

A Proposal of an Excellence and a Performance Appraisal Model Dedicated to Higher Education Institutions

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Abstract

The current research intends to provide a clear understanding of the process of appraising performance inside institutions. In order to alleviate the obstacles that could prevent the achievement of a valuable performance, appraisal in Higher education institutions in Iraq, the main models of excellence that are highly recognized in other international contexts were considered and in-depth depicted for the purpose of proposing a similar model that could be adapted to the University of Al-Qadisiyah affiliated to the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research in Iraq. The axes suggested in the proposed model could support directors and managers of this university, or any other higher education institution, in the fulfilment of a superior performance and excellence.

Keywords: Models of excellence, higher education institutions, performance appraisal/assessment, the University of Al-Qadisiyah.

INTRODUCTION

In developing countries, and more specifically in some African and Arabic regions, the administrative systems of institutions have not yet witnessed a real insightful transformation that allows them to be highly efficient and performant in order to adapt to the worldwide changes and the international new trends. In fact, in such a dynamic environment which is so turbulent and volatile, institutions should be sufficiently resilient to cope with the tremendous developments and the great challenges at all the levels. To do so, those institutions have to embrace modernity and development and follow modern scientific methods that allow them to continuously evaluate their performance in order to enhance it. In this perspective, the present research intends to propose a higher education excellence model that is basically found on a performance evaluation system. Such a model,

that is basically developed after considering other international models, could be adopted and applied by higher education or service institutions that pertain to other developing countries, e.z. those which are located in some Arabic regions. In other words, the higher education excellence model suggested by here has a common ground with other previous international models. Nevertheless, it is not completely similar to any of them. Moreover, few additional dimensions, not previously found in any of the previous models, have been suggested in the present model applied to Al-Qadisiyah University, located in Iraq.

□ The research problem, objectives, and questions

In developing countries which seek to keep pace with the movement of the scientific administrative development, most institutions may lack scientific global curricula that serve

to the development of their administrative and technical work. To achieve a remarkable success, those institutions should rely on modern management concepts, including the European model of quality, the American and Japanese models, and other insightful excellence and performance appraisal models. All those models may contribute to solve many of the problems suffered by the institutions that are administratively backward or technically deficient in terms of administration, such as the Iraqi ones.

Therefore, the current study seeks to propose the application of a performance evaluation model for specific managers, and distinguished leaders of higher education institutions, considering the University of Al-Qadisiyah as a suitable place for our empirical research. Such a model would be consistent with the reality of the state of those institutions and has the ability to reveal their level of excellence and indicate whether the defects in their performance need to be fixed or not.

Accordingly, the research problem of the present research was formulated on the basis of the following questions:

- Is the current model applicable for universities and is it possible to adapt it to the university of Al-Qadisiyah, in order to assessing its performance?
- Is the model suggested in the present investigation suitable for the specific work environment of the institution under study, with all its characteristics?
- Is it possible through the application of the model proposed in the present study to assess excellence of higher education institutions, by upgrading their performance?
- Is there any linkage between the research model proposed in the present study and the other international models already proposed in the same perspective, but applied in other contexts?
- Are there any benefits from applying the excellence performance evaluation and measurement model?

□ The originality of research

The originality of the present research can be stressed through the normative, scientific and practical model that it proposes, and which is applicable in service, economic or production institutions. It is also of utmost importance to highlight that the current research intends to provide a clear vision and a conceptual framework built on the most important international models that were the cornerstone of what is practical for the higher education model of excellence proposed hereby. It will be also interesting to notice that such a model differs from the previous ones through the multiplicity and diversity of the dimensions of performance appraisal that it involves and which enable the readership to access to an enriched amount of information on how to enhance the excellence of higher education institutions.

□ Research method, Data collection, and procedures

In order to collect information regarding the conceptual aspect of the present research, a case study was conducted. Arab and other foreign sources (books, dissertations, theses, research, journals), the Internet, etc have been purposely consulted. As for the practical aspect, a checklist was also adopted.

The research extended during the time period from 1/1/2018 to 1/1/2023 and the case study was undertaken at Al-Qadisiyah University, which pertains to the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research.

PERFORMANCE EVALUATION AND RELATED CONCEPTS: DEFINITIONS AND MEANINGS

It can be said that the art of performance management and its evaluation appeared coinciding with the emergence of the industrial revolution and advanced military wars in the world at the beginning of the last century, but it went through different stages at the level of intellectual depth and methodological rooting because of its importance in the fields of life,

and some transmitted knowledge showed what supports the content of that.

The development that the world has witnessed in the field of performance management and oversight in recent years and the complexity in the business environment can be considered an incentive for all institutions to review their performance and look for ways to diagnose their strengths, increase their effectiveness and benefit from them as much as possible, and point out their weaknesses and address them and turn them into points that help them in Improving its performance to keep pace with developments and changes, and this is done by following scientific methods in analyzing and evaluating its performance accurately, these developments that occur at the level of performance, at the level of control, and at the level of development in corruption mechanisms And corruption, since corruption has recently become a systematic phenomenon, and it has its tools and methods that it constantly develops to protect itself from falling under the hands of justice.

2.1. Main definitions related to performance

Performance is an important indicator of what is produced by the processes that occur within the institution (outputs), and Al-Abedi (2016, p. 81) defined it as “the final outcome that resulted from all operations and procedures inside and outside the institution, depending on the institution’s ownership of resources, benefiting from positively affecting factors and challenging negative influences, enlightened by its vision striving to achieve its mission and targeted goals”.

2.2. The importance of performance evaluation and its main benefits for stakeholders

The concept of performance evaluation appeared for the first time in the modern era in the US Army during World War I 1914, as the military leaders were the first to use it, and the institutions did not take it until the late twenties of the last century. (Ashmawy, 2014, p. 49; Siddiq, 2012, p. 212).

INTOSAI International has referred to performance assessment as “an independent

and objective examination of government actions, systems, programs, or institutions that relate to one or more than three aspects, namely efficiency, effectiveness, and economics, aiming at developing them” (INTOSAI, Standard 3000, Parag 1.1)

It appears therefore that performance evaluation is a scientific and a practical approach that is applied inside organizations to know how to attain their strategic goals, through the coverage of all the managerial and analytical levels within those companies. By doing so, they can also continuously improve their objectives’ achievement.

