AN EMPIRICAL COMPARISON OF THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC MANAGEMENT AND THE EFQM EXCELLENCE MODEL IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

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ABSTRACT:

Purpose: Higher education institutions are now in a new age and VUCA world in which an array of threats and pressures for change are faced. This paper first describes the main forces for higher education reform then considers these forces using two existing models of change. The purpose of this paper is to compare and contrast two practical management models through an empirical analysis of the change processes, tools and their contribution to change management in higher education environments. We chose to compare these two models because they were successfully implemented in higher education institutions, and it would benefit practitioners from both models to learn from the respective practices.
Design/methodology/approach: Two different approaches are adopted: The European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) which is an excellence model and the Socio-Economic Approach to Management (SEAM) which is a transformative intervention model.
Findings: SEAM and EFQM emphasis the development of human potential and not the administration of human resources. EFQM focuses on key improvements depending on the institutional level of maturity and builds teams based on personal profile. What makes SEAM distinctive is the fact that this approach evaluates the effect of organizational dysfunctions using hidden cost methodology in relationship with the individual performance.
Research Limitations: This study is limited to two Lebanese Universities; additional research can be done on wider number of universities.
Practical implications: This paper identifies the success factors of change initiatives through practical management models. The practical implications of this paper are consistent starting with leadership as a major factor contributing to successful change, and the participatory managerial approach resulting in strong personal staff engagement and commitment.
Originality/Value: This paper provides a clear understanding for the implications of practical management models and accentuates the significance of measuring the human contribution in institutions.

Keywords: Organizational Development and Change, Higher Education, EFQM, Socio-economic approach to management, Intervention Research

INTRODUCTION

The topic of managing change for Higher Education institutions has gained momentum in the last decades of the twentieth century. Academic institutions are undergoing rapid and major changes nowadays since they are challenged by turbulent, dynamic and complex internal and external environments. In order for universities to experience success in such environments, there is a need for wise change strategies. In many instances, the survival of the university depends on its clear assessment of the challenges faced, its responsiveness to change, and its strategy implementation for a new direction. Change processes to induce change in order to increase institutional and staff performance to meet stakeholders' expectations are at the heart of this research. Therefore, this research focuses on comparing the successful improving process at two different universities. References will be made on the success factors of change and opportunities for improvement in both models in order to increase their impact.

However, with the Lebanese financial crisis and the COVID-19 outburst, universities, that used to be once a place where people study in proximity, was disrupted (Eddé, 2020). The university experience uses to mean teamwork, group challenges, and lived experiences. Suddenly, this unique ecosystem was hit in its core, creating uncertainty and substantial increase in nature and quantity of challenges to deal with (Times Higher Education , 2020). Management has to transform its management practices and faculty members have to adapt their teaching practices to the new normal.

As much as it is important for organizations to develop, it is difficult to achieve and sustain successful organizational change initiatives. In spite of extraordinary efforts the failure rate of transformational interventions may be high. Practitioners may neither have the experience nor the required information to initiate a change process. Moreover they may not feel the urge for self-development and employees' development in order to improve performance. Hence, there is a need for an intervention to enhance performance in the two contexts.

A review of literature on transformation in higher education provides information about the content of organizational change or the 'what of change'. The literature also describes the change outcomes and the factors related to them in addition to change conditions. However the process of change is not well elaborated (Kezar & Eckel, 2002). For that reason, the researchers aim to understand the process of change by comparing two models. Furthermore, charismatic and visionary leaders, inspiring vision and mission, or aligned policies and procedures (Taylor & Koch, 1996) are the generalized strategies for change. But, engagement of organizational members and participatory management may cause discomfort to leaders as they may not value these practices. Moreover, the change strategies are represented in the literature as isolated strategies and the change actions as distinct actions. However, effective change strategies should be systemic, synchronized, and symbiotic. SEAM and EFQM conceptual frameworks view transformational processes systemically, work on synchronizing employees' efforts and on involving them in the change process. Therefore, this research aims to describe two successful change models applied to Higher Education Institutions (HEI). Each model has its particular successful tools and processes that can be beneficial to be adopted by the respective practitioners.

