains two phases. In the first phase, the environmental changes are identified and in the next phase, the quick response to changes and imparting of them are considered.

Competency: It means a wide set of abilities which support the productivity of the actions to obtain the organizational goals. In the other words, the ability of an organization to reach its goals efficiently and effectively is called competency.

Flexibility/Adaptability: Flexibility is one of the most important factors of agile organizations. Dove in 1996 mentioned flexibility as the basis of agility in the organization. Swafford *et al.*, (2006) have also confirmed it. Several researchers have studied flexibility and there are different definitions on it. We all have a general viewpoint about flexibility, but less people know the details. Flexibility means the ability to accordance and consistency with the environment; in the other words, flexibility is the ability to create different products and

services and achieving different goals by the same resources and facilities. Some authors such as Sharifi & Zhang do not differentiate between agility and flexibility and use both of them with the same concept. While some other researchers make them different from each other. It seems that despite the similarities, the term flexibility is different from agility.

Speed: The ability to carry out activity in the shortest possible time. Quickness includes the following issues:

1. Quick new products time to market;
2. Products and services delivery quickness and timeliness;
3. Fast operation time;

According to Lin et al., (2006), underpinning these four principles is a methodology to integrate them into a coordinated, inter-dependent system. They believe that agility capabilities must be explained into strategic competitive capabilities.

11.0 Agility providers / Enablers of Organizational Agility

There are many enablers of organization agility like : Partnership, New technology especially Information technology (IT), Customer relation management, Organizational culture, Change skills, Change, Management, Leadership, Continuous learning and worker empowering, Knowledge management, Innovativeness, Risk taking, Human resources management, Core competence management, Performance management, Virtual enterprise creation, Team working And Concurrent engineering (CE), Continuous improvement, Learning organization creation, Knowledge driven enterprise creation, Organizational structure, Capability for reconfiguration, (Yusuf et al., 1999 and Gangouli et al., 2009). While developing any strategy or performance measure these attributes must be guiding principles.

12.0 The need of agile organization

Rather than having proactive nature, organizations behave mostly in a reactive manner to reduce the effect of environmental uncertainty. To minimize the negative effects of environmental changes organizations required to develop a proactive approach rather than a reactive approach. Organizations' adaptive capabilities help them to respond against the changes occur in the environment in an easier way. Creating too great a capacity to respond by deliberate postponement of decisions can result towards lack of decisiveness, progressively increasing costs, and a continual revision of plans. Too great a reaction capacity or too short a reaction time may lead to overreaction, excessive information search, and wasted resources (Scott, 1965).

The reasons for putting agility at the core of strategy for the twenty-first century were based on observation of the following phenomena (Goldman et al., 1995):

1. Increasing market fragmentation
2. Growth in the need to produce to order
3. Recognizing markets are heterogeneous
4. Shrinking product life cycles
5. Converging products and services
6. Globalization of production
7. Simultaneous co-operation and competition between firms
8. Distribution infrastructures which support greater customization

An organization today strive for sustainability and competitiveness , all BEM models also put emphasis on long term survival of the organization, to achieve this organization must put agility as cutting edge strategy.

13.0 Shortcomings of various BE models

As we have discussed through this paper, one major problem with the various excellence models and the managerial practices of these models seems to be that people still interpret these models from a positivistic and mechanistic paradigm. The high-failure rate with implementation of TQM and excellence models seems to be related to this problem (Dahlgaard-Park, 2002; Dahlgaard-Park and Noronha, 2003). The phenomenon can be illustrated by an analogy of a doctor who tries to cure a mental sick person by carrying out a physical surgery. In order to understand the complex realities of organizations and its environments organizations need a new cure (framework) which can capture both depth (qualitative) and breath (quantitative).

We believe that understanding and recognizing the full range of realities always includes the company culture and respect for people's values, and we believe that corresponding paradigms is a prerequisite for having success with the journey towards excellence. In order to capture and understand the full range of realities, we recommend that various qualitative ideas and approaches such as sense making (Weick, 1979; Weick, 1995), imagination (Morgan, 1986), story telling (Czarniawska, 1997), a symbolic-interpretive approach (Pfeffer, 1981; Gagliardi, 1990), etc. to be adopted along with already well-adopted quantitative approaches.