In other words, performance evaluation gives the possibility of judging whether or not the institution has achieved its objectives. It helps the institution to take the corrective measures based on the feedbacks that contribute to amending and formulating its plans and implementation procedures. Such measures could lead to a revision of the organization’s mission in order to reach its vision (Al-Kinani, 2017, p. 485). In the same vein, Al-Khuzami (1999, p. 189) argued that performance evaluation is a key tool of management that enables decision-makers/leaders to reach excellence in performance. Corporate performance evaluation is then one of the targeted and necessary processes which intend to identify the strengths and weaknesses/points that need development in the light of specific criteria related to quality, planning and development (Abu Daqqa, Dajani, 2011, p. 8). For Sinclair & Zairi (1995, p.1) and Al-Karkhi (2015, p. 127-129), the comprehensiveness and continuity of the evaluation process should be highlighted, in order to achieve the goal of an integrative evaluation. Al-Hiti (2008) added that performance evaluation is not an end in itself, but rather a means to reach several goals, such as reviewing the core activities of enterprise management (Al-Mobaideen, 2013, p. 689)

From the aforementioned considerations, we can deduce that performance evaluation is an effective, efficient, and economic process that works to demonstrate the institution's ability to reach its desired goals by investing its

resources in all the activities, operations, and procedures, after positively interacting with their corresponding internal/external stakeholders. Through a benchmarking process, a comparison between financial and non-financial indicators is conducted and deviation ratios are highlighted.

The importance of performance evaluation is then evident. As pointed out by Al-Khatib (2003, p. 34), Siyam (2010, p. 45-46), Abu Hatab (2009, p. 18), Nelly & Thomas (2002, p. 5), and Mikol (2003), it enables to:

- (1) recognize the extent to which the institution can efficiently exploit its available resources and capabilities.
- (2) assess the ability of the institution to achieve its goals or not.
- (3) better understand its integrated administrative process.
- (4) provide a ground that helps in making administrative decisions through their reliance on correct and realistic facts when making decisions.
- (5) find out the reasons that led to the decline in performance, if any, and to suggest accordingly the appropriate solutions.
- (6) offer the opportunity to review and reconsider the work/operating systems.
- (7) contribute to improving work relations in the institution.
- (8) help managers reinforce what needs to be done in the future and the correct application of the idea of: "You cannot manage what you can't measure"

Likewise, Khanjar (2016, p. 26) explains that the importance of performance evaluation could be depicted by "the useful and accurate information it provides to managers about the reality of the institution's performance, to help it make the necessary decisions to upgrade the quality of its outputs, as well as to improve the course of operations in the event of their deviation from what was planned". In fact, for Al-Bahadli (2017, p. 25), performance evaluation represents "the real indicator of the

extent of commitment of the institutions' departments and branches to continuous improvement in all their activities to achieve their goals". Based on what was mentioned above, additional other points that reflect the importance of performance evaluation could be generated as follows:

- (1) assessing and sensing the institution's real capabilities and their role in developing the future policies and strategies that alter the reality in a way that improves performance.
- (2) activating the role of feedbacks which enlighten the whole picture of corporate performance for decision makers.
- (3) enabling each institution to answer the following questions:

Why does performance still get faltered, although there are material, human and financial resources as well as logistical support?

Why do results remain poor despite the existence of higher degrees, competencies, experiences?

Do the services provided by the organization meet the ambitions, or are they rather suspected to be non-existent, despite government support and exaggerated expenditures for each specific context?

It appears therefore that the performance evaluation process could also play an important role in combating the financial and administrative corruption. To do so, the distribution of power and the responsibilities of those who are qualified for it should be reformed, after considering the division of the organizational structure of the institution represented by its responsible centers and the development of its administrative structures.

The statements mentioned above go in the same vein of what was revealed by Al-Nassar (2012, p. 2) in the light of the great developments that the world is experiencing at all the levels (e.z. political, economic, technological). Indeed, for this scholar, "starting a successful and an effective administrative reform process needs in advance to assess the real institutional

performance, because identifying the performance of government institutions through their evaluation helps those in charge of the administrative reform process by identifying the real situation of these institutions and their need for reform. They could therefore develop the plans and strategies that are necessary for the administrative reform process. In other words, the results of a real assessment of the public institutional performance are to be used for the acceleration of the pace of the administrative reform process”.

2.3. Institutional performance appraisal

The leading institutions, which seek to fight against inefficiency, governance and other management related issues/challenges, have the tendency to begin to deal with performance control in a completely different way than it was in the past. Indeed, these institutions try to set new standards and mechanisms that could be updated to enable them to monitor performance and to develop their tools/methods in detecting an imbalanced performance. One of the most important methodologies is basically found on the institutional performance evaluation and improvement. Through a case study, and a broad analysis of the new trends in the scientific research, we noticed the possibility of developing novel mechanisms and methods, as well as modern and proactive methodologies that are dedicated to review the performance evaluation process, and some of its related concepts (e.z. its importance, objectives, faced difficulties, and required steps for its success).

STEPS OF PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

Most researchers investigated the interrelated and sequential steps of performance evaluation, which work and depend on each other in an integrated manner. As asserted by Al-Shaaban and Al-Abaj (2014, p. 271-272), those main steps encompass:

(1) Determining the evaluation requirements and objectives.

(2) Choosing the appropriate method(s) for training supervisors on evaluation.

(3) Discussing the methods for evaluating and setting the prior criteria for comparison.

(4) Presenting and analyzing the results of evaluating and making the administrative decisions.

(5) Developing the prospective plans for future performance development.

As for Hamzawy (2013, p.15), a practical vision for the steps of performance evaluation could be suggested, as shown in Figure (2) as follows:

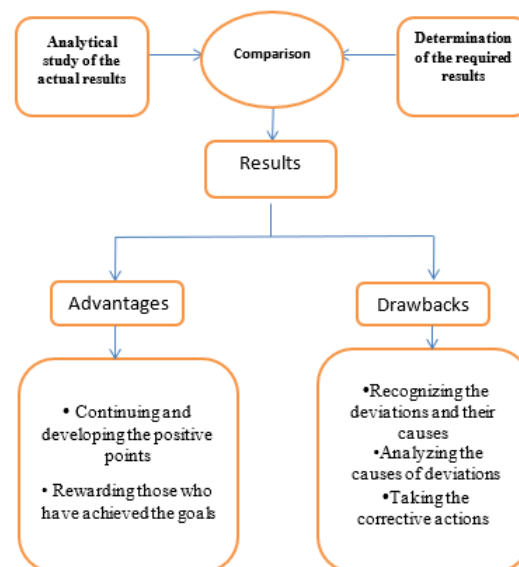


Figure 2. Key Steps of performance appraisal

Source: Hamzawy, Mohamed Sayed, (2013), Performance Measurement in Contemporary Institutions and Institutions. Research during the Conference on Performance Measurement in Security Work. Naif University for Security Sciences).