This paper first explains the principles of the EFQM excellence model and the Socio-Economic Approach to Management (SEAM). Second, the implementation and evaluation of these transformational models are described in two cases and important lessons are gained. These models were applied in two Lebanese private universities and are classified in three steps: situation analysis, intervention and impact. SEAM and EFQM are significant scientific approaches to consultancy and both have records of achievements. This paper describes both frameworks to explain the why and the how of transformation experiences. The similarities and differences show the diversity of consultancy approaches beside the successful factors in two projects, each with distinctive merits and strengths. SEAM and EFQM are guided by change principles and processes. These models suggest that successful transformational consultancy should be participatory and incorporated into an organization through a sequential process of negotiation, diagnosis (listen, observe and understand), persuasion, commitment, approach, implementation and evaluation. These processes value most the people and succeed to motivate organizational members' for change since effective organizational change depends on the development of the human potential. EFQM and SEAM change model suggest that organizational change emerges through multiple baby steps and project based change initiatives.

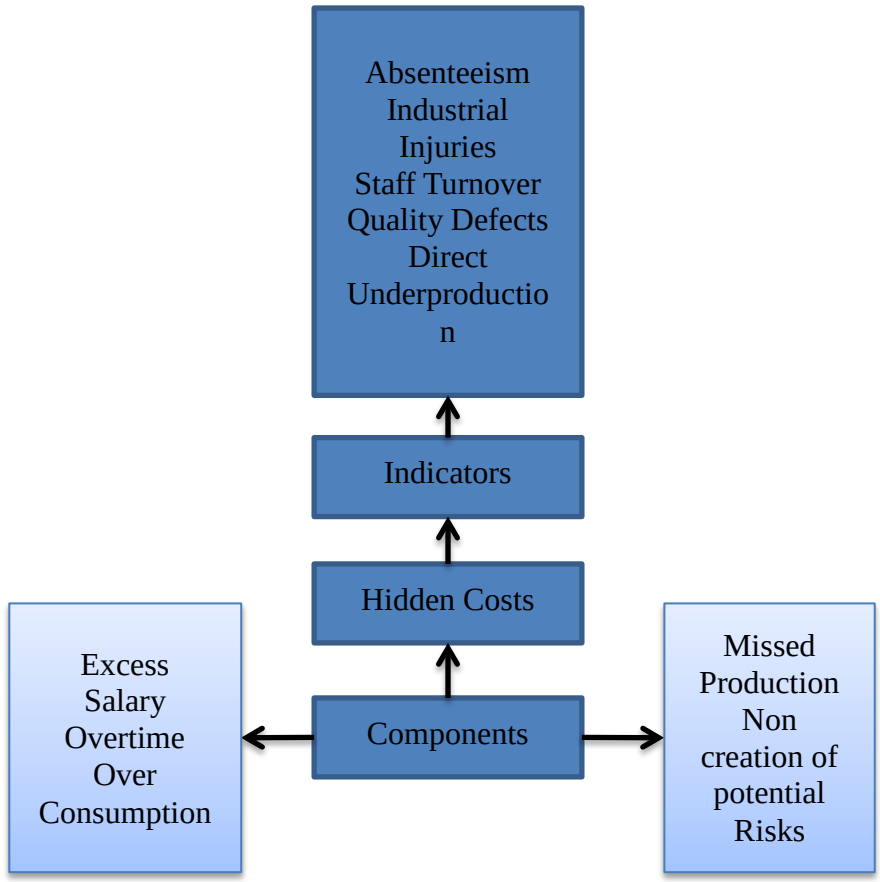
SEAM AND EFQM SYSTEMIC APPROACH TO MANAGEMENT CONSULTANCY

This paper reviews and compares two approaches to management consultancy the Socio Economic Approach to Management (SEAM) and the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM). These approaches have been applied in global and international contexts and this section reviews their origins and processes.