14.0 Shortcoming of the quality awards

The Baldrige Award, EQA and AQA do not seek to assess management excellence. Much effort is required to prepare an application. This might prove to be a significant obstacle for some organizations that cannot afford to devote the necessary resources to the award application. Another criticism is that the applicants nominate themselves for the award. Some maintained that the customers should do the nomination, as they are the ones that are directly experiencing the outcomes of the organization's quality processes. There is also a danger that

companies might focus more on winning the award rather than the opportunities for self-examination, learning and also improvement that each assessment provides (Ghobadian and Hong, 1996). Most award criteria are static instead of being dynamic. The structure of the award criteria is too rigid, and does not provide much flexibility. As such, organizations might encounter difficulties trying to match their processes with the award criteria.

Grigg and Mann (2008) state that business excellence awards have been “a primary means of formally and publicly recognizing the efforts of organizations that have achieved significant improvements or world-class performance”.

Grigg and Mann (2008) highlight, however, that several scholars have reported little to no evidence of the improvements mentioned above, citing Williams et al. (2006), Wilford (2007) and Tuck (2005a; 2005b) as examples. Adams et al. (1999) state that in a strictly financial sense, TQM matters but awards may not. Lee (2002) also states that the approval process is lengthy and can sometimes stop companies from focusing on core activities. Another criticism is that the award structure is very rigid, resulting in some companies struggling to match their current processes with those in the award criteria. However, Grigg and Mann (2008) conclude that although debates continue around the operational and financial benefits of competing for or obtaining business excellence awards, there is little doubt that competing for such awards ensures that firms concentrate on their processes, measurements and performance, and that winning the awards gives valuable publicity and commendation.

15.0 Gap area

We may observe that gaps exist, and the custodians of BEMs/ NQAs have not yet evolved any other index to fill these gaps. Some of the other limitations of BEMs/ NQAs are as follows: while it is believed that BEMs / NQAs focus to balance the needs and expectations of all stakeholders, most of the studies focus only on business results in general and impact on the bottom line in particular. Thus, it is difficult to comment on benefits accrued to other stakeholders. While BEMs / NQAs are being used effectively in many manufacturing organisations in developed economies, their impact in developing countries like India and China is limited. Still, India and China are emerging as global manufacturing hubs. Kume (2005) points out that the Deming Prize is losing its popularity in Japan due to the economic slowdown, is and becoming more popular in the third world countries, especially in India. There is a danger that organisations start focusing on winning the award rather than focusing on opportunities for making improvements (Ghobadian and Hong, 1996).

For the organizations themselves, it is important to consider business excellence as an overarching framework within which its other improvement initiatives fit. This will assist in an integrated and aligned approach to improvement that can deliver strong short and long-term benefits to the organisation.

A major problem with contemporary BEM / NQAs is lack of a universally acceptable model. The variance between different models shows that these models are still passing through an evolutionary process. The factors that make the success of business organizations long-lasting and sustainable need to be explored empirically.

The significant changes to have occurred in past two decades – viz. the developments in information technology, the information explosion leading to fast-changing customer preferences/expectations, minority shareholder activism, growing employee aspirations, the emergence of oppressed classes, the increasing awareness of social equity, enhanced awareness of environmental concerns, public-private partnerships, changing demography, the global economic crisis, etc. – have had far-reaching implications on the business world. While the world grapples with issues pertaining to economic recession and climate change, excellence models cannot escape impact of the volatility and uncertainty sweeping many parts of the world.

It is also recommended that further research is undertaken to determine whether the design of business excellence models should be different for different industry sectors. Therefore, can one design fit all or should it be tailored, Nihal Palitha Jayamaha, et al.. 2011.