Similarly, Al-Zubaidi et al. (2016: 231-232) and Sabrina (2015, p. 43-45) who agreed on the steps of the performance evaluation process, presented them in Figure (3) below:

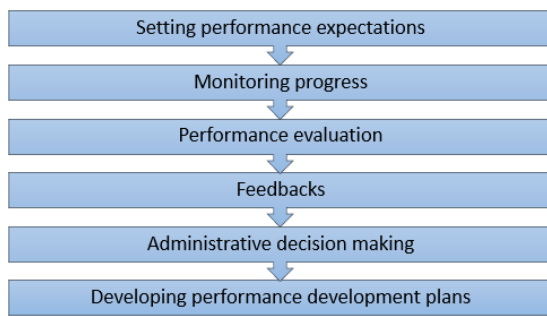


Figure 3. Stages of the Performance evaluation process

Source: Sabrina, Fares (2015, p.45). Employee Performance Evaluation and its Impact on Institutional Performance, Master's Thesis in Political Science, Al-Jilani University Bounaama, Khemis Miliana, Algeria,

From the above researchers' opinions, it seems that all the steps of the performance evaluation process are so important and require to be respectfully considered. Nevertheless, it should be also mentioned that the culture of performance evaluation requires also to be instilled and developed inside institutions.

In the same perspective, the realistic steps of institutional evaluation performance could be suggested, as follows:

□ Step 1: Identifying and recognizing the reasons for the evaluation process, before proceeding with it and applying it inside the institution. In fact, the evaluator or the chartered appraiser should get the answer to the question: "What are the reasons behind such an evaluation?"; "Does the evaluation aim, only at detecting errors through a self-evident evaluation process, or is it intending to correct deviations and errors in order to suggest the appropriate and best solutions?"

For instance, in the Iraqi environment, evaluation is often undertaken for accountability and/or punishment. That is why, all the ministries have their own administrative units which are specialized in assessing performance. By doing so, they have noticed that the defect linked to the basic degree of the evaluation process quality and what comes after could be inherent to two mains reasons: (1) the evaluator himself, who needs to assess

his own performance, skills, and abilities; (2) the approved standards which might not reflect the reality and do not reveal the true purpose of the evaluation.

□ Step 2: Determining the appropriate time for evaluation. Indeed, some ministries need evaluation at the peak time of providing the service, rather than whenever the society or the state desperately need it do it without preventing the corresponding institution, and so on.

□ Step 3: Studying and analyzing the existing reality that should be evaluated and checking whether there are barriers to evaluation or not. In other words, the evaluation process is accompanied by costs that should not be wasted;

□ Step 4: Selecting the reviewers/appraisers who are specialized in evaluation and who are technically omniscient and aware of the nature of the work that should be evaluated inside the institution;

□ Step 5: Adopting professionalism and impartiality in the results of the evaluation process;

□ Step 6: Analyzing the results professionally and accurately with the aim of identifying deviations, corrections (of the errors), and supporting the positive strengths/points that should be highlighted and provided to decision-makers through information/feedbacks;

□ Step 7: Estimating the effectiveness of the performance assessments by comparing the previous and the subsequent ones ; then following up via the implementation of the corrections approved by the assessors.

DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED BY ORGANIZATIONS DURING THE PERFORMANCE EVALUATION PROCESS

The difficulties that could be encountered during the performance appraisal process can be identified as follows:

4.1. Difficulties encountered at the level of institutions

A center for preparing leaders of the Egyptian Council of Ministers identified the difficulties of evaluating institutional performance and supported that they could revolve around political pressures, data volume and information, conflictual goals/priorities, and absence of identification of tasks and devices (Al-Tuwaijri, 2010, p. 5-6; Mukhaimer et al., 1999, p. 23-33. Ayesh (2008, p. 51) added the difficulty of routine.

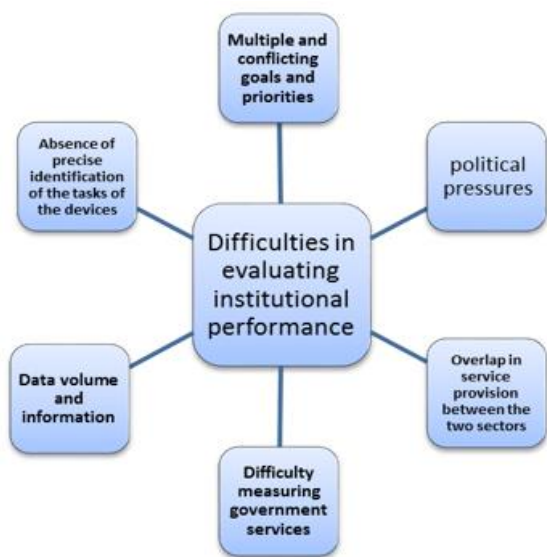


Figure (4). Difficulties during the institutional performance evaluation process

Source: Leaders Preparation Center affiliated to the Central Agency for Regulating Administration in the Egyptian Presidency of the Council of Ministers, Approach to assessing institutional performance using the balanced scorecard model, 2010

According to Plaska (2012, p. 7), the difficulties encountered during the performance evaluation process could be summarized in five main points, which could be detailed as follows:

- (1) The difficulty in defining standards that contribute to the technical performance of the institution.
- (2) The focus made on results, rather than on the means that led to achieving them.

(3) The large number of criteria and their ramifications, which makes distorting and directing the results possible through manipulation and reliance on the criteria that are consistent with the interest of those affected by the evaluation process. This leads in turn to taking the corrective decisions by those who are unable to solve problems.

(4) The culture of fear of accountability and mistakes' recording due to a constant control, which cultivates an atmosphere of mistrust and chaos among individuals. Such a culture aims to punish negligence and to consider evaluation as part of the disciplinary process (Abu Rizk, 2012, 49).

(5) The high costs of the control process, due to the fact that some institutions suffer from an increase in their desired revenues which do not cover the costs. In such circumstances, the process of control and assessment becomes a burden on them.

4.2. Difficulties encountered at the level of individuals

There are several sources of deviations in the performance evaluation process, and one of the most important of these sources is related to the errors committed by the appraiser. Avoiding such mistakes is almost impossible; but improving the evaluator awareness can decrease these errors to their minimal limits. In accordance with the statements of Mathis, Jackson (2009, p. 476-477), Hashem (1988, p. 218-221), Dessler (2003, p. 237-238), Al-Zubaidi et al. (2016: 246), Bahr and Abdul-Wahed (2011, p. 773-776), and Bernouti (2007, p. 415-417), the most common mistakes could be listed as shown in Figure (4) below.

Table (1). The most common deviations

T	Aberrations	Descriptions
1	Multiple standards	Giving mixed ratings for equal levels of performance
2	Being affected by current performance or past performance	Using information The effect of evaluation results
3	Tolerance / giving average ratings / rigor	Giving the same appreciation to all individuals

4	Resident bias	The impact of bias assessment
5	Halo effect	Building generalizations based on a single adjective
6	Contrast effect	Comparing individuals with each other, not with standards
7	Comparison with oneself	Comparing individuals with the rater, not with the standards
8	Sample errors	The information provided is incomplete or inaccurate

Source: Mathis, Reper L & Jackson, John H. (2009, p. 476-477)

'Human Resource Management'

From the considerations stated above, we can note that some other difficulties that an institution is facing during its performance evaluation process, especially in Iraq, were not stated; and could therefore be added as follows:

The absence of a specialized body that sponsors the evaluation and which enjoys a full independence.