SEAM change process

Similar to all effective research methodologies, SEAM approach has developed over the years and is still evolving. From its origins in early 1970s, successive experiments, interventions and research projects have been carried out in the ISEOR (Socio-Economic Institute of Firms and Organizations) research center created by Professor Henri Savall. The Socio-economic approach has dual focus, the economic and the social performance (Savall & Zardet, 2008). The inevitable interaction between organizations' structures and employees' behavior is a driving force essential to the production of goods or services (Savall H. , 2003). Productivity and high quality social performance are simultaneous and should be measured in economic terms. The interaction between structure and behavior causes dysfunctions (Savall H. , 2003). The dysfunctions are classified in six categories: working conditions, work organization, time management, communication-coordination-cooperation, integrated training and strategic implementation. These dysfunctions result in economic inefficiencies identified as hidden costs (Savall & Zardet, 2008).The five categories of hidden costs are: absenteeism, industrial accidents, personnel rotation, poor product or service quality and direct productivity losses (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Hidden performance costs evaluation (SEAM)



The Socio-economic approach to management is an effective and systemic approach to organizational change (Savall, Zardet, & Bonnet, 2008). SEAM intervention process aims to reveal dysfunctions, design and implement solutions in partnership with the organizational members. The diagnosis phase is the initial phase that is based on the individual and collective interviews. The intervener researcher listens instead of directing questions. The purpose of the interviews is to obtain information on the current situation of the organization in order to identify dysfunctions. A rigorous interview analysis procedure is followed and correlations among witness sentence are charted to uncover patterns. The breaking down of information gathered during interviews follows tree form structure (Savall & Zardet, 2008). The analysis brings together the field-note quotes or witness sentences as key ideas then summarize them in pivotal ideas. The rich information collected from interviews describes a variety and interconnected social relations. Hence, the witness statements collected and classified are mirrored to the organizational members. This phase ends with the preparation of a written report that is the 'expert advice'.

The steps of the intervention start with conducting in-depth interviews (40 to 75 minutes each). On average 15 significant witness statements, per interview, are

selected. These field-note quotes are categorized and analyzed. In order to stimulate change and validate the researcher work, the data compiled and categorized is presented to all interviewees. By this phenomenon of the "mirror effect", the actors recognize the dysfunctions and either confirm or reject them (Savall, Zardet, & Bonnet, 2008). The next steps are:

- The Expert Opinion: Researcher's interpretation
- Hidden cost computation and fostering change
- The Socio-Economic Projects: Mobilizing teams
- Tools implementation to facilitate change and measure performance improvement

The project management of change and innovation in organizations requires from the intervener to rely on the skills, competencies and involvement of actors. Therefore understanding the interests of the various partners engaged in the implementation of change is necessary. Moreover the system dynamics and the interactions between members are also important. SEAM is a method of management that approach change and innovation as a process that is gradually built up, and that involves the actors and defines strategies for change. SEAM seeks to create supportive environments where the human potential, talent and energy can be released (Savall H. , 2010).

EFQM change process

To maintain its legitimacy, EFQM requests from industry experts, assessors, consultants, award winners and researchers to review the model, which is adjusted regularly in order to integrate various management concepts and methodologies. The last EFQM model 2020 was introduced in 2019, after an intense co-creation process with the various stakeholders. The EFQM 2020 model take into consideration the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the European values and business ethics (Fonseca, Amaral, & Oliveira, 2021). As per José Manuel Barroso, President, European Commission (2004-2014) "*since its creation in 1992, the EFQM has also guided many organizations, from both the public and private sectors, to improve productivity and efficiency and to develop their human capital*" (EFQM, 2013). Herman van Rompuy, President of the European Council said "*The EFQM Excellence Model provides a framework that encourages the cooperation, collaboration and innovation that we will need to ensure this goal is achieved*." The EFQM Excellence Model provides a holistic view of the organization and it can be used to determine how the different methods fit together and complement each other. Since its creation, the EFQM model is internationally recognized as a structure that supports organization in change management and performance improvement. The model is generic and application to any type and size of organization (Fonseca et al., 2021).