The European Business Excellence Model (EBEM) is nowadays a familiar framework, used for a spectrum of purposes, with the most frequent aim from its full deployment being the attainment of organizational success. The EBEM's requirements, however, involve abstruse management concepts and thus, there is, frequently, a significant variety within the suggested approaches to face the criteria requirements. Although, such integrated business excellence models should not necessarily be of a very prescriptive nature, allowing for deployment latitude among sectors and types of businesses, a more homogeneous understanding of the suggested approaches to the requirements might be a welcome basis by both academics and business professionals. There is a need for a simplified and systematic method to help organizations primarily to formulate the appropriate approaches, and secondly to continuously assess their effectiveness through the use of the model, Evanthia P. Vorria and George A. Bohoris, (2009).

The EFQM model is better suited to the discussion of questions dealing with HRM, organizational and knowledge competencies, since it proceeds from a stakeholder perspective and takes all important concerned

groups into consideration. Excellent companies can be characterised by the fact that they target results in many areas of company development that are considered to be trend-setting and exemplary. Since each company also exhibits weaknesses, a partial, area- or topic-specific excellence, in the sense of ‘best practice’, probably better corresponds to reality. In contrast to the EFQM, excellence is understood less as a measurable and assessable variable than as an underlying position and process. Some of the HRM competency which EFQM model do not specifically call for some measurement are : Scarcity, Valuable, Permanence, Limited limitability, difficult transferability to external parties, Reduced substitutability, Customer value, Differentiation , Transferability and Integration. These are quite similar to VIRO tool, Robert J. Zaugg and Norbert Thom Journal of Change Management, 2003. If a company wishes to scale the peak of excellence, appropriate HRM, organisational and knowledge competencies are required. These implicit competencies do not, however, generate themselves; rather, they must be constantly developed and converted into competitive advantages.

Categorization of gap area

Requirement of Customization of BE framework

Business excellence models are generic framework by design. They are industry neutral and not prescriptive. The requirement of models in generic form usually becomes too complex for employees of an organisation to understand and act upon for focused improvement. Both EFQM and BSC need to be more flexible and need to be customised for specific organisation. BEM should address how managers assign appropriate metrics to measure the drivers (enablers) that will make organisation sustainable (S. Wongrassamee, PD Gardiner, JEL Simons, 2003). The research points out that the criterion weights of the EFQM excellence model are not stable and generic quantities, that implies BE models are to be customized as per organization and may vary from organization to organization and country to country. However some researchers in the past has just suggested changes in criteria weightages that too broadly at country level. For example research by Jacob K. Eskildsen et al, 2002 is limited just about enhancing enabler criteria weightage from 50% to 70% and no other approach for customization is suggested.

Requirement of BE framework as strategic driver

Business Excellence models give dip stick measurement of organisation’s present level of excellence and since these are not prescriptive; organisation usually look for some improvement in some operational issues rather than strategic issues.

The BEM is not perceived as an ideal or business model rather, as has been strongly voiced, it is seen and used as a framework for structuring conceptual thinking and co-ordinating improvement activities. Further research is required to make it tailored for a particular organisation and balancing three layers of strategic, tactical and

operational content of the model so that it also become strategic driver to some extent.... (Denis Leonard and Rodney Macadam, 2002).

Requirement to integration with BSC and BE frameworks

There are couple of studies which suggests integration BEM with BSC. The main advantage of such integration is that strategy creation and execution both gets flip. Paper by Rodney Macadam and Edel O'Neill, 1999, suggests short coming of both EFQM model and BSC when used independently lacks on certain aspects of leadership, employees, strategy formation and processes. Similarly, Andy Neely and Mike Bourne, 2000, suggests reason for Performance Measurement (PM) failures and advocates integrated frame work like BSC but it does not give details of such frame work in various organisation and industry. It also does not outlay how to make it robust for agile organisation.

Ian McDonald, Mohamed Zairi and Mohd Ashari Idri, 2002, in their study suggests use of BE model and BSC in tandem but how these integration will help to address gap areas like effect of external environment on organisation and strategies for agility have not been addressed. Redha M. Elhuni & Mohammad Munir Ahmad, 2014, although suggests excellence frame work based on BSC type performance measures (citing few variables of softer skills) but does not deliberate how BE or BSC can be integrated as overreaching framework taking in to account comprehensive parameters.