The absence of accurate criteria by which the evaluation process becomes valid, and proving that the services provided by the ministry correspond to the budget allocated for them.

The political pressures, nepotism, and fear of the influential, as well as the halo drawn around some of the leaders that govern the institution, etc.

The misplacement of the appropriate persons: the right person is not placed in the right place and some of those involved in the evaluation process are not specialized.

The absence of government support for those who are in charge of the evaluation and the lack of respect for the state in the evaluation results and their serious follow-up.

REQUIREMENTS FOR THE SUCCESS OF THE PERFORMANCE EVALUATION METHODS

The success of the performance evaluation process is more important than the assessment

process in itself. Indeed, such a success depends to a large extent on the methods that the institution adopts in implementing the appraisal process, so that several conditions and requirements should be considered in order to ensure the achievement of the expected results. According to Suad (2007, p. 36), the most important ones are as follows:

The evaluation method is related to the mission, goals, values and culture of the institution.

The method can provide clear guidelines for those who work for the performance appraisal.

The method allows an open communication between the various parties of the evaluation process so that obstacles or difficulties could be overcome.

The possibility of providing several sources of information, required for reaching fair, objective, credible and reliable results.

The flexibility of the evaluation method which should be easily modified and developed.

The possibility of avoiding complications in the application by developing a consistent, simple and clear approach for all the stakeholders.

The ability to carry out evaluation procedures in a timely manner and for a specific period.

MODELS OF EXCELLENCE

While pioneering regional and local organizations appeared in the global scene, they took upon themselves the task of motivating organizations and pushing them towards excellence by developing the appropriate models that serve as a guide for them. Thus, through self-assessment, identifying the various shortcomings and weaknesses in performance. These models are presented within the framework of stimulating excellence. Besides, the prizes offered to organizations vary in value according to the attained levels of performance (Shawki, 2009, p. 8).

Before reviewing the most important global models and the most common pioneering ones, it is of utmost importance to highlight their main benefits and goals, as follows:

6.1. Benefits of institutional assessment based on excellence models

These models provide a guiding reference and a normative base for measuring the extent of progress and development in performance, spreading the concepts of excellence and a culture of total quality, disseminating the best management practices, and ensuring the application of the most efficient work methods (Ben Abboud, 2009, p. 152). Considered by Malkawi (2013, p. 12) and Abu Shabab (2013, p. 19) as a basis for evaluating the performance of organizations, competing for the awards, assisting organizations in improving their activities to achieve distinguished results (Al-Muzayen, Al-Ghamdi, 2010, p. 761). The main benefits of applying such models could be cited as follows:

Representing a self-assessment tool, which could serve to change and unify the culture of the organization.

Offering a guide for identifying improvement opportunities, and benchmarking with other distinguished organizations;

Building a comprehensive structure for a total quality management system;

6.2. Obstacles related to the institutional evaluation based on excellence models

Al-Muzayen, Al-Ghamdi (2010, p.761) enumerated several points that hinder the application of evaluation models and institutional excellence, which are namely:

Lack of awareness of the importance of the models of excellence as strategic plans rather than quick solutions to financial and administrative problems.

Lack of conviction, support and participation from the leadership

Poor communication, weak focus on beneficiaries, and Resistance to change.

Lack of loyalty, motivation, stifling centralization, and lack of employee delegation and participation.

INTERNATIONAL MODELS OF EXCELLENCE

7.1. The Japanese Deming Model of Institutional Evaluation and Excellence

Edward Deming was born in the United States of America in 1900. He traveled to Japan with General MacArthur's team for its reconstruction after the end of the second World War (Aqili, 2009, p. 172-173). The first model of excellence launched by Deming in 1951, is the first quality award that emerged in the world. It was established by the Japanese Federation of Scientists and Engineers (Al-Najjar Jawad, 2017, p. 289). According to Al Zaboun, Hamdan (2015, p. 163), this model is based on the assumption that every individual who is working in an organization should contribute to the production of the commodity or the provision of the appropriate service for its customers, through the process of total quality management. Such a process underlines ten criteria that are reviewed every several years, as illustrated in Figure (5) below (Batio, Achiouni, Berwari, 2013, p. 89).



Figure (5). The Deming model

Source: ' Borter, L.J. & Tanner, S.J. (2004, P, 261), Assessing Business, Excellence Second Edition, Oxford: Publishing Elsevier Butterworth Heinemann

Adebanjo (2008, p. 3) stated that those criteria, as shown in the model above, are divided into four groups, which are namely:

Direction: The direction of the organization is determined by the policy standard.

Support: The organization's approach is supported by its standards (organizational structure, information, standardization, and human resource development).

Implementation: The implementation is ensured through standards (quality assurance activities, maintenance and monitoring activities, and improving activities).

Results: Findings are measured through impact criteria, and future plans are developed within the organizational future policies.

7.2. The American Model for Performance Excellence (Malcolm Staircase Model)

The Malcolm Baldrige National Excellence Organization was established in 1987 in the United States of America for the purpose of improving the competitive capabilities of American organizations and their ability to face the challenges of their European and Japanese counterparts in particular (Shawki, 2009, p. 11). For this purpose, after the US Secretary of Commerce, two awards were presented each year, as a maximum, from all three categories of organizations, i.e. large manufacturers, large service companies, and small business organizations in manufacturing and services (Hafez, 2015, p. 64).

The American Baldrige Award is, nevertheless, based on the seven standards of excellence of the model shown in Figure (6) below. Such standards are measured through the distribution of (1000) points (Abu Jumaa, 2016, p. 116).

