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Excellence Awards in the UAE Government Sector – An Evaluative Framework for the Government Excellence Model Implementation

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Excellence Awards in the UAE Government Sector – An Evaluative Framework for the Government Excellence Model Implementation

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Abstract

Most countries use business excellence models on a local and global scale to improve organizational performance in the public and private sectors. Although the effective implementation of excellence models was studied in the global context, little research exists on excellence models adopted in the United Arab Emirates)UAE), specifically in the government sector. This study thoroughly evaluates the implementation of the government excellence model (GEM)—with respect to the benefits, motivations, critical success factors, barriers, and obstacles—in the government of the UAE. The study proposes frameworks that help organizations implement the new excellence model and recommends changes to the implementation approaches to more effectively deploy the excellence model in the government sector. This study applies a qualitative approach and uses semi-structured interviews to propose an evaluative framework for implementation.

The key findings that emerged in this study are: (1) the motivations for applying the GEM can be classified into five themes: 'pioneering', 'happiness', 'core business-oriented model', 'national agenda/government plan', and 'recognition'; (2) the critical success factors of the GEM implementation can be classified into six themes: 'culture of pioneering', 'commitment', 'resources', 'capability building' 'one government', and 'award custodians'; and (3) the barriers/obstacles for the GEM implementation can be classified into three themes: 'assessment process', 'size and work nature of the organization', and 'benchmarking'.

This study is the first at the UAE federal level (Abu Dhabi and Dubai) to assess the implementation of the new excellence model. It is unique in identifying the 14 themes that each organization must focus on to reach the pioneering level. This study also reports emerging themes, such as 'one government', 'culture of pioneering', 'national agenda', and 'happiness', which were not previously discussed in the literature. Thus, this research makes an important contribution to the field of applied excellence. The unique and significant guidelines were developed for each theme so that the GEM model can be beneficial for the government and assist in achieving a leading position at the global level. This study also establishes that collaboration between four key stakeholders, namely, the government, award custodian, government entities, and assessors, is important for successful implementation. This study is also the first to introduce a new concept, the 'culture of pioneering', as the main driver for implementing the excellence model to achieve the vision of the UAE, in general, and the Emirates, in particular. Another new concept, 'one government', was established; it suggests that collaboration and coordination among all government entities must be strengthened to achieve their strategic plans. Further, the one government concept should be incorporated into the assessment cycle. This study is beneficial to the UAE public sector, as it establishes an exclusive innovative excellence model based on the current significant findings. The findings of this study are also notable because they provide an organization with many guidelines for implementing the excellence model in an effective and efficient way and contribute to the existing body of knowledge.

The proposed framework also provides a strong foundation for future researchers, especially in the UAE, and paves the way for future research in the area of assessing the excellence model in the public sector. This study has also raised the bar for future works by listing 13 areas that need attention to ensure the success of the GEM model.

Keywords: Government Excellence Model, Excellence Model in Public Sector, CSFs, Motivation/Benefits, Barriers/Obstacles, National Quality Awards, UAE Government.

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Finally, to my parents, for their deep love and support. My father and mother, both of whom were teachers that dedicated their careers to educating students, always encouraged me to complete my study and strive for more. They have always instilled in me the ambition to achieve the highest degree in academics.

Certification

I, Rami Ahmad Abu Laban, declare that this thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the conferral of the degree Doctorate of Business Administration from the University of Wollongong in Dubai is wholly my work unless otherwise referenced or acknowledged. This document has not been submitted for qualifications at any other academic institution.

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Rami Ahmad Abu Laban
19th November 2022

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my father, mother, brothers, and sister. I also dedicate it to my lovely wife, Ruba, and my sons: Adam, Laith, and Rashid.

Glossary

APO	Asian Productivity Organization
BS	British Standard
CSF	Critical Success Factors
DGEP	Dubai Government Excellence Program
DM	Deming Prize
DQA	Dubai Quality Award
EFQM	European Foundation for Quality Management Model
EQA	European Quality Award
EOQ	European Organization for Quality
EC	European Commission
GAO	United States General Accounting Office (GAO)
GEM	Government Excellence Model
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
JUSE	Japanese Union of Scientists and Engineers
MBNQA	Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Awards
NQA	National Quality Award
OP	Organizational Performance
QC	Quality Control
QA	Quality Assurance
QM	Quality Management
OE	Organization Excellence
PMO	The Prime Minister's Office-UAE
RQ	Research Question
TQM	Total Quality Management
UAE	United Arab Emirates

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Chapter 1: Introduction

This chapter presents an overview of excellence models and is divided into three main parts. Part 1 presents the evolution of quality and total quality management (TQM), followed by the history of excellence models around the world, and then specifically presents the history of the excellence models in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Part 2 presents the excellence model researched in this study—with detailed information on how it was developed and the main components of the model—as well as the criteria, scores, and objectives of the model. Finally, Part 3 presents the statement of the problem; objectives, significance, rational, and research questions (RQs) of this study; and the structure of the whole thesis.