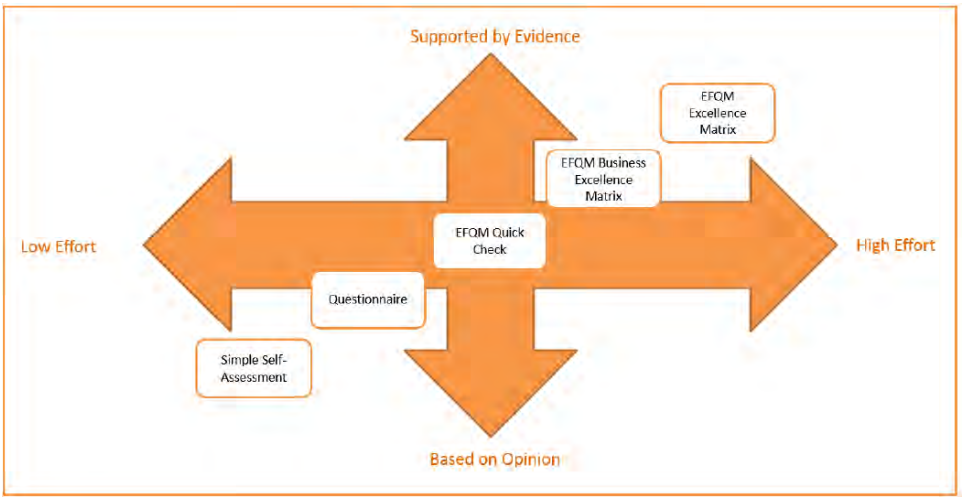
The EFQM Excellence model provides a good vision of how an organization should work together to deliver successful outcomes for both the business and the customer. In the EFQM model the processes are part of the identified enablers and the effectiveness of a company's processes is important in delivering successful outcomes (Oakland, 2014). The EFQM Excellence model implementation aims to identify strength and opportunities for improvement. Through using the EFQM Excellence model organizations design and implement approaches and assess their results in order to achieve and sustain outstanding levels of performance that meet or exceed the expectations of all their stakeholders (EFQM, 2013).

The EFQM model has different self-assessment tools that proved that it is possible to achieve sustainable development through the implementation of the model (Aryanasl, Ghodousi, Arjmandi, & Mansouri, 2016). The EFQM model contains a set of guidelines that can be used by the organizations for self-assessment and improvement. These are based on (1) stakeholders orientation, (2) customer orientation, and (3) the cause-effect relation between the results and enablers of change (Manresa & Escobar Rivera, 2021).

The self-assessment is the initial phase that would allow an organization to discern clearly its strengths and areas in which improvements can be made and culminates in planned improvement actions that are then monitored for progress (EFQM, 2013). EFQM offers five different self-assessment tools to be used depending on the maturity of each organization, the level of effort and the available evidence for the approaches (Figure 2). These tools can be used with various potential approaches in order to carry out the self-assessment:

- Workshop guided by an EFQM assessor
- Surveys, questionnaires
- Interviews
- Activity or process audit
- Simulation

Figure 2 EFQM self-assessment tools (EFQM, 2013)

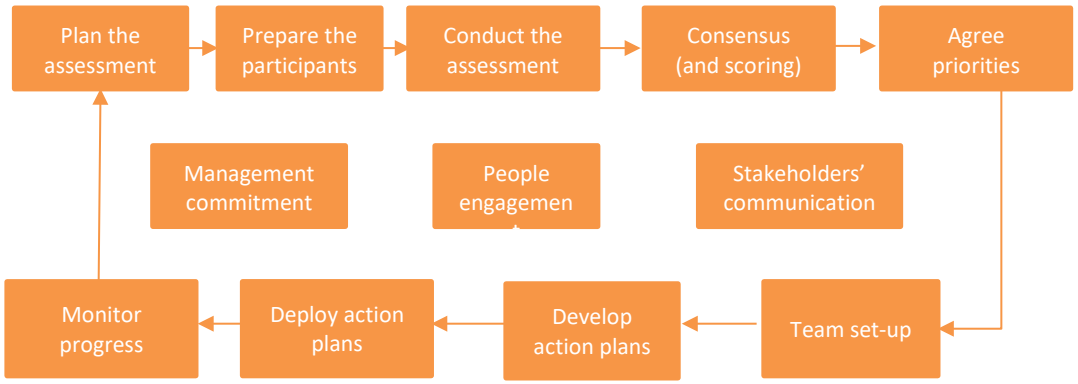


The organization can choose the method that best suits her. A scoring chart is also provided in order to establish quantitative measure of performance against the model and gaining consensus on the issues facing the organization.