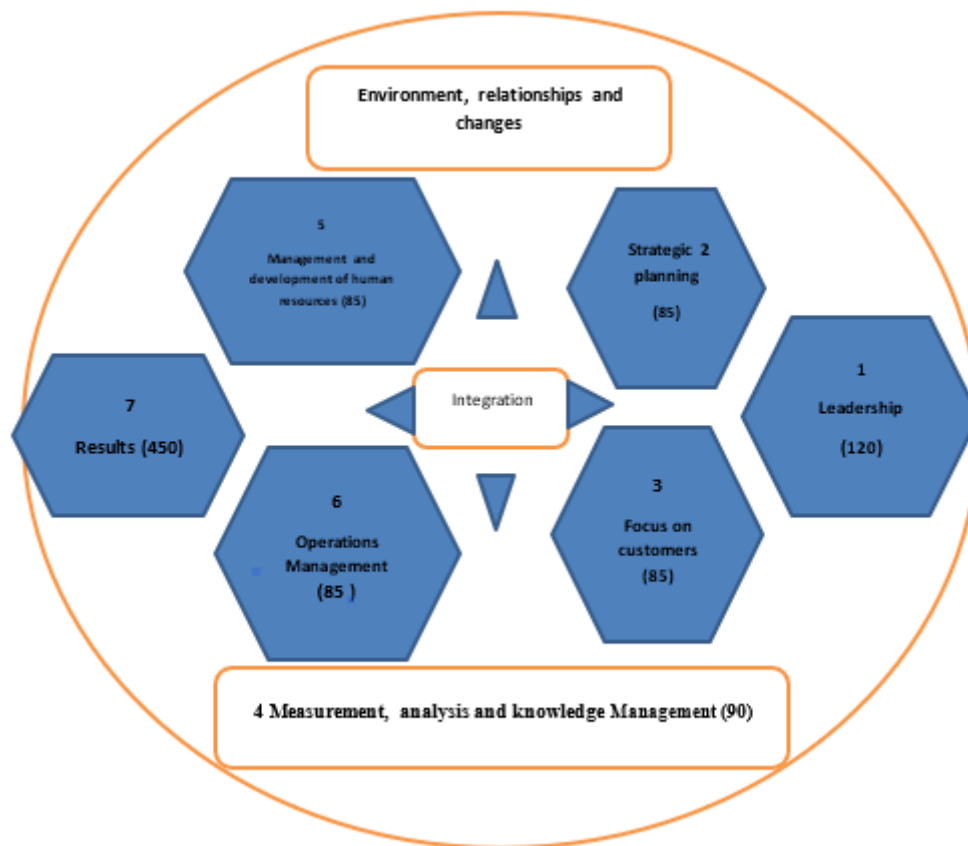


Figure (6). Baldrige standards (Taken from the Baldrige model (2017/2018))

Source: www.nist.gov/baldrige.com

Sheikhs et al (2011, p. 14) advanced that the Malcolm Baldrige Award is offered to achieve the following goals:

Increasing the awareness and interest in quality to support the competitive capabilities.

Managing the requirements that are recommended for attaining excellence.

Unifying the policies of American companies in order to apply the comprehensive quality management approach and improve it.

Sharing information related to the successful experiences of organizations that applied the standards.

Laying foundations for evaluation in the field of quality and community service.

7.3. The European model of excellence

The European Foundation for Quality Management was established in 1988 and in 1991 the concept of excellence model was built as an annual competition for the best organizations in Europe so that the organization presents the best appropriate documents that describe: “what it does, why doing it?, How was it developed? And what are the main results reached?”. In 1992, the first session of the award was established (Al-Muzayen, Al-Ghamdi, 2011, p. 756). In this perspective, Aqili (2009, p. 206) mentioned that whoever examines the European model of excellence will conclude that total quality management constitutes an integrated system that includes all the inputs that are directed and controlled by an effective administrative leadership to reach specific outputs, as shown in the following figure (7):



Figure (7). Components of the Total quality management system

Source: Aqili, Amr Wasfi (2009, p. 206) An Introduction to the Integrated Methodology for Total Quality Management, Point of View, Second Edition, Dar Wael Amman.

As defined by Balkabeer (2016, p.171), the European model of excellence is assimilated to “the brilliant practice in managing the organization and achieving its results. It enables the organization to reach its rank of excellence whenever it adheres to the ideas and administrative patterns that are based on the foundations and standards on which the concepts of the award are based.” The related award is granted to four categories of organizations, which are namely: the large institutions, the departments and operational units of institutions, the public sector institutions, as well as the small medium enterprises (Sahmoud, 2013, p. 26).

7.3.1. Stages of development of the European model of excellence

The European model of excellence was originally launched in 1991, as an annual competition for the best organizations in Europe. The amendments to the standards name of the “Excellence model” began therefore so that the eight main concepts of excellence could be generated, encompassing ‘the radar logic’, and up to the last amendment of 2013. To conclude, the stages of the development of the European Model of excellence (1991-2013) could be presented as shown in Figure (8) hereafter.