Wasatorn Shutibhinyo, 2014, focuses on aspect of interpretation of BSC framework by organisation and various level of BSC implementation in organisations. Paper does not dwell in to issue like how balanced BSC is wrt external agents and how it can be made more effective. The one way is to integrate it with BE models. All these papers do not deliberate how in tandem integrated framework will address many aspects agile organization. They also did not come up with suggestive integrated framework.

Requirement of BE models as overreaching framework

The paper by Musli Mohammad et al, 2011, discusses how the BEM can be used as an overarching framework for managing and/or aligning multiple Improvement initiatives within the organization. A new model is developed showing some of the main improvement initiatives that can be adopted towards achieving Business Excellence, which are arranged according to the common enabling criteria of BEMs and levels of BE maturity. The study does not address the issue of lack of dynamic model for organizational agility. Mere co-relation with initiatives will not bring BE frame work overreaching. It needs to take care of gap area identified during last two decades of implementation.

Christian Ehrlich, 2006, finds that a major criticism of the EFQM-Model, because it does not say which precise organizational measures in criteria 3 (people) do lead to which better results regarding motivation in criteria 7 (people result). It shows that measures (stated in criteria 3) can now be assessed in respect of their amount of effectiveness in the perception of motivation potentials in criteria 7. The study clearly shows that some important measures and their linkage in enabler and result and vice versa is still missing in BE model. Although paper states about gap area in criteria linkages, it does not give complete laundry list of performance measurement for referred criteria 3 & 7 of EFQM model. The issue of strategic HR, organization culture for flexibility and agility etc.. have not been addressed.

Faezeh Qavampour Hashemi and Naghme Bagheri Ghajari, 2014, study focuses in finding relationship between leadership effectiveness and certain attributes of EFQM model. This relationship is indeed intuitive. However there are many gap areas and shortcoming of BE models and study neither focuses on that nor dwell in to leadership imperatives which will help in overcoming these shortcomings.

Seyed Amir Bolboli and Markus Reiche, 2014, suggests corporate culture can be investigated to specify the individual requirement of different sectors and to integrate these requirements in a roadmap for implementing Business excellence. Thereby suggesting sector specific BE framework. It also suggests identification of relevant improvement potential or BE tools for each EFQM sub criteria thus indicating strengthening sub criteria with additional appropriate measures.

Rajashekharaiiah, Jagadeesh, 2014, has not gone deep in emphasizing all the factors and sub-factors related to human resources in the awards criteria but evidences the emphasis placed on human resources in achieving quality as reflected in the quality awards' criteria. But issues like absence of implicit / explicit HR parameters, absence of parametric relationship between criteria 3 (People) and criteria 7 (People result) in EFQM award have not been researched.

Requirement of flexible BE framework

The external environment and competitiveness is ever changing and this calls for flexibility in BE models so that organisation agility and sustainability can be achieved. The biggest drawback of any BE model is that they are quite rigid and lacks flexibility. Kevin Shergold and Deborah M. Reed, 1996, states BEM and self assessment help in improvement activities but how these initiatives help for being agile organisation is matter of further research.

Mohamed Djerdjouri, 2004, in his research clearly points out that for BE model; criteria, criteria structure and weightages are dynamic and should evolve over a period of time. But research does not give any details as how to address this required dynamics of model.

Anil K. Sharma and Balvir Talwar, 2007, evolved Universal Business Excellence Model and do talk about the outer-most layer of “external environment” makes the model flexible and integrates with culture and business environment of the country / region where it is to be used. It keeps the flexibility in determining weightage for each criterion in a given environment. However the actors of external environment, drivers of flexibility and like wise issues have not been dealt with.

Daniel Va´zquez-Bustelo et al, 2007, showed that in turbulent environments, the integrated use of agile manufacturing practices promotes manufacturing competitive strength, leading to better operational, market and financial performance. It is pointed out that the factors of agility are considered keeping manufacturing in mind so there is need for generalization for organizations and it need to be dovetailed with some excellence framework.