1.1 Quality and TQM Development

Quality can refer to different things for different people and different organizations. Everyone has their own meaning and definition of quality, which leads to every organization defining quality in various ways depending on customer type, product, and service, as well as the purpose of the product and service. Shewhart (1931) defined quality 'as a thing that has the positive attribute of conformance to specified standards.' However, quality has also been defined as 'value for money' (Feigenbaum, 1956, 1961), 'fitness for use' (Juran, 1974), 'conformance to requirements' (Crosby, 1979), 'quality and customer satisfaction are the same thing' (Ishikawa, 2011), and 'satisfaction of the customers' (Deming, 1986). The search for a universal definition has resulted in inconsistent results (Reeves and Bender, 1994). According to the International Organization for Standardization (ISO), 'quality is the totality of features and characteristics of a product that bear on its ability to satisfy stated or implied needs.' In 2009, Dale described the evolution of quality in four stages, as shown in Figure 1.1.
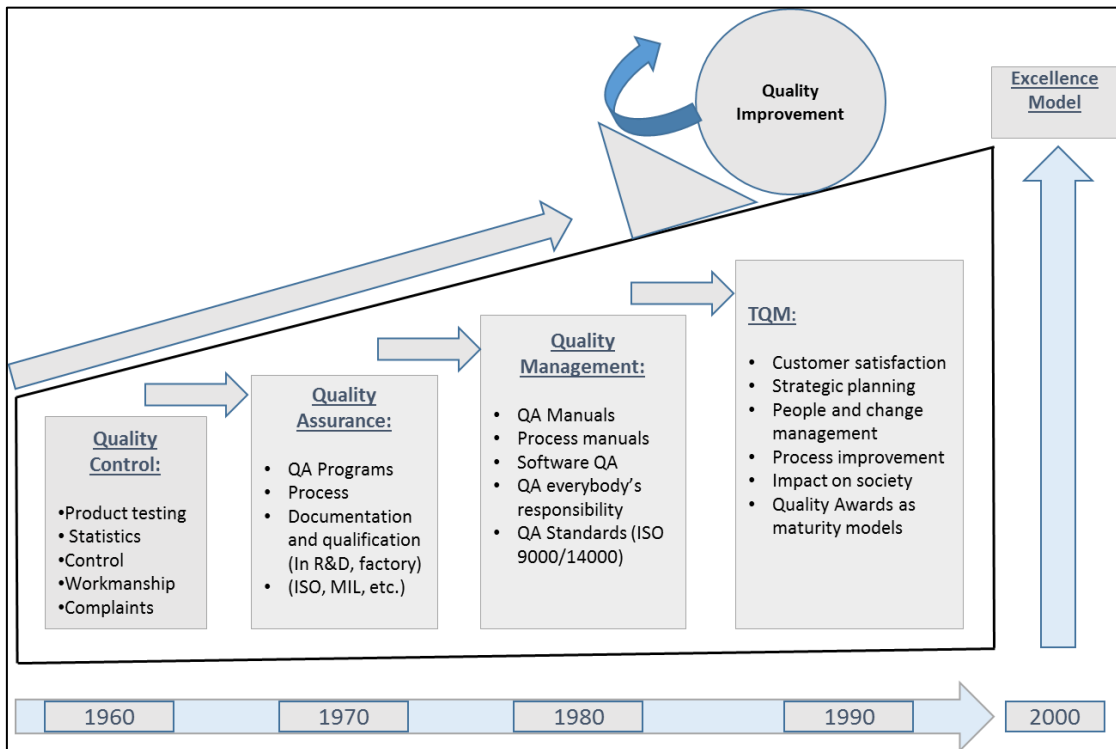
Figure 1.1: Evolution of TQM (Source: Dale, 1999)

TQM concepts originated from Japanese practices and were heavily influenced by Deming and Juran, who travelled from the US to Japan to help re-engineer and re-structure the Japanese industry after World War II. TQM is recognized among the top innovation management practices of the last century. It has been implemented by organizations to understand and satisfy their customers' needs and expectations and eliminate costs from their operations (Dale, 1999). The British Standards Institute (BS 4778 Part 2 of 1991) defined TQM as 'a management philosophy embracing all activities through which the needs and expectations of the customer and the community, the objectives of the organization, are satisfied in the most efficient and cost-effective way by maximizing the potential of all employees in a continuing drive for improvement.' Onuwa (2008), in his DBA dissertation, studied the relationship between quality practices and organizational performance in a financial firm; he found that the firm decides where it would like to be unique and excellent. Tanninen et al. (2010) studied the effect of TQM on the overall performance of the organization from three main perspectives: profitability, productivity, and customer satisfaction. They found that TQM increased productivity, customer satisfaction, and productivity compared to organizations that did not start implementing TQM. Changiz (2011) also supported this conclusion and found that the performance of enterprises and TQM are connected directly. He examined seven hypotheses and concluded that the seven TQM practices positively impact the performance of organizations (leadership, process management, communication, employee management, customer focus, supplier management, and tools/techniques). Gómez-López et al. (2016) reported that excellence models and awards were developed to assess and evaluate organizations according to the implementation of the TQM philosophy. Finally, Adamek (2018) opined that excellence models have evolved from the concept of TQM.

1.2 History of the Excellence Models

Some leading countries have developed excellence models to improve the overall performance of their organizations, whether public or private. As of 2011, more than 94 excellence models were implemented in at least 83 countries (Mohammad et al., 2011), as listed in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1: Location of Excellence Models

Sl.	Location	# of Awards
1	Africa	3
2	East Asia and the Pacific	17
3	South Asia	6
4	Europe and Central Asia	30
5	Middle East and North Africa	8
6	Americas	12

(Source: Asian Productivity Organization, 2002: The Quest for Global Competitiveness through National Quality and Business Excellence Awards)

Most excellence models originate from the development of TQM. Alonso-Almeida and Fuentes-Frías (2011) found that the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award (MBNQA) and European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) contain the largest part of the TQM dimensions, suggesting that

organizations that implement excellence models are on the path to achieving excellence and continuous improvement. They concluded that the most important international quality awards and excellence quality models that serve as a guide are the MBNQA, Deming Award, and EFQM. Three major excellence models (quality awards) are currently used around the world (Alonso-Almeida and Fuentes-Frías, 2011):

1) Deming Prize Excellence Award

The Japanese Union of Scientists and Engineers (JUSE) launched the Deming Prize in 1951 in Deming's honour for his contribution to improving Japanese industry. The award is given to organizations that prove their journey to excellence and quality. The award is based on ten criteria: policy and objectives; organizations and their operations; education and its extension; assembling and disseminating information and its utilization; analysis; standardization; control; quality assurance; effects; and future plans.

2) MBNQA

The MBNQA is a US quality award established in 1987 for many purposes, such as improving quality standards, increasing productivity, improving value to stakeholders, promoting quality awareness, and improving global competition. The model consists of seven major criteria: 1) leadership, 2) strategic planning, 3) customer and market focus, 4) information and analysis, 5) human resource focus, 6) process management, and 7) business results. Ghafoor et al. (2021) studied the strengths and opportunities of MBNQA and found that this framework is the most up-to-date among the excellence models and provides nine times more training for assessors than other award custodians.