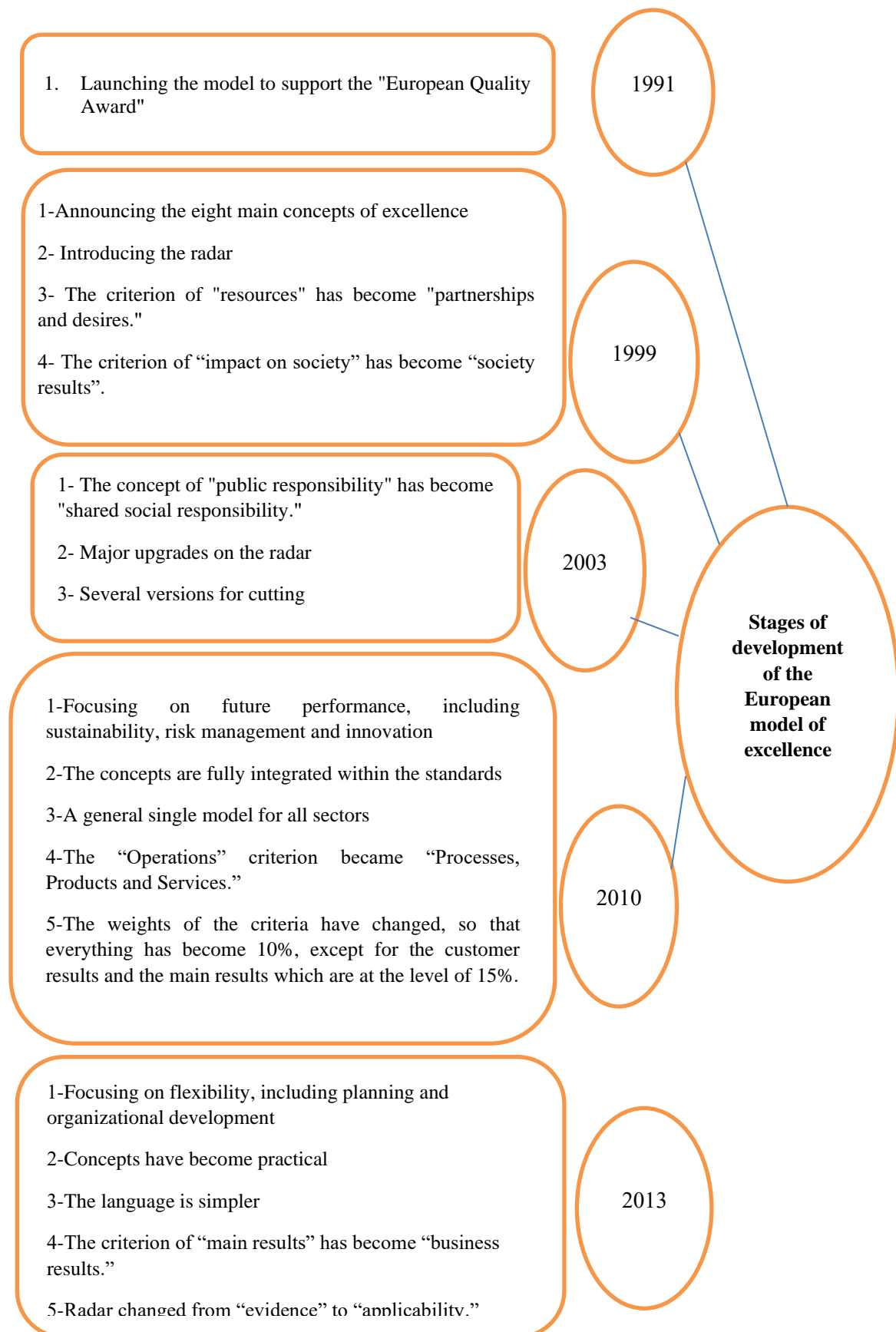


Figure (8). Stages of development of the European excellence model

Source: The Evolution of the EFQM Excellence Model (2013) <http://www.efqm.org>

7.3.2. Importance of the model

The excellence model is one of the best international models that are employed to upgrade the institutions' level of performance through their self-evaluation. Besides, such model enables organizations to keep abreast of developments via the implementation of modern and sustainable management tools at the lowest cost and with a high quality. By doing so, they could develop their internal/external stakeholders, encourage the spirit of creativity inside institutions, unleash talents and capabilities; achieve a better customer satisfaction by offering high-quality produces at the lowest cost, and therefore, achieve a sustainable excellence in all aspects of performance (www.mitit.gov.ps).

7.3.3. Objectives reached by organizations through the implementation of the model

According to Tavanaz et al (2011, p. 645), the organizations which opt for implementing the European model of excellence are usually seeking to achieve the following goals that are mentioned below:

promoting the idea of quality as an essential process, for a continuous improvement in any organization.

increasing competition between the European public/private sectors.

assessing to what extend the organization stands on the path of excellence, for a better benchmarking of its activities/strategies.

encouraging the institutional cooperation, collaboration and innovation to reach its goals.

In the same perspective, FLEGO (2006, p.18) adds that the European model of excellence motivates also the European institutions/organizations and assists them in:

□ facilitating their procedures aiming at achieving excellence through human resources'

development, better societal and economic results, as well as a superior customer satisfaction.

□ supporting managers of organizations towards reaching globalization and excellence.

7.3.4. Uses of the European Excellence Model

The European Excellence model is one of the means that might have multiple usages, as shown below:

□ It is an administrative tool that requires patience and perseverance to be applied, not a magic wand.

□ It helps organizations identify the appropriate improvement activities that enable them to achieve outstanding results.

□ It is a basis for evaluating the performance of organizations which compete for the awards of excellence (Al-Sheikh et al., 2011, p. 44).

Other researchers, like Vallej et al (2006: 327), Kim et al (2008: 32-33), and Michalska (2008, p. 205) have identified other usages of the European model, as explained below:

It is a framework for evaluating organizations and setting up their structure;

It aims to develop the awareness of the importance of quality in the global current market.

It supports organizations in achieving excellence through a continuous identification of improvement areas that are found on learning and innovating.

It represents a way to measure and obtain tangible and intangible performance compared to other organizations.

Lonica et al (2010: 130) identified other usages of the excellence model s and explained them in the following figure (9):

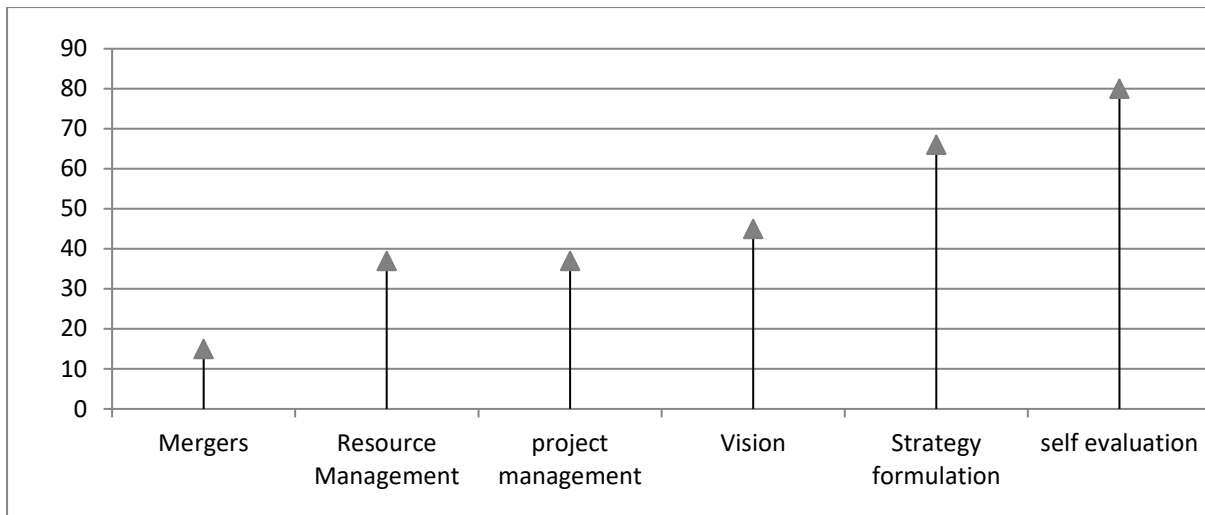


Figure (9). The purpose of using the EFQM Excellence Model

Source: Lonica et al. (2010, p. 130), "TQM And Excellence", Annals Of The University Petrosani, Economics, 10 (4).

7.3.5. The nine standards of excellence

The European Model OF Excellence consists of (9) criteria illustrated in Figure (10) representing: the enablers (5) which cover what

the organization does and who's the results (4) cover what the organization achieves. In general, the results are caused by enablers; whereas feedbacks help to improve those matters.