The steps of the intervention (Figure 3) start with creating two teams of management and areas' representatives to conduct two separate parts of the self-assessment. Following both teams join in a workshop to present their results and to discuss them with the other team, this process is facilitated by an EFQM assessor. Once strengths and opportunities for improvements are agreed upon, improvements are organized and prioritized using the feasibility and importance matrix (EFQM, 2013). The next steps are:

- Defining an action plan
- Setting up a team for each project in the action plan
- Defining the approach for the improvement by the team
- Deploying the approach
- Assessing the results of the approach and recommending improvements.

Figure 3 EFQM improvement implementation process



The definition, deployment and assessment of the approaches require from the intervener to rely on the competencies of the team members assigned by the organization. Additionally EFQM focuses on the satisfaction of all stakeholders, for that each team should map its stakeholders and identify their needs. The continuous organizational self-assessment *will allow realignment of the principal driving motors to focus on the critical success factors and continuous improvement, to maintain a balanced and powerful general thrust which moves the whole organization towards its mission.* (Oakland, 2014)

SEAM AND EFQM PHASES

This section is based on actual interventions and has been written with a focus on practical application. The organizational theories and best practices that were adapted are from the higher education environments. The results are specific to the context and the intervention objective is to help the practitioners to respond to the actual internal and external challenges. The experiences gained from both approaches are systematically recorded and the results are identified.

The first phase is creating the climate for change and building partnership. Effective organizational change is heavily reliant on the engagement and buy-in of the department head and management team. They make the decision to conduct the change process and to build a new workplace culture. They also appoint an excellence leader to support and impulse the change in the department and to give support to the staff in the change process. The contribution of all actors and the team work spirit are also primordial to the achievement of the intervention goal. For that the first step is to introduce the team to the models principles and get their engagement.

SEAM diagnosis phase entails identifying the need for change and developing the case for change. This phase identifies dysfunctions through interviews with all the members. The researcher classifies witness statements under five themes. The results are represented to all in their own words. This phase stimulates change and validates the intervener work. Based on the discussions, everything expressed or not expressed will be interpreted by the researcher. The data analyzed will be communicated by written report to the leadership of the office. The dysfunctions presented during the "mirror effect" guide the members to analyze their own practices and undergo a path of continuous self-reflection leading potentially to systematic change.

Similar to SEAM diagnosis phase, EFQM second phase is the self-assessment, where participants identify and get into a consensus on the improvement priorities. The self-assessment tool used was Quick Check (EFQM, 2013). This phase brings the department leaders together to discuss strengths and potential improvements, the group was able to:

a. Summarize the approaches currently in place
b. Determine the current maturity level of the approach and the impact this approach has on strategic goals
c. Take ownership of relevant improvements

The EFQM assessor guides the group into a self-reflection and analysis to identify their situation and identify their needs for change. The resulting self-assessment document is written by the team members as per their own perception and needs for change. The assessor does not intervene in the self-assessment document but he helps them formulate it.

The essence of the third phase is participative goals setting. These goals have to be SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and time-based). The management and employees agree to the office objectives and understand what they need to do in order to achieve them. This phase starts by creating the improvements' teams; they are the ones responsible of conceiving and documenting the action plan. SEAM intervener and the actors identify the socio-economic projects. It is argued that when people feel left out of strategy sessions despite being qualified to participate, they become demotivated. Curiosity in working on a solution is its own reward (Waytz & Mason, 2013). Hence, people engagement in the definition of the approach is key for the success of the project. Ideally, when employees themselves have been involved with the goal setting and choosing the course of action to be followed by them, they are more likely to fulfill their responsibilities. This phase ends with a development of a plan that details priorities, execution dates, resources needed and responsibilities.

Equally important function is measurement. The introduction of indicators (qualitative and quantitative) must be achieved in a way that supports and extends the idea of participatory management approach. Encouraging, engaging and empowering everyone will increase the ability of the office to pursue the best practice path to performance improvement.

Once the team is set up the EFQM model follows the RADAR Methodology to help writing and implementing the improvements (EFQM, 2013):

- Define the improvement objective and determine the current position (RESULT)
- Analyze & identify the root cause and what to do about it (APPROACH)
- Implement the improvement (DEPLOYMENT)

- Learn and improve along the way (ASSESS and REFINE)

The desired RESULT should have an objective, a measurement for its success, additionally it should have SMART objectives (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-bound).
The APPROACH should start with the issue they are trying to address, how it was identified, what are they planning to do about it and why.
The DEPLOYMENT identifies how the approach will be implemented, where, when and by whom.
The ASSESSMENT and REFINEMENT describes how the monitor of the progress against the plan will happen, the monitor against the objectives and how learning points are identified and recorded. The assessment will be done in a continuous base by the management team with a frequency agreed on by both parties. During these meetings monitoring will be recorded and needed support will be given by the management team to the execution team.