3) EFQM

As noted on the EFQM website, the EFQM was founded in 1988, and its main aim is to make European industries and organizations more competitive. The assessment process has three main phases starting from initial assessment, then site visits, and final review and decision. The EFQM model consists of nine major criteria. The model has the same total score as the MBNQA, 1000 points. The model is divided into two parts, enablers and results. The results are assumed to be caused by the enablers. The enablers measure what the organizations do, and the results measure what the organizations achieve. The model is used by most European organizations, public and private, to achieve the overall performance for the organizations in all fields, such as financial, customers, employees, and services. The model provides an organization with a structured framework to enable it to conduct self-assessment and identify the areas of strength and weakness.

The EFQM, Deming Prizes, and MBNQA have existed for more than 20 years. Many countries have adopted excellence awards to improve the overall performance of their organizations, whether in the private or public sector. These excellence models can be applied to all firms irrespective of location, size, or sector (e.g., the MBNQA, EFQM, Canadian Excellence Award, and Australian Excellence Award). More than 70 countries have adopted excellence models/awards (APO, 2001; Calingo, 2002). National Quality Awards (NQAs) are the basic tool for improving organizational performance and promoting a quality culture. The primary objective of an NQA is to enable organizations to attain continuous performance improvement,

maintain consistency, and achieve the desired level of business performance excellence (Sayeh, 2006), as all excellence models are based on the requirements of the TQM philosophy. For example, Dubai first adopted the Malcolm Baldrige program but found that it was beyond their TQM maturity, and then they moved to the EFQM model with slight modifications (Sayeh, 2006).

As noted on the EFQM website, 'The EFQM is the most known and applicable excellence award in the world, as it is considered a non-prescriptive framework based on nine criteria.' Five of these criteria fall under enablers, and four criteria fall under results; the enablers cover what an organization does, and the results cover what an organization achieves; results are assumed to be caused by enablers. Recently, Rawabdeh et al. (2022) proved that the model is valid and reliable, and the enablers and results are strongly correlated.

'The EFQM model is based on the premise that excellence results, with respect to performance, customer, employee, and social aspects, are achieved through effective leadership, sound people management and development, effective use of partnerships and resources, clear and well-directed policy and strategy, and effective processes' (EFQM, 2018). This is compatible with the results of Ghafoor et al. (2021), who found that EFQM and MBNQA are considered the most popular excellence frameworks by surveying award custodians in 56 countries. Hammad et al. (2020) summarized the benefits of considering an excellence model as non-perspective. They analysed various research studies and found that the advantage of a non-perspective framework is implementing excellence models in any organization irrespective of its size, type, nature, and sector. These organizations can design, develop, and execute different tools and capabilities to achieve the desired results.

The weights of the major criteria in the various awards vary and depend on the aims and objectives of these awards. Table 1.2 focuses on the main national and international awards in the world to show how the weights are different.

Table 1.2: Weights of the Main National and International Awards

Award	Enabler Category		Results Category	
	Number	Points	Number	Points
Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award	6	550	1	450
European Quality Award	5	500	4	500
Japan Quality Award	7	600	1	400
Singapore Quality Award	6	600	1	400
Australian Business Excellence Award	6	420	1	580

At the time of developing this study, a new update of the EFQM model was launched to respond to new trends in management and to comply with the dynamic changes in business. 'The EFQM 2020 model comprehends three different dimensions, direction, execution, and results, with a total of seven criteria and the RADAR assessment tool.' (Fonseca et al., 2021).

1.3 History of the Excellence Model in the UAE

Many countries in the Arab region have implemented and adopted their own NQAs. First, the UAE has many quality awards in different Emirates, such as the Dubai Government Excellence Awards (DGEP), Dubai Quality Award (DQA), and the first Arab Quality Award, which is identical to the EFQM (Dubai Quality Award, 1995). The Emirate of Abu Dhabi launched the Sheikh Khalifa Excellence Award (SKEA) in 1999 to enhance private organizations' performance to a world-class level and improve the competitiveness of the Emirate in different sectors and fields. This award helps business sectors to learn from best practices and benchmark their results and performance with pioneer organizations. (The Sheikh Khalifa Excellence Award, SKEA, 2018).

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan in the year 2000 developed its quality award and named it after His Majesty King Abdullah the Second, the 'King Abdullah II Award for Excellence', based on the MBNQA criteria (King Abdulla II Award for Excellence, 2018). Other Arab countries, such as Morocco, Oman, Qatar, and Egypt, have also started their journey to quality awards.

The UAE is located in the Middle East with a population of approximately 9 million and is comprised of seven Emirates: Dubai, Sharjah, Ajman, Ras Al Khaimah, Fujairah, and Um Al Quwain, with the Abu Dhabi Emirate as the capital. The UAE is a truly multinational country. It is not uncommon to find people from over 100 nationalities working together in teams within a single company (Barrett, 2019). The UAE is determined to be a leading country in the region in various sectors, such as business, banking, economics, and services. To achieve this, the UAE undertook to improve its organizations in both the public and private sectors and, therefore, developed and initiated many quality awards in different Emirates, as shown in Table 1.3.

Table 1.3: National Quality Awards in the UAE

Emirate	Quality Award	Category
UAE	Emirates Government Excellence Award (His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Excellence Award)	Federal Award
Abu Dhabi	1) Abu Dhabi Award for Excellence in Government Performance	Abu Dhabi Local Government
	2) Abu Dhabi Quality Award	Abu-Dhabi Private Sector
Dubai	1) Dubai Government Excellence Program (DGEP)	Dubai Local Government
	2) Dubai Quality Award (DQA)	Private Sector
Ajman	Ajman Excellence Award	Ajman Local Government
Ras Al-Khaimah	Sheikh Saqr Program for Government Excellence	Ras Al-Khaimah Local Government

All excellence awards shown in Table 1.3 are based on the EFQM model, whose effectiveness has been shown to improve the overall performance of public and private organizations.