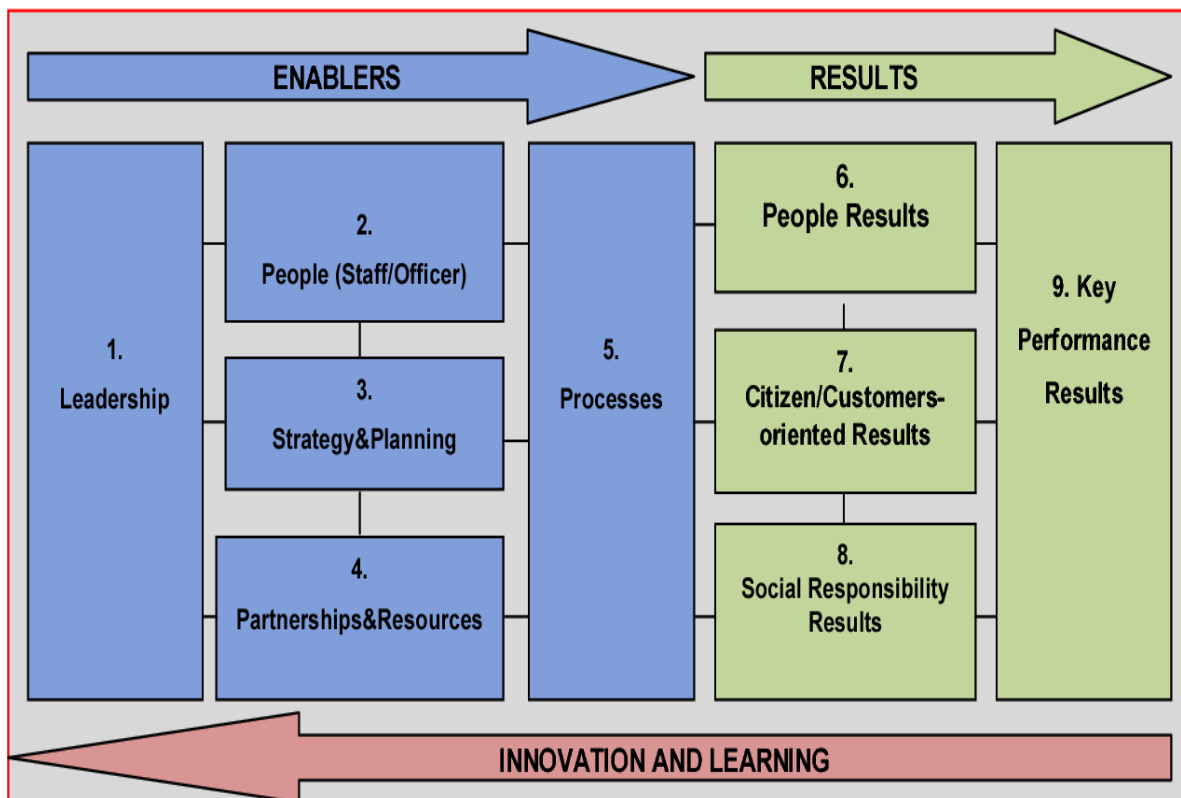


Figure 10. Standards of Excellence

Source: European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) <http://www.efqm.org>)

As it can be seen from Figure (10), the criteria for excellence consist of two parts:

7.3.5.1. Part One: Possibilities (causes)

This part includes the work methods, mechanisms and means that the institution has followed to carry out its work at all the levels and in all its departments, and sections. This part contains the five main criteria according to (www.efqm.org), (www.shop.efqm), (Radam, 2016, p. 28-29), (Palestinian Financial and Administrative Control Bureau, Special Second Quarterly Report, 2010, p. 16 - 18), (Al-Anazi, 2015, p. 433-434), (Suleiman, 2014, p. 58-60), (Fadel, 2016, p. 24-27), (Sahmoud, 2013, p. 29-32), (Abu Jumaa, 2016, p. 116):

- Leadership: Distinguished institutions have motivated leaders who work to achieve excellence and are committed to the institution's values and ethics. This criterion has a relative importance of (10%) it contains (5) sub-criteria, which are:
 - developing the vision, mission and institutional values in the directorate.
 - ensuring the participation of leaders in the process of developing work systems in the Directorate.
 - Leaders dealt with all the stakeholders.
 - Leaders to promote a culture of excellence among human resources in the directorate.
 - The leadership of the Directorate provides a work environment that is conducive to creativity and excellence in performance.
 - The leadership of the Directorate and its departments ensures the flexibility and effectiveness of changes.
 - Policy and strategy: the relative importance of this criterion is (10%) and it contains (4) sub-criteria:
 - Building the strategy to achieve the directorate's goals according to the needs of all stakeholders.
 - Provide accurate information for the strategy.
- Preparing, reviewing and updating the strategy.
- Explain the steps of implementing the strategy to those concerned.
- Human resources: the relative importance of this criterion is 10%. It contains (5) sub-criteria, which are:
 - planning and managing human resources.
 - identifying and developing the skills and capabilities of human resources.
 - enabling the participation of human resources and dealing with them transparently.
 - ensuring a good communication and dialogue with human resources.
 - paying attention to the efforts and achievements of human resources, by rewarding and appreciating them.
- Partnerships and resources: the relative importance of this criterion is (10%) and it contains (5) sub-criteria, which are namely:
 - partnership management.
 - financial resources' management.
 - ed property management.
 - technical resource management.
 - information and knowledge management for supporting an effective decision-making and building the capabilities of the institution.
- Operations: the relative importance of this criterion is 10%. It contains (5) sub-criteria, which are:
 - process design and management methodology.
 - operations' improvement.
 - services' development.
 - management and strengthening of the relationship with customers.

7.3.5.2. Part Two: Results

The results reflect the achievements attained by the institution through its enablers, in addition to the main results of the institution itself. They include the opinions' assessment of the concerned authorities, as well as the indicators of performance of operations towards these bodies. They should be originally based on targeted positive values, and linked to the organizational plans and work, by showing up the positive progress that the organization could attain during its years of work. (The Office of Financial and Administrative Control, 2010, p. 82), (www.efqm.org), (www.shop.efqm)

To assist institutions in their self-evaluation process and for a better achievement of their results, the EFQM proposed a matrix or a RADAR logic which could be applied to:

- Results
- Application of a Methodology
- Deployment
- Assessment
- Review

It should be mentioned by here that it was called (RADAR) and not (ADARR), as the results were put in the foreground, although the methodologies precede the results. Thus, the methodologies are formulated in a way that suits the goals, which will constitute, in turn, the future results of the policy. Besides, the strategy that is consistent with the vision, depends mainly on the results that the organization seeks to achieve (EFQM, 2012, p. 6).

The RADAR Logic is then a dynamic evaluation framework and a powerful management tool that provides a structured approach to assessing the performance of any organization with an overview (www.efqm.org) (EFQM, 2013, p. 31) The overall Radar

mechanism could be applied inside the organization to:

- determine the results to be achieved (goals) as part of its strategies.
- plan and develop an integrated set of methodologies to achieve the required immediate and future goals.
- apply methodologies in a systematic manner that ensures their implementation.
- evaluate and improve the applied methodologies based on monitoring and analyzing the achieved results and continuous learning activities.

THE ASSESSMENT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF AL-QADISIYAH'S PERFORMANCE

In compliance with the objectives of this research aiming at evaluating the distinguished performance of The University of Al-Qadisiyah affiliated to the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research in Iraq, a model will be presented in what follows so that such an institution could cope with the changes that are occurring in its surrounding environment, unless the mechanisms and procedures which are of a flexible strategic nature. Following the specifications of the precedent models of excellence shown above, the current study intends to propose a model that enables its users to assess the institutional performance, to work with excellence, and evaluate the extent to which it keeps pace with the wheel of excellence in performance. The University of Al-Qadisiyah affiliated to the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research in Iraq was chosen to be approved as a sample for application. As the results shown in Appendix No. (1), the examination list was divided into nine axes, after measuring the rate, percentage, and gap for each of those axes.

Table 2. The results of evaluating the outstanding performance of the University of Al-Qadisiyah for all the combined dimensions.