Quality management literature generally endorses the benefits from TQM or excellence models for organisations. Nevertheless, the cause-and-effect relations from excellence model enablers to company results have always been issue of debate and research. Some researches were conclusive on it, while some were not conclusive , David Muturi, 2014. However this study does not focuses on broader issue like what are attributes on enabler and result side (soft and hard) parameters which BE model lack for organisation sustainability and competitiveness.

Dawn Ringrose, 2013, study provides a simplified checklist kind of approach instead of comprehensive BE framework to make it more effective. This can be used for explaining some of requirement of BE model in simplified form but does take care of various aspects of shortcoming of BE framework specially wrt agility.

Vassilios Mavroidis et al, 2007, states in European Union wherever model is modified , higher weighting (scoring) is given on both the “impact on society” and “people management criteria”. This is because European Directors recognize the need for their companies to act within a social as well as an economic environment. Although it suggests variation in model criteria weightage as per organisation’s environment but only country level variation that too in weightage of criteria is not much effective for agility of organisation as pointed in other researches. Further not only weightage , one need to research what are factors at criteria and sub criteria

level which gives model dynamic rather than static.

Fine tuning of BE model

Some of the researchers have suggested additional criteria in BE Model to make it more effective. Rickard Garvare and Raine Isakson, 2011, suggests BE Models may be appended with additional proposed criteria like: individual excellence , organisational excellence and societal excellence , result from personal excellence, environmental result, result from support to societal excellence to make them more sustainable and likewise. Research does not suggest how these additional criteria will fit in to specific BE model and what should be measures around these criteria / sub criteria.

Paper of Su Mi Dahlgaard-Park et al, 2007, points out certain gap area of BE models and their limitations. It also proposes 4P model approach to reduce tendencies to ignore softer issues. However paper does not give detailed account of how models can be made flexible for organization agility. Further it does not give any evidence of getting it validated by experts. Moreover it is not only the human aspect but the issue of using models as strategic tool considering future challenges as well.

BE models have enabler criteria and result criteria, while enabler criteria focuses on softer skills, result criteria focuses on performance measures around various business results including customer, employees and society. Dong Young Kim et al, 2010, research says unfortunately, while the majority of published papers explored the sub-criteria of performance measurement, only 29 percent of papers explored the remaining sub-criteria. Exploring various themes within the sub-criteria, however, can provide possible solutions to the following questions : What problems prevent strong performance?, What critical factors motivate enablers?, What measurements are beneficial to enhance performance?.

Balvir Talwar, 2011, in his paper states benefits and limitations of BEMs and stresses that BEMs need to be fine-tuned by incorporating lessons from ancient teachings to attain “sustained business results. Although the paper points out need for fine tuning the BE models for sustainability however it does not give framework for the same.

Asian Productivity Organization commissioned a study in 2011 to find out benefits and short comings of BE models. One of the gap in model identified was that BE model need to be an overarching framework within which its other improvement initiatives can fit. This will assist in an integrated and aligned approach to improvement that can deliver strong short and long-term benefits to the organization. It has suggested

strengthening model with sustainable parameters for triggering improvement...Robin Mann, 2011.

J.S. Oakland and S.J. Tanner, 2008, talk about evolution of BE framework from 1989. They have studied leadership excellence and its relation with overall performance of organization, which appear to be obviously positively related. However how the BE framework itself should change from its evolution for enhancing its effectiveness is not covered in the research.

Balvir Talwar, 2011, suggests that factors those make the success of business organizations long-lasting and sustainable need to be explored empirically.

16.0 In lieu of conclusion

Gap areas have been identified in Business Excellence framework based on research done up to 2014. These gap areas will be suitably addressed to evolve Business Excellence framework for organization agility. It will create a creative and dynamic Business Excellence framework which is corrected for shortcomings so that an overarching model is evolved.

The research study will showcase approaches for organizations as how to adopt such model to enhance capacity of the organization to actively influence the environment, thereby reducing the vulnerability of the organization. It will be solved example for organizations to quickly adapt to change management.

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