

Comparing Business Excellence Models Using Quantitative Methods: A First Step

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Abstract : Established Business Excellence Models (BEMs), like the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award (MBNQA) model and the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) model, have been adopted by firms all over the world. They exist alongside more recent country-specific BEMs; e.g. the Australian, Canadian, China, New Zealand, Singapore, and Taiwan quality awards that although not as widespread as MBNQA and EFQM have nonetheless strong national followings. Regardless of any differences in their following or prestige, the emergence and development of all BEMs have been shaped both by their local context (e.g. underlying socio-economic dynamics) as well as by global best practices. Besides such similarities, that render them into objects (i.e. models) of the same class (i.e. BEMs), BEMs exhibit non-trivial differences in their criteria, relations, and emphasis. Given the evolution of BEMs (e.g. the MBNQA underwent seven evolutions since its inception in 1987 while the EFQM five since 1993), it is unsurprising that comparative studies of their validity are few and far in between. This poses challenges for practitioners and policy makers alike; as it is not always clear which BEM is to be preferred or better fitting to a particular context. Especially, in contexts that differ substantially from the original context of BEM development. This paper aims to fill this gap by presenting a research design and measurement model for comparing BEMs using quantitative methods (e.g. structural equations). Three BEMs will be focused upon in particular for illustration purposes; the MBNQA, the EFQM, and the King Abdul Aziz Quality Award (KAQA) model. They have been selected so to reflect the two established and widely spread traditions as well as a more recent context-specific arrival promising a better fit.

Keywords : Baldrige, business excellence, European Foundation for Quality Management, Structural Equation Model, total quality management

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