SEAM AND EFQM TOOLS

SEAM and EFQM engage all actors in the change process, synchronizes actors' efforts and aligns strategic goals. SEAM and EFQM models incorporate management tools to facilitate change and help institutions overcome barriers to implementing change. These tools integrate the general steering vision with the role of all working units. This is an important lesson related to successful implementation of change as it is a method of building and developing progressively and collectively new behaviors and new operating rules. Indeed, if the change does not motivate the actors in motion, it runs into passivity, distrust or hostility and has little chance of success. The innovative interventions reduce the negativity perceived by actors and resistance to change.

SEAM Tools

The Socio-economic tools allow the implementation of concrete actions for improving performance. It helps actors to manage change as they develop their managerial skills through training and personalized assistance. Through the six management tools (Competency Grid (CG), Time Management (TM), Strategic and Operational Piloting Logbook (PLB), Internal External Strategic Action Plan (IESAP), Priority Action Plan (PAP), Periodically Negotiated Activity Contract (PNAC) and concepts (Integral/Horivert Diagnosis, Root Cause Analysis, Mirror Effect, Communication Coordination and collaboration (3Cs), Hidden Cost, Hidden Potential, Baskets, Socio Economic Projects) (Savall, Zardet, & Bonnet, 2008) developed by the team of ISEOR,
For example, the Periodically Negotiated Activity Contract (PNAC) is a key management tool in SEAM. It is an improvement contract of socioeconomic performance signed between each employee of the company and his/her direct manager. The manager speaks for the company by delegation of authority from the CEO. He/she commits to bring better structures of activity, specific means best adapted and also an additional compensation to the employee. All these are self-financed by reducing hidden costs, that is to say recycling into added value. The worker commits himself/herself to develop more effective and productive behavior, improve immediate results and get a better involvement into creation of

potential. The PNAC has been conceived of in order to allow a certain degree of safety for employees while preserving the competitiveness of the enterprise. It is also an essential tool for developing a feeling of personal self-achievement and satisfaction, which rises from the recognition by the hierarchy of the performance achieved by the person, quite as important as the study of his/her personal assessment, his/her personal contribution, his/her objectives or his/her wishes of professional evolution.

Another example of SEAM management tools is the Competency Grid. It constitutes a genuine tool for explaining the internal procedures, answering the issue of evolution and change. It makes the changes more acceptable to the workers. It avoids incarnational resolutions whose implementation would depend upon a large collection of norms, running counter to flexibility and sustainable efficiency. The competencies and human potential constitute the first strategic lever for a sustainable improvement of economic performance. One of the fertile ways consists of developing the implementation of human competencies, instead of simply accumulating more or less virtual and volatile skills (Savall & Zardet, 2005).

SEAM highlights not only the role of each actor in the university, but also leads to a deeper awareness in the modes of management and the need to engage stakeholders. The participatory approach aims at engaging actors in the transformation process to lessen the resistance effect and enable change achievements. However, the personal conflicts, lack of coordination and unhealthy competition between the institution actors may result in opposition and a delay in the change process. In order to avoid strong resistance, SEAM socio-economic projects are built on the basis of teamwork. Mobilizing people in groups alleviate many of the conflicts and disagreements through more frequent communication and collaboration. In order to reap the benefits of collaboration and insure successful results these teams need to have specific objectives as well as “head and heart driven actions”. The mobilization of individuals and forming working groups creates dynamism and flexibility within the overall rigid structure. Employees’ commitment and engagement through a negotiation process are the main elements for a successful transformation. Negotiation creates a common ground between actors and stimulates actions and it is vital for fruitful cooperation. Hence the challenges of engaging employees and enhancing communication, coordination and coordination are tackled.

EFQM Tools

The European Foundation for Quality Management model gives guidelines for actions to improve the organization’s performance. The EFQM training program as well as the EFQM certified assessors help the organization’s leaders to develop their skills.