General results								
Weights		0	1	2	3	4	5	6
(Iterations) the sum of iterations for all criteria= 98		0	1	0	7	39	32	21
The result (weights x repetitions) =564		0	2	0	28	195	192	147
The mean for all standard = 5.8	Percentage for all criteria = 0.058	The gap amount for all criteria =0.942						

From the obtained results of the checklist shown in Appendix No. (1), it appears what follows :

*The axis of the first criterion (the presence and adequacy of the legal rule, legislation, laws, regulations, and instructions): it has achieved an average of (4.4) out of (10) degrees, with a percentage of (0.044), which indicates the existence of a gap of size (0.956) compared to what should be applied. 10) a paragraph, as indicated in Appendix No. (1), which reveals a number of implications related to the essence of the institution's work that are related to legislation, regulations, and laws.

*As for the second criterion axis: the role of leadership and institutional management in the performance of the institution: it has achieved an average of (5.4) out of (10) degrees and a percentage of (0.045); which indicates that there is a gap of size (0.955) compared to what should be applied as important and basic axes available to assess the excellence of the institution's performance. The number of paragraphs of this axis has reached (10), as shown in Appendix No. (1). Such a number reveals that there are numerous important and essential points related to the essence of the institution's work represented in the role of leadership in determining the paths and directions of its performance.

*Likewise, what was mentioned regarding the third criterion axis is that the institutional strategy achieved an average of (6.1) out of (10) degrees, with a percentage of (0.061). Such a finding indicates that there is a gap of

(0.939) compared to what should be applied. This axis is also considered one of the important and basic pillars that should be taken into account to measure the excellence of the institution's performance. As shown in Appendix No. (1), the number of paragraphs of this axis has reached (10), which reveals the importance of such basic pedestals related to the essence of the institutional performance and its excellence.

*As for the fourth criterion axis: 'human resources', an average of (4.3) out of (10) degrees and a percentage of (0.043) indicates the existence of a gap of size of (0.957). Compared with what should be applied, this axis is also considered one of the important and basic axes that should be available to assess the excellence of the institution's performance. As highlighted in Appendix No. (1), the number of paragraphs of this axis are (10), which reveals the importance of 'human resources' as a basic pillar that constitutes the foundation of the institution's work and their performance.

*The axis of the fifth criterion: 'risk management and institutional protection' achieves an average of (3.7) out of (10) degrees, with a percentage of (0.037). Such a finding indicates that there is a gap of size of (0.963) compared to what should be applied. This axis is also one of the important axes and the basic requirements that must be available to evaluate the excellence of the institution's performance. As shown in Appendix No. (1), the number of paragraphs of this axis has reached (12). It reveals the importance of such

a basic foundation that is related to the institutional control and its high contribution to the continuity of the institution's work.

*For the sixth criterion axis: 'the evaluation of the institutional partnership': it has reached an average of (4.2) degrees out of (10), with a percentage of (0.042). Such a finding indicates that there is a gap of size of (0.958) compared to what should be applied. As exposed in Appendix No. (1), the number of paragraphs of this axis is (12), which confirms the relevance of "the institutional partnership" for the performance of institutions.

*When it comes to the seventh criterion axis: 'resource management', it appears that it has achieved an average of (4.6) degrees out of (10), with a percentage of (0.046), which indicates that there is a gap of size (0.944) compared to what should be applied. 'Resource management' is therefore of paramount importance and it cannot be ignored whenever it is a question of measuring the excellence of institution's performance. As displayed in Appendix No. (1), the number of paragraphs of this axis is (12), which supports the value and importance the management of resources as a basic pillar for the institutional performance.

*As for the axis of the eighth criterion: 'operations', it has performed an average of (4) degrees out of (10), with a percentage of (0.04), which indicates that there is a gap of size (0.960) compared to what should be applied. It is very important that it cannot be ignored, and it is necessary to measure the excellence of the institution's performance, as it is the pillar of performance. The number of paragraphs of this axis has reached (12) paragraphs, as shown in Appendix No. (1), which reveals a number of important and basic pillars on which performance depends Related to the operations that form the basis of the work of the institution involved in the work of the institution.

*Concerning the axis of the ninth criterion: 'Control' has achieved an average of (4.4) degrees out of (10), with a percentage of (0.044), which indicates that there is a gap of size (0.956) compared to what should be applied. Control cannot be ignored by any

institution which intends to assess the excellence of its performance. As highlighted in Appendix No. (1), the number of paragraphs of this axis has reached (12), which demonstrates the relevance of such an essential pillar on which the performance depends. Indeed, control should be involved in the work of the institution and it forms its foundation.

CONCLUSION

Despite the multiplicity of terms and concepts dealt with in this research, its main objective revolves around the statement of the main dimensions involved in the process of appraising an outstanding performance in order to ensure its indepth understanding. By doing so, the obstacles that prevent conducting the appraisal properly could also be alleviated, whose results are useful and correct for the deviant path in performance in Iraq. Indeed, in such a context, despite the large number of agencies working to monitor and assess the performance of institutions, many problems remain not yet resolved inside universities which need to upgrade their development to cope with the international changes and trends. Through reviewing American, Japanese, European, and some other Arab experiences related to evaluating performance, quality inside institutions, we noticed that there is a difference in the nature and quality of criteria chosen and used by those which sought to attain excellence. Some of those criteria focused on profits, managing gains, and avoiding losses in a remarkable way; whereas other ones underlined the role of resources, leadership, and control. For instance, the American experience which pointed out the importance of profits and the factors contributing in improving profitability, by stressing the role of the private sector. On the other hand, for the recent Japanese experience, the vision is different as it seeks to achieve Distinction and preference in the aspects of performance which start from planning, development, management, control, adaptation, creativity, discrimination or exclusivity, and so on. As for the European and Arab experiences, which are inspired from European experiences,

the emphasis is rather put on the role of leaders who play a pivotal role in achieving performance inside institutions, especially in service and non-productive ones. For reasons that the place cannot mention, and that one of the clear manifestations that shows the validity of what we referred to above is its establishment in Design models of excellence that work on evaluating institutional performance. Therefore, in accordance with the precedent proposed models of excellence and appraisal methods that were implemented in other developed contexts, a model was designed in the current research conducted in the Iraq context. Such a model, entitled 'Model, Evaluation and Measurement of Excellence', and aiming at ensuring an administrative reform of universities, was accepted by the scientific, arbitrated university professors, and the professional pillars of the country. After Applying the model, the final results of the dimensions achieved an average of (5.8) degrees out of (10), with a percentage of (0.058), which indicates that there is a gap of size (0.942). Such a finding supports the evidence that these dimensions are of paramount importance and cannot be ignored. By applying such a model which could be available to measure the excellence of the institution's performance, managers of leaders of higher education institutions could learn to upgrade their performance to cope with the international trends. Other prospective studies could suggest other models of excellence that put more emphasis on the agility and resilience of higher education institutions and universities which should cope with their international environment and display their flexibility and openness to change.

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