A study of the performance of Local Education Authorities during the Third Five-year Development Plan with use of EFQM excellence model in khozestan province- Iran

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Abstract:

The present study aimed at investigating the extend of achieving the objectives of Third Five-year Development Plan of education with using EFQM Excellence Model in Khozestan province Local Education Authority. A analytic-descriptive method and a self evaluation questionnaire was utilized to conduct the research. The population of this study All staff members who were serving in the LEA of Khozestan State during the Third Five-year Development Plan and the sample was comprised of 90 people who were randomly selected to fill out the research questionnaire.

The findings indicate that: a) The mean score revealed by all khozestan local education authorities was 346 of 1000, for enables was 285 out of 500, and for results was 368 out of 500. It can be seen that the gap between enables –current and expected was 305/52, between results- current and expected was 368.05 and between total (both enables and results) was current and expected ws 673.57  b) there was a significant difference between enablers and results factors and the results factor was less than the enabler factor.

Key words: Human resources development, Third Development Five-year Plan, EFQM excellence model.

Introduction

Economic globalization, which rests decision-making power with market and social forces, has established a ubiquitous presence on a global scale. Certainly, Educational administrators are feeling the effects of economic rationalist policies and

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in turn make managerial decisions that reflect this essence to the education and, ultimately, to the schools, teachers and classroom. One of the important questions managers of education face is how to measure Quality of education? To talk about quality implicitly includes also talking about particular values and preferences (Arvin, 1987).

Quality always refers to particular individuals values, not to some a priori principle. The values are not generally known, nor can they be postulated. They must be inferred. In some areas there is something like a common mindset which all education managers, schools principal, teachers and students share – to a certain degree. Schools performance, teacher commitment, parent’s satisfactiuon, student grades, certificates, feedback and evaluations form part of these common concepts helping to establish quality standards (Mehralizadeh & Hossainzadeh, 2007; Jurian, 1988; Ishikawa, 1986; Deming, 1982; Feigenbaum, 1986; Taguchi, 1986; Crosby, 1979).

Since the beginning of the 90’ the TQM (Total Quality Management) concept is gaining momentum throughout all organization and industry sectors. TQM drives organizations towards business excellence, i.e. towards a sustained improvement of the organizational practices and results that guarantees the continuity of the business. (Deming, 1982). The EFQM Model provides a generic framework of criteria, which can be equally applied to any organisation regardless of size, sector and structure. Developed as a reference framework for the European Quality Award, the basic principle of the EFQM Model is that customer and staff satisfaction and integration into society are achieved via the role of the organisational leadership in setting the policy and strategy and the management of staff, resources and processes, culminating in excellence in key performance results. (Mehralizadeh, 2006).

European Foundation for Quality of Management (EFQM) approach as One of the models of quality provides the integrated model with the necessary framework to allow education and schools to link results with specific education goals and makes a link possible between quality concepts, improvement and education management. (Pupius, 2003). In short, quality is not something that should be added on to a business or education: the whole education and schools environment should be Managed in a quality way. (Saraiva Edro, Rosa and Orey, 2003).

Education system in iran and in the state of khouzestan as one of the big and important province Since the Islamic Revolution of 1979, has gone under qualitative and quantitative changes. (Mehralizadeh, 2002) The school system is under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education and Training. Since 1998 khouzestan province had four Development Planning- first development plan was 1991-1995, second development plan was 1996-2000, third development plan was 2001-2005 and fourth development plan is 2006-2009. during these Five-year Development Plans of education the khouzestan province managers spend considerable amount of resources and enavour in the education system. It is excpected that these resources to be created an environment of excellence in education system. Therefore the evaluation of these planning is important for Khozestan province Local Education Authority.
In this paper the vital debate is about the views of Khozestan province Local Education Authority in relation to the level of achievement of goals of Third Five-year Development Plan of education. So the critical question is to how extend the third development plan has positively increased the performance of local education authorities to enhance education system in the target province.

Research goals

The aim of the project is to evaluate goal achievement and promote the culture of self-evaluation and quality management in local education authorities in the secondary schools level by using EFQM Model as a common framework.

1. How was the performance of enablers (leadership, human resource management, policies and planning, society participation, process) of education (LEA) in the secondary schools level?
2. How was the performance of results (human resource management, customers, society and performances indexes) of education (LEA) in the secondary schools level?

Hypothesis

1. H1=Performances of Education managers in relation to enablers and results was lower than the EFQM standard indexes.
2. H2= Performances of Education managers in relation to enablers was lower than the EFQM standard indexes.
3. H3= Performances of Education managers in relation to results was lower than the EFQM standard indexes.
4. H4= There is significant differences between enablers and results of performance of managers of education (LEA).

Methodology

A self evaluation method was used to collect data from managers of LEA education in Khouzestan province which is one of the known and important province of Iran. In order to collect data a questionnaire is designed based on the latest version of EFQM in education. EFQM Model is a practical tool that is mostly used by educational organizations in self-evaluation of the organization, but it is also a useful framework for external audits as well as a structure for educational organization's management system. The EFQM Model forces to examine organization's functions, operations and results as a whole. Excellent educational organizations identify key customers and customer groups for whom educational services are provided. Organization clarifies current and future needs of customers and customer groups and develops services accordingly. Basic approach of the EFQM Model is to ensure clear links between enablers and results.