1.4 Government Sectors in the UAE

This study focused on the government departments that apply the excellence models in the UAE federal government entities, Abu Dhabi, and Dubai. These were chosen because they applied the excellence models for a significant amount of time (Dubai in 1998, Abu Dhabi in 2004, and the UAE federal ministries in 2009) to develop a competitive advantage locally and internationally. This is the major finding of Criado-García et al. (2020), who concluded that organizations need to continuously generate and assimilate new knowledge and skills to be competitive. Therefore, quality and excellence—as a management philosophy based on continuous improvement, innovation, and learning—can create a context and conditions for developing sustainable competitive advantages.

As stated in the official portal of the UAE government, 'The Cabinet of the United Arab Emirates is the Executive Branch of the federation, handling the execution of all internal and external affairs related to the federation as per the UAE Constitution and the federal laws, under the supervision of the President and the Federal Supreme Council. The Cabinet consists of the Prime Minister, two deputy prime ministers, the ministers of the UAE, and an active General Secretariat. The UAE Federal Government has 49 government entities.' (Federal Government Entities, the Cabinet, 2018).

Dubai has more than 30 local government organizations, and their services cover all main public services, such as transportation, tourism, commerce, civil defence, free zone services, municipality activities, customs, utilities, water and electricity, land services, charitable activities, and Islamic services. The list of government departments in Dubai that implement the DGEP is available on the website (Dubai.ae, 2017). Dubai has over 60,000 employees working in these government departments. The annual budget for all the departments was approximately AED 53 billion in 2017.

Abu Dhabi has similar government departments to that of Dubai and provides similar public and government services. The list of government departments in Abu Dhabi that implement the Abu Dhabi Excellence Award is available on the website (Abu Dhabi Government Entities, 2020); the list also shows the structure of the government.

The UAE, in general, and Dubai, specifically, decided in the early 1990s to become the regional economic leaders; therefore, they had to improve unilaterally across the service industry by advancing the performance of governmental organizations. Dubai has approximately 32 government departments that provide various public services, such as utilities, transportation, law enforcement, social, customs, public works, and healthcare. These services are replicated in all the other Emirates. To achieve the strategic goal of becoming the regional economic leader, Dubai constructed the first government excellence program globally, in 1997, by adopting the EFQM model and making minor changes to suit their government organizations' requirements. This was called the DGEP. The objective of the DGEP model is to achieve business excellence (BE) and improve the performance of all government departments in Dubai by implementing the latest management practices. The program allows benchmarking with the best-in-class organizations worldwide to improve customer satisfaction, optimize resources, improve processes, develop

human capabilities, and encourage creativity and innovation.

Abu Dhabi also started its excellence journey by launching the Abu Dhabi Award for Excellence in Government Performance in 2006 to achieve specified objectives. The objectives were to improve government performance through improving services; encourage the local government departments to adopt the best practices in all fields; and instil creativity and innovation at all levels of organizations, including the employees.

Finally, the UAE government launched its excellence model (the Emirates Government Excellence Award that then became the His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Excellence Award in 2009) with the main objective being the improvement of the overall performance of all government organizations (including ministries and federal units) (The Government Excellence Model, 2019).

1.5 The Government Excellence Model in the UAE

1.5.1 Excellence Journey in the UAE

The Vice President of the UAE launched a new excellence model, which works extensively to improve the government in all areas by implementing innovative and pioneering projects and initiatives to achieve the vision of the UAE and become one of the foremost countries across several categories in published competitiveness reports. These projects and initiatives include all current trends regarding the excellence model to support the government sector's drive to become a pioneer country, such as innovation, government services, and future shaping (Al Zaabi, 2019).

The UAE government started the journey of excellence and pioneering (The March of Excellence) by establishing an excellence/quality award for the private sector in 1994. The next step was to promote government work by initiating localized excellence programs. In 2009, the Sheikh Khalifa Government Excellence program was launched, which covers all federal government entities and aims to improve internal happiness as well as societal happiness.

'Two decades later, in March 2015, the Emirati government excellence model was launched based on the directions of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum. The team at the Cabinet Office at the UAE Ministry of Cabinet Affairs and the Future immediately started designing and launching the Model as an extension to the excellence journey that the UAE has embarked on since 1994 (Figure 1.2: excellence journey) and to become a global reference for governments seeking to pioneer in government work.' (Source: PMO Website, the Government Excellence Model, 2019).

Figure 1.2: Excellence journey in the UAE (Source PMO Website, The Government Excellence Model, 2019)

Legends:

DQA: Dubai Quality Award

DGEP: Dubai Government Excellence Program

SKEA: Sheikh Khalifa Excellence Award

SSPGE: Sheikh Saqr Program for Government Excellence

ABEGP: Abu Dhabi Award for Excellence in Government Performance

AEP: Ajman Excellence Program

SKGEP: Sheikh Khalifa Government Excellence Program

GEM: Government Excellence Model 'The first excellence model for the government sector on the international level'

SBRDGPA: Saud bin Rashid Al Mu'alla Distinguished Government Performance Award

The government excellence model (GEM), developed by the government of the UAE, strives to meet the satisfaction and happiness of all stakeholders. The model helped the government of the UAE to become the leader in many competitiveness indices at a global level because the model is considered innovative and disruptive (Al Zaabi, 2019). Ten reputed quality and excellence associations and universities now endorse the GEM as a world-class excellence model.
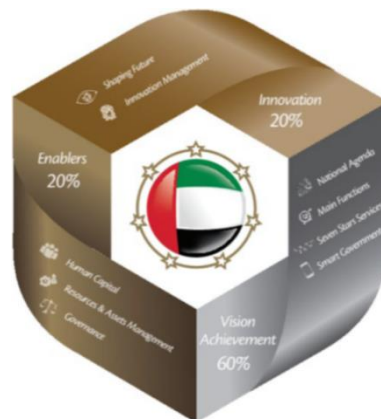
Figure 1.3: GEM (Source PMO Website)

The new excellence model was launched at the UAE federal level in 2014. The first assessment cycle was done in 2015. On the 19th of April 2016, His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, ordered the immediate implementation of the Fourth Generation of the Government Excellence System in Dubai. In 2016, H.H. announced, 'Next year, the Dubai Government Excellence Program will complete 20 years since it was founded; we gave our directions for Dubai government entities to move to the Fourth Generation of the Government Excellence System as a new milestone of government work.' In 2016, Abu Dhabi decided to switch to the new excellence model (Source: https://wam.ae/ar). Hammad and Dweiri (2018) pointed out that the DGEP adopted the new federal excellence model to suit the requirements of the Dubai government's objectives. Moreover, as Saraiva (2019) mentioned, the excellence model in the UAE is supported by the highest levels of leadership in the country.