The EFQM 2020 model (Figure 4) calls for new mindsets, disruptive approaches, and collaborative leadership to ensure that organizations can simultaneously manage both change and operations with increased agility and improved levels of performance. Furthermore, the EFQM 2020 model is framed in the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and European business ethics values. The EFQM 2020 model comprehends three different dimensions, direction (why), execution (how), and results (what), with a total of seven criteria (and twenty-three

criterion parts, plus two results Criteria) and the RADAR (Result, Approach, Deploy, Assess, and Refine) assessment tool.

Figure 4 EFQM Model

EFQM 2020 criterion:

A- Direction
   1. Purpose, Vision and Strategy
   2. Organizational Culture and Leadership

B- Execution
   3. Engaging Stakeholders
   4. Creating Sustainable Value
   5. Drive Performance and Transformation

C- Results
   6. Stakeholders Perceptions
   7. Strategic and Operational Performance

In each of the seven criteria EFQM identifies criterion part, and in each criterion part there are Guidance Points for the company on what to do. For example:

1. Purpose, Vision and Strategy

1.3. Understanding the Ecosystem, Own Capabilities and Major Challenge

1.3.a. Researches and understands the ecosystem, including megatrend implications, and the consequences of it on the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and Global Compact ambitions.

EFQM model 2020 is a rethought version that emphasis on transformation and organizational performance. Additionally, EFQM increased its focus on sharing good practices and the use of online tools to connect international assessors and organizations by creating two important digital platform AssessBase and KnowledgeBase. EFQM also emphasized on training the different stakeholders on using these tools and promoted their use. EFQM also increased the focus on the sustainability by integrating the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the model. They represent stakeholders needs and the contribution to social, economic, and environmental sustainability and development (Fonseca & Carvalho, 2019), promoting the sustainable strategy, execution, and assessment (Barbier & Burgess, 2019).

SEAM AND EFQM CONVERGENCES AND SPECITIES

The topic of performance management is at the forefront of the current discussions among business leaders and human resource professionals. The intent of an improvement process is recognized to drive performance and support individual development. However, the value achieved through performance management programs is questionable. It is argued that "up to seventy percent of all change initiatives fail" (Blanchard, 2010, p. 44). Therefore, the success factors for a management consultancy intervention are highlighted below.

The management tools facilitated change because of two main functions. A political function through cooperation, synergy and training; this function acted against collective dispersion. The other function is technical through scheduling and meeting of resources; it acts against the individual dispersion. Moreover, these tools integrate the general steering vision with the role of all working units. The participatory and directive method proved to be effective. This is the second important lesson related to successful implementation of change as it is a method of building and developing progressively and collectively new behaviors and new operating rules. Indeed, if the change does not motivate the actors in motion, it runs into passivity, distrust or hostility and has little chance of success. These innovative interventions reduced the negativity perceived by actors, in spite of the negativity in the university climate (lack of planning, monitoring and evaluation and accountability).

It is important to note that effective leaders have a unique part to play in the transformation process. The leader needs to acknowledge his role as the decision maker who will support the change initiative. The leader acts as a champion who would fight for the change initiative to remain alive. He is willing to use his political power to make it happen. The leader of change is a role model, employees look up to. He demonstrates the behaviors and attitudes that are expected of everyone else. Employees watch leaders for consistency between words and actions to see if they should believe the change is really going to happen.

What makes SEAM distinctive is the fact that this approach seeks to develop the human potential, improve performance and hence reduce hidden costs. Socio-economic interventions have shown that whenever a company finds itself

confronted with a given problem, it only involves visible costs and ignores its hidden costs. Savall describes this behavior as an ostrich-like. In this context, 'to act like an ostrich' means to ignore problems that could have a significant impact on the organizations' bottom line. Organizations acting like ostriches will multiply the hidden costs if they do not "get their heads out of the sand" and act to eliminate the root causes of dysfunctions, because hidden costs can be reduced only when they become visible. After the computation of the dysfunctions' financial impact, the organization commits to a prescription to the root cause. Human activities in organization are often associated with the concept of performance. Hence, organizations design complex performances metric systems and are increasingly spending resources to implement control systems. However, organizations may not identify that these control systems can also generate dysfunctionalities and hidden costs and potential. From this perspective, if the control system is not accepted and understood correctly by the actors, it results in loss and not productivity. SEAM evaluates the effect of organizational dysfunctions using hidden cost methodology in relationship with the individual performance.