Self-Assessment by EFQM members to identify and facilitate ongoing improvements within their secondary schools in accordance with clear best practice procedures; Such Self-Assessment identifies strengths and areas for improvement and provides input to improvement plans.
EFQM model as shows in figure 1 consist of two parts enables and results. The score show in the figure 1 are part of the weighting system.

Figure 1: EFQM Excellence Model

After carefully developing questionniare its validiaty and reliabilty is measured. questionniare face and content validity is gained based on the views of some of the education experts. Also reliability of questionniare is calculated via a pilot study and alpha cronbach.

Table 1: reliability of questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance indexes</th>
<th>society</th>
<th>customers</th>
<th>Human resource management</th>
<th>process</th>
<th>participation</th>
<th>Human resource</th>
<th>Policies and strategy</th>
<th>leadership</th>
<th>criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Results reliability</td>
<td>/82</td>
<td>/82</td>
<td>/80</td>
<td>/77</td>
<td>/78</td>
<td>/79</td>
<td>/80</td>
<td>/79</td>
<td>Alpha cronbach</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Method of collection data

The author followed a step by step methodology to achieve the research goals. First of all, a theoretical-practical training of 120 managers of Khuzestan local education authorities was carried out. Following the training activities, a self-assessment process was implemented, using an adapted pro forma approach designed by the researcher. Throughout this process we give them advice of how to fill out the
questionnaire. Data entered into the SPSS 12 and was analysed in with descriptive and inferential (t-test) statistics.

Results and discussion

The mean score revealed by all Khuzestan local education authorities was 346 of 1000, for enables was 285 of 500, and for results was 368 of 500. The distribution is shown in Figure 2. It can be seen that the gap between enables – current and expected was 305/52, between results- current and expected was 368.05 and between total (both enables and results) was current and expected was 673.57.

Table 2: LEA views of Khuzestan education performance in the Third Five-year Development Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Number of sample</th>
<th>Average of current performance of LEA</th>
<th>Average of Expected performance of LEA</th>
<th>Gap between current and expected</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>40.32</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>69.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy &amp; Strategy People</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>40.28</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>49.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>54.77</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>35.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partnership &amp; resources</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>35.01</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>54.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Processes</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>44.20</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>95.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Enablers</strong></td>
<td><strong>84</strong></td>
<td><strong>214.58</strong></td>
<td><strong>500</strong></td>
<td><strong>305.52</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer Results</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>44.66</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>155.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People results</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>26.21</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>63.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Society Results</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>24.32</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>35.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key performance results</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>39.98</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>110.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Results</strong></td>
<td><strong>84</strong></td>
<td><strong>131.95</strong></td>
<td><strong>500</strong></td>
<td><strong>368.05</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total score</strong></td>
<td><strong>84</strong></td>
<td><strong>346.54</strong></td>
<td><strong>1000</strong></td>
<td><strong>673.57</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the model shows process, Customer and performance results are very vital in evaluation of education system performance. In fact these three criteria are essential in all activities of a well-functioning educational organisation. In excellent educational organisation, the management works actively to maintain and promote co-operation and contacts with key customers, while present and future customer needs and expectations are taken into account in strategic planning. In addition, the educational organisation’s operating methods in other evaluation areas (staff, partnerships and resources as well as processes, such as the teaching/learning process) also have a significant bearing on customer results. These are also influenced by the educational organisation’s success in communication, coping with social responsibility, promotion of creativity and innovation and in other institutional processes.

Key performance results should be related to the educational organisation’s basic role as stated in its policy and strategy and to the objectives set while the results of this research revealed that during the third development plan this link was absent.
Figure 2: comparison of current and expected scored of EFQM model (Enables and Results)

Figure 3: comparison of current and expected scored of EFQM model criteria

The collected data indicated that the performance of khouzestan province in relation to enablers and results was considerably poor.
Hypothesis1: the Performances of Education managers in relation to enablers and results was lower than the EFQM standard indexes. \( t=-17.23, df=83, \text{sig}=0.05 \)
Hypothesis2: Performances of Education managers in relation to enablers was lower than the EFQM standard indexes. \( t=-16.59, df=83, \text{sig}=0.05 \).
Hypothesis 3: Performances of Education managers in relation to results was lower than the EFQM standard indexes. \[ t = -26.59, \text{df}=83, \text{sig}=0.05 \]

Hypothesis 4: There is significant differences between enablers and results of performance of managers of education (LEA). \[ t = 16.59, \text{df}=83, \text{sig}=0.05 \]

**Conclusion**

There are some lessons we could get from this research. Firstly, the European model has provided us with a global, systematic and regular analysis of the activities and the results of Khuzestan LEA by comparing them with the criteria of an “Excellence Model”. Secondly, this process has made it possible to make a comparison of Khuzestan LEA, both among themselves and with other tools such as recognized EFQM model.

Thirdly during the third development plan the links between enables and results was weak. In interpretation of these results it should be say that Khuzestan LEA performance in the case of leadership, Policy & Strategy, People, Partnership & resources and Processes was unable to provide a suitable background for improvement of education and secondary schools. Also with regards to the criteria of EFQM model some actions needs to be taken relation to the improvement areas detected in the Khuzestan LEA.

Development of a strategic tool that has the potential to deliver the corporate strategy and to enhance communication and understanding of overall direction and criteria of education system.

alignment of leadership, policies and strategies with the results that are required measurement of actual performance against desired performance

**Reference**


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