1.5.2 The 10 Principles of the UAE Government Excellence Model

Figure 1.4 summarizes the ten key principles of the GEM. The principles represent how the government is to become pioneering worldwide, as the model provides a continuous evolutionary cycle of improvements. The model considers the vision of the country as a pioneering base and achieving leadership at the global level. The role of leadership is important in leading government entities toward the strategic objectives of organizations and ensuring that disruption is part of the organizational DNA. The model also emphasizes total alignment with all external issues and the environment. It considers performance a tool for measuring success through the distinctive capabilities of the entity.
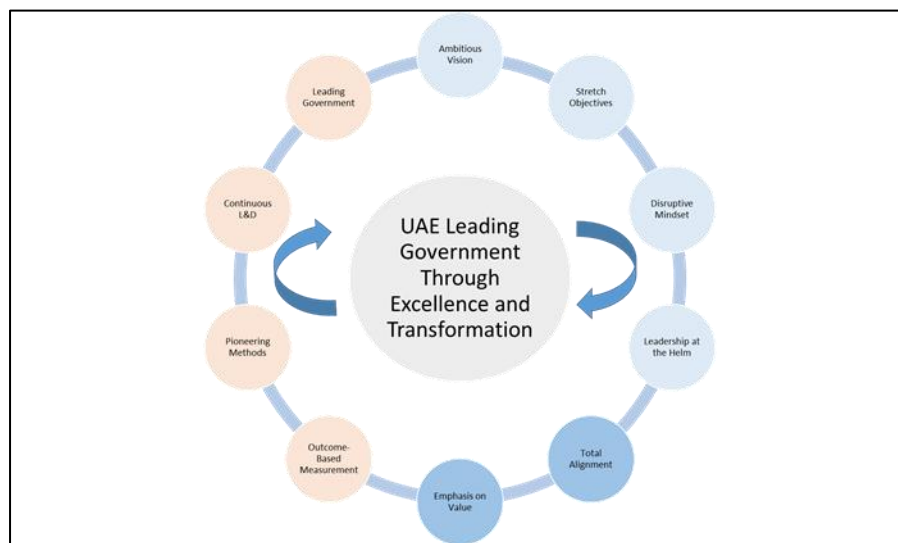
Figure 1.4: GEM 10 Fundamentals (Source: Zairi, 2019, p. 4)

1.5.3 The Fundamentals and Characteristics of the Government Excellence Model

This model is unique, and the uniqueness is owing to the following reasons/characteristics (Government Excellence Model Guide, government excellence model, 2021):

1) Considers the diversity of government entities' work nature.
2) Is result-oriented: the impact and results achieved weigh 70% of entities' assessments.
3) Focuses on the integration and innovation in entities' functions and services through utilizing the latest technologies.
4) Ensures the rational spending of government resources.
5) Engages local and international subject matter experts (SMEs) in the assessment process.
6) Measures the excellence maturity level against leading performances worldwide.
7) Focuses on future foresight and integration among government entities to achieve a unified vision.

1.5.4 Objectives of the Excellence Management System

As stated in the GEM guidebook, the new model differs in important ways from the previous one, as it incorporates some new concepts, such as achieving the vision of Dubai/the UAE, seven stars, innovation

management and future shaping, project management, and sustainability. The new model has introduced the concept of the core business or work nature of the organizations and focuses on the main specialized work results and achieving the national agenda. When the PMO launched the new generation of the excellence model, it set direct objectives (listed below) that new excellence systems will achieve if government entities implement them.

1) Supporting the government's intentions in the area of innovation
2) Focusing on improving the government's services
3) Acquiring a competitive advantage and leading position for Dubai and the UAE

The GEM, as shown in Figure 1.3, is divided into three main pillars representing the foundations for international leadership. These pillars ensure that any government entity will effectively perform its specialized work to achieve its objectives, in line with the general government objectives, through the optimal use of resources and the continuous pursuit of learning and development.

Achieving vision:

For a government entity to claim that it has achieved its vision, it must show that it has followed the national agenda and succeeded in achieving its objectives as outlined in the Memorandum of Association. This is accomplished by implementing the programs, projects, and services it offers its customers, partners, and the community at large, in a way that meets all the requirements and conditions and satisfies its obligations through an effective and efficient streamlining of all relevant working processes and methodologies. This must also happen in cooperation with, and not in opposition to, the work that other government entities are striving toward to provide the utmost satisfaction and added value to the community (Al Zaabi, 2019).

Innovation:

A government entity is innovative when it applies new, dynamic, and unconventional problem-solving methods. It designs and develops processes, methodologies, programs, and policies that continuously adapt to the changing times and needs of the entity, its partners, and its customers. It must always factor in the social, environmental, and economic restraints it must operate under while using these limitations as a springboard for developing further and placing itself at the forefront of cutting-edge practices (Al Zaabi, 2019).

Enablers:

Enablers are those resources and assets that enable a government entity to achieve its objectives and fulfil its obligations to its customers, partners, and stakeholders. The government entity must be able to manage its assets and resources in a conscious, deliberate way to maximize their effectiveness and efficiency. It must guarantee adherence to the principles of transparency, integrity, and governance, provide strategic and

operational risk management and mitigation and communicate these to its stakeholders. Human resources is the basis for enabling all this for the entity, and the entity must provide an attractive, fulfilling environment that facilitates the achievement of the entity's objectives, goals, and vision (Al Zaabi, 2019).

Recently, during the final stages of this research Dubai and the federal government modified the GEM. This second version of GEM modified its focus slightly, with some criteria and their weights being updated. These changes, however, did not cause the model to deviate in any significant way from the original GEM's essence. Therefore, this new version does not affect the findings of this research.