EFQM particularity is in the maturity levels for the organization and for the approaches it manages, and though using different tools to optimize them, another particularity is the engagement of management and teams in different moments. Organizational improvement is not only about putting in place approaches; it is also about continuous improvement and maturing existing ones to a point where they are sustainable and repeatable. The maturity level, make long term projects and difficult tasks seem attainable and it focuses on key improvements depending on the institutional level of maturity. The engagement of management in the self-assessment promote the understanding of how different processes interact across the department (and organization as a whole). The management role in assessment and follow up increase the strategic importance of the projects and success potential. The teams' autonomy in proposing approaches and implementing them increases their satisfaction (Waytz & Mason, 2013). The integrative assessment process and team members building based on personal profile is key to breaking the silo in the department.

Another major feature in performance improvement processes is the selection and use of measures and indicators. The performance indicators selected in this project represent the factors that lead to improved student services and operational performance. The set of the key indicators were tied to students, stakeholders, and/or the office performance requirements. Moreover, achieving operational efficiency and sustainably require working with motivated and engaged actors. Therefore, SEAM and EFQM alike focus on the development of human potential and not the administration of human resources. It builds an environment that encourages creativity similar to a greenhouse where ideas get seeded and flourish and it emphasizes the role of the individual versus the system in the performance improvement process. SEAM and EFQM both create a new culture characterized by its agility, autonomy and empowerment. This intervention methodology examines the fundamental principles of performance management and constantly reconstructs them to meet the current changing demands.

Agility and innovation are critical to university's success, and student affairs must offer the flexible services today's student-customers demand. Higher education industry, like almost all other industry, is driven by the SMAC (social, mobile, analytics and cloud) technologies. These technologies affect the way HE players

engage their students and community partners. The situation analysis was simple, but the hard part was the passage to the act of transformation. The intervener facilitated the process and the socio-economic tools encouraged actors to think proficiently. The units' operations are currently more effective, collaborative and innovative since their efforts are integrated more strategically within the divisions and across the institution.

CONCLUSION

In this changing environment, higher education institutions are being more and more aware of the importance of systematically understanding, planning, and implementing change. Well-identified and implemented change strategies could be the lever of success for many universities in this changing environment. It can even be said that, the university's survival could depend on a correct internal self-assessment in light of external opportunities and challenges. It is equally important to identify the right change, to implement, and to get people to interiorize it (Burnes, 2004a, 2004b). We can say that change consist of strategy definition, resources allocation and people commitment. SEAM and EFQM interveners serve as facilitators of the change process. These change models addressed the dysfunctions, analyzed the root-causes, and promoted a culture of engagement to select, design and implement solutions. It is important to state that the personal commitment of the leader and the actor's engagement contributed to the achievement of the goals and its success.

The human potential is a key component in the higher education sector and they are the most important input. For effective change implementation, universities have to work on developing the human potential and participation toward the goals of action and organizational change. The value of people in organizations has been ignored in the classical management books; however, in the closing years of the twentieth century management recognizes that the human capital is the only economic component with the inherent power to generate value. The human capital observed as the human potential is the only source of sustainable value creation (Savall H. , 2010). One of the main reasons for change strategy failure is the lack of employee engagement since employees tend to resist change, thus, it will not be easy to alter their thinking nor changing their behavior. Employees are powerful in organizations and they decide whether they want to cooperate and be engaged (Savall H. , 2010). To improve organizational effectiveness, people should be motivated to perform at high level. Each of the presented models have its unique methods and tools that were proven successful. Universities can consider combining these two models in developing their unique best fit version based on their organizational needs while focusing both on the strategic and operational changes as well as developing human potential.

This study was limited to two Lebanese universities; additional research can be done on wider number of universities. Additionally, another study can investigate all approaches used by Lebanese universities in order to define what works better in the sector. This study examined the effectiveness of the use of EFQM and SEAM models. An additional study may examine the use of EFQM and SEAM over a number of years.

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