1.5.5. The Scores of the Government Excellence Model

The weights of the three main pillars are shown in Table 1.4. This is an example of the model in Dubai, as stated in the TEC-DGE Guidebook, 2nd edition in 2020 (Dubai Government Excellence, 2020).

Table 1.4: Weights of Criterion in the GEM

Pillar	Criterion		Total Weight
Vision Achievement	1)	National Agenda	60%
	2)	Main Functions	
	3)	Seven Stars Services	
	4)	Smart Government	
Innovation	5)	Future Shaping	15%
	6)	Innovation Management	
Enablers	7)	Human Capital	25%
	8)	Assets and Resources	
	9)	Governance	

1.5.6 The Assessment Approach

The assessment approach in the GEM is divided into two main sections (Dubai Government Excellence, 2020):

(1) Assessment of capabilities; and

(2) Assessment of results.

Part I: Capabilities are assessed using three main criteria:

(1) Effectiveness

(2) Efficiency

(3) Learning and development.

Part II: Results are assessed using four main criteria:

(1) Comprehensiveness and usability

(2) Achievement of results

(3) Performance development

(4) Leading position

1.6 Statement of the Problem

The UAE decided to build and develop a new, customized model to achieve the UAE's vision. Simply put, the vision is for the UAE to be one of the top countries across all fields and areas that will push the nation to the international forefront (UAE Vision 2021 website: www.vision2021.ae). To translate the vision into reality, its pillars have been mapped into six national priorities representing the key focus sectors of government action in the coming years. This vision focuses on innovation, future-shaping, worldwide competitiveness indices, smart government, and seven-star services.

Moreover, moving forward from implementing a previous version of the excellence model to a new version (GEM) will require some new perspectives to be studied to guarantee the new model's success. The new GEM differs from the previous one in many areas, as discussed in 2019 by Zairi, Saraiva, Bowe, and Al Zaabi in their respective articles, such as:

1) The main focus of the new model is the assessment of the core business and work nature of the organizations, meaning that the assessors should be SMEs in those areas of the organizations. The previous excellence model in the UAE was based on the EFQM model, and the assessors were from different backgrounds, not necessarily SMEs, in the job nature of the organization.

2) The new model (GEM) is designed to support the strategic initiatives of the government in different areas, such as seven-star services, innovation, smart government, future-shaping, and the UAE strategic plan. The new model has a separate main criterion for each area to allow the government departments to focus on these areas and allocate their resources to achieve the stated objectives of the government.

3) The new model has a clear sub-criterion to achieve related to world-class leadership. This means that all government departments should compare their results directly with competitiveness indices to achieve world-class leadership and become pioneers at the international level.

4) The GEM will be able to link all government directions under one system, meaning that to be a leading organization, every organization must comply with many government requirements regularly, such as legal compliance indicators, legislative compliance, management, and financial government indicators, smart transition indicators, happiness indicators, and strategic indicators. All these indicators will be part of the assessment and determine if the organization is a leader.

5) SMEs are used to assess different criteria, such as innovation, smart government, and human capital; they will also assess the work nature and core business of the organizations.

6) Winning conditions have been added to the assessment process, meaning the organizations must meet certain conditions before they are considered leading organizations. An example of this would be that the customer satisfaction of the organization must be above the government average.

Similarly, Hammad and Dweiri (2018) also reported many advantages and disadvantages of the new GEM compared to the EFQM. In brief, the advantages of the GEM are that it (1) uses variable weights for some

criteria, (2) focuses on specialized business, (3) uses SMEs, (4) assigns more weight to work-related criteria, (5) has results-based models, (6) aligns with government strategy, (7) implements new concepts, (8) links enablers and results, and (9) has a clear assessment tool. Meanwhile, the reported disadvantages are related to its (1) fundamental concepts, (2) benchmarking, (3) leadership roles, (4) clarity of criteria requirements, and (5) sustainability of excellent results.

In brief, the most important reason for conducting this study is to aid the UAE in achieving the three key objectives of the new GEM (as stated in section 1.5.4). The UAE, in general, and other Emirates, such as Abu Dhabi and Dubai, specifically, considered the previous model to be effective in improving government departments but not enough to take the UAE to the new worldwide era in terms of becoming pioneers and leaders globally with respect to innovation, government services, and most importantly, with respect to the competitiveness indices. This became the trigger for conducting the study.

However, to evaluate the new model and ensure it will achieve the stated objectives, it is vital to know what research has been done globally in these areas and apply it to the new model. Many excellence models were examined to determine which priority areas need to be studied to make this new model effective. Many articles have been published concerning other excellence models worldwide; however, very few have been published in the UAE. Therefore, an ideal starting point is to analyse the areas that these articles researched and studied to determine the areas to focus on in the UAE. Currently, six main researchers have conducted literature reviews globally to discover what has been done and why. The following areas were studied to ensure the model is effective.

  1) Motivation and benefits of using the model
  2) Critical success factors (CSFs)
  3) Obstacles and barriers of the model
  4) Internal validity

The main areas that most of the literature focusses on, as mentioned above, could be researched and studied for the GEM in the UAE, except for the study of the model's implied relationship validity and internal consistency because these areas need actual results of the assessment scoring for many organizations. As the GEM, up until today, has been implemented for only one cycle, excluding the internal validity from the study is recommended, and hopefully, other researchers in the context of the UAE can do a related study soon.

The main reasons for choosing the abovementioned areas are also discussed in Chapter 2 (Literature Review); in summary, it is strongly recommended for the UAE government to academically understand these areas to support the government in being world-class leaders in their sector and to make the new model a success. In addition, researching these areas will benefit many stakeholders, such as award custodians, organizations, excellence departments/sections, and consultants.

The three perspectives will be discussed in detail in Chapter 2; these are important for this study to evaluate the current excellence model. However, studying the trends of the articles published in the context of the excellence model revealed that four main areas should be focused on to improve the excellence model and ascertain its reliability and effectiveness in achieving the stated objectives.

The current study is the first study on the GEM and NQAs in the UAE, Abu Dhabi, and Dubai. The study's overall objective is to critically evaluate the new GEM to help the different stakeholders get the optimum benefit from the implementation and adoption of the new model. This research is mainly focused on the excellence model currently implemented in the government sector in the UAE. Moreover, the study will be beneficial to many stakeholders that are involved with the model, such as the government entities that apply the excellence model; the award custodians, such as the PMO and the Executive Councils at the Emirate level; the assessors who assess and evaluate the excellence model implementation in the government entities; and lastly, to the government of the UAE itself, which sets the road map and vision for the country and the local Emirates, as well as policy makers of the NQA. This study's findings would help academic students, as they will serve as a basis for research in the field of excellence in the UAE at the government level. Further, the study will fill a gap in the literature in the area of quality awards in the UAE.

These perspectives must be recognized by all organizations, including the benefits and advantages of the new model to organizations; the obstacles and difficulties that most organizations will face during the implementation; and the CSFs that ensure organizations will reach their strategic objectives and, in turn, achieve the national agenda of the UAE.

To summarize the problem in this study, four perspectives or areas must be researched to ensure that the current GEM will achieve the stated objectives for launching a new excellence model. The rationale behind choosing these four areas is that all the existing research focusses on these perspectives for considering the excellence model to be effective, successful, and reliable in achieving the stated objectives. Figure 1.5 below shows why these areas are important to government departments, that is, to understand, at an early stage of implementation, the new version of the excellence model.

The motivation, benefits, and impact of using the excellence model have been studied and researched by many authors and many excellence models. Some researchers had similar findings, while others found different reasons that encourage organizations to implement the excellence model. Some research focusing on public organizations suggest that implementing these models (awards) in public organizations may not improve their performance (Eriksson et al., 2003; Prabhu et al., 2002). Conversely, other research in corporate situations indicates a solid relationship between the implementation of quality (excellence) awards and the performance of the organizations (Eriksson and Garvare, 2005; George et al., 2003; Kanji and Moura E Sá, 2007). In the literature, many research articles examine how implementing excellence models leads to improvements in competitiveness. These articles cover Korea (Lee et al., 2003), the USA (Lee et al., 2006), Canada (Boys et al., 2005), and New Zealand (Saunders and Mann, 2005; Saunders, Mann, and Smith, 2007). It is important to point out that few research papers appear to have focused on the impact of excellence awards on public and service organizations. Common motivations found among

researchers (Gómez-López et al., 2016; Gómez-López et al., 2017; Heras–Saizarbitoria et al., 2006; Heras–Saizarbitoria et al., 2012; Iñaki et al., 2011; Saunders et al., 2008; Wei and Juanli, 2013) are the improvement of internal efficiency, productivity, and the company's image. Other researchers found different motivations, such as becoming a world-class organization (Gómez-López et al., 2017; Mann et al., 2011; Saunders et al., 2008; Talwar, 2009; and Zhao, 2004). Moreover, some researchers have indicated that organizations implementing TQM/PEM will obtain significant benefits, including increases in both financial profit (Boulter, Bendell, and Dahlgaard, 2013; Hendricks and Singhal, 1997; 2000; Jacob, Madu, and Tang, 2004; Link and Scott, 2001, 2006, 2011a, 2011b, 2011c) and non-financial outcomes (Curkovic et al., 2000). Finally, studies have also suggested that BE model implementation does not necessarily bring positive benefits for the enterprise (Fisher et al., 2001; Stephens et al., 2005). Table 12 summarizes the main reasons for implementing the excellence model. To help the UAE government achieve the model's stated objectives, answering the following question is necessary: How should one identify the key motivations, and are these internal or external? To answer this, the following questions need to be addressed:

1) Does the implementation of the GEM increase the competitiveness ranking of the UAE? Is there a relationship?
2) What are the internal and external motivation factors that encourage the organization to implement the GEM?
3) How should one measure the success of implementing the GEM in the UAE?

An additional perspective on assuring an effective excellence model is to study what factors lead to a successful experience in using an excellence model. Early studies show that this perspective has been researched deeply in the context of TQM to check the implementation success of the quality principles. Some researchers have classified the CSF into many groups to help organizations implement the excellence model (e.g., Salaheldin, 2009). Other researchers find that identifying the CSFs varies from model to model, as it depends on other parameters, such as type of organization, size, culture, and industries. Research in Middle-Eastern countries relating to in-depth implementation studies of BE are lacking. As the GEM has been recently launched, the recommendation is to identify the CSFs to prove the success of the implementation of the new excellence model. The following question arises: How should one identify the CSFs for such models implemented in a government department? To answer this, the following questions need to be addressed:

1) How should one determine the most critical factors that lead to a successful implementation of the excellence model in the UAE?
2) Can the CSFs be classified to study the impact on the implementation of the excellence model in the UAE?
3) Do other factors (i.e., culture, size of the organizations, industries, etc.) affect the successful implementation of the excellence model in the public sector?
4) Do the CSFs help the organization to be excellent? Do they ensure the effective implementation of the model?

The third perspective is the barriers and obstacles. Few research articles have studied the obstacles and difficulties regarding using and implementing the excellence model. Some authors found similar obstacles in most of the excellence models implemented worldwide (Ahire et al., 1996; Angell and Corbett, 2011; Bhat and Rajashekhar, 2009; Corbett and Angell, 2011; Gómez-López et al., 2017; Mann et al., 2011; Mathews et al., 2001; Soltani et al., 2005; Tari, 2009), such as lack of time and lack of commitment. Other researchers found different obstacles (Bolboli and Reiche, 2014), such as a lack of implementation know-how and resistance to cultural change.

Although studies that examine the obstacles to the implementation of the excellence model are rare, some authors have studied the barriers to TQM implementation. For the UAE to achieve the objectives of the model, studying the actual barriers during the implementation of the model is recommended.

The barriers might be studied from different perspectives and different opinions. To identify these barriers, three perspectives could be studied during the implementation of the excellence models in the UAE:

1) Submission process
2) Assessment process
3) Implementation process

In addition, these perspectives might be verified by the opinions of four stakeholders:

1) Employees
2) Quality/Excellence managers
3) Top management
4) Assessors and validators

Figure 1.5 summarizes the issues that should be studied to ensure that the new model is effective.
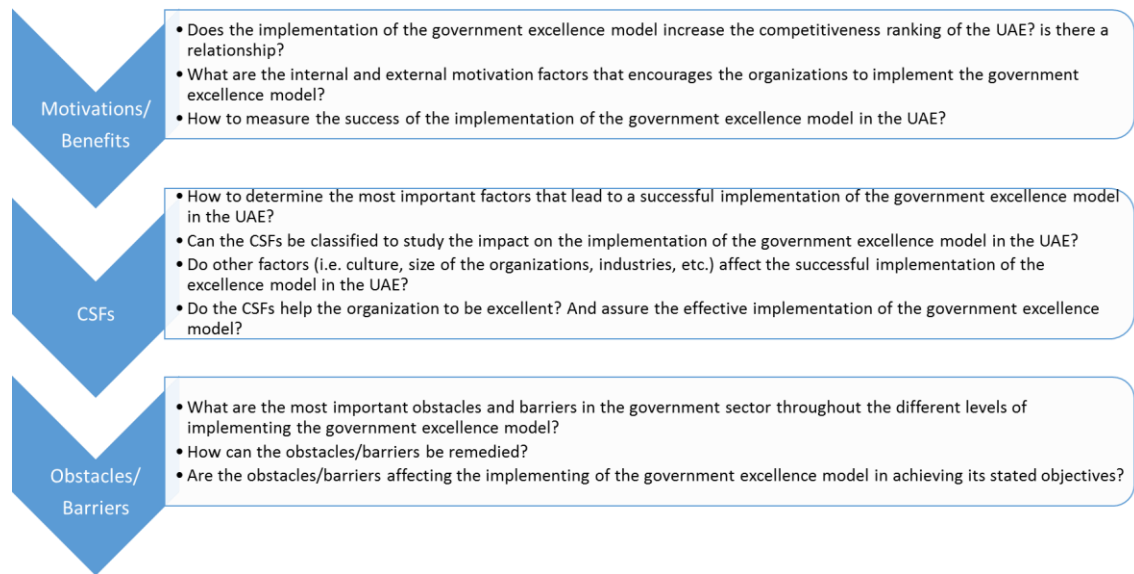
Figure 1.5: Scope of the Study

1.7 Aim and Objectives

The main aim of this research is to critically evaluate the new GEM with respect to three perspectives (motivations and benefits, CSFs, and obstacles and barriers). This study attempted to discover the benefits, motivations, CSFs, barriers, and obstacles to implementing the new version of the excellence model. If the benefits and motivations can adequately be defined, organizations may utilize them to achieve the overall objectives of the model in the UAE, which will lead to the country developing in other areas. If the barriers and obstacles can be studied and identified, organizations will become worldwide role models and acquire competitive advantages and leading positions in the UAE. Finally, if CSFs can be discovered, organizations can adopt them to promote society's welfare. The specific objectives of this research are as follows:

1) Discover the benefits and motivations for implementing the new GEM.
2) Study the CSFs needed to make the GEM a success.
3) Explore the difficulties/obstacles facing the government organization sector during the implementation of the GEM.
4) Propose changes to the national excellence awards programs depending on the outcomes of the study.

1.8 Significance

This study adds to the body of knowledge significantly for the following reasons. First, there is little research on quality, TQM, and excellence awards in Arab countries, including the UAE. Second, an excellence model has been implemented in Dubai for more than 21 years with no emphasis on researching the benefits and motivations, CSFs, and barriers and obstacles of the model. Specifically, there are sound reasons to examine these aspects and understand the excellence award in the government sector, as it has reached a stage of maturity. Third, if this study can discover the obstacles and barriers, CSFs, and

motivation and benefits of implementing the GEM in the UAE, the organizations can utilize the outputs of this study to achieve the desired results, which leads to achieving the overall objectives of the model.

The findings from this study are expected to provide the following benefits:

1) An overall recommendation to the award custodian concerning where to focus their resources and time to improve the model itself and where to invest to achieve the overall objectives of the GEM.
2) Operational recommendations for the organizations wishing to implement the new model to achieve their strategic objectives and the government strategic plan by knowing all the CSFs, benefits, and obstacles of the new model.
3) A starting point for all researchers in the UAE wanting to use the information and recommendations coming out of this study to deeply examine other RQs in the future.
4) Some direct findings for directors/managers of excellence in government departments to focus on to successfully implement the excellence model in their organizations.

1.9 Rationale

The public sector in the UAE adopted the EFQM model with some customizations (Ahrens, 2013; Lasrado and Uzbeck, 2017) and decided in 2015 to develop a new GEM to serve the ambitious vision of the UAE. (Al Zaabi, 2019; Zairi, 2019). The new government model system is built based on the future needs of the government of the UAE and its expectations and directions from the local Emirates. The new model is unique to the UAE, as it considers new areas not covered directly by other excellence models globally, such as direct criteria for future shaping, innovation, the country's vision, AI, digital, and government services. This was concluded by Hammad and Dweiri in 2018 when they compared the EFQM with the new GEM. Moreover, the assessment and evaluation methods are vastly different from those of other excellence models globally, as they include SMEs and core business specialists in the areas to be assessed for each organization. 'The 4GES model focuses on the specialized business of the entity by using Subject Matter Experts in the field as assessors and giving more weight to work-related criteria.' (Hammad and Dweiri, 2018).

As mentioned in the previous section, there is very little research pertaining to quality, TQM, and excellence awards in the context of Arab countries, including the UAE (Ahrens, 2013; Hawarna et al., 2020; Lasrado, 2017; Lasrado and Uzbeck, 2017; McAdam et al., 2013). Lasrado (2017) also concluded there is a distinct shortage of published research papers and articles in the Arab Middle East on the benefits and effects of implementing the excellence model. Moreover, Hawarna et al. (2020) stated that empirical research papers and studies that examined the relationship between the NQA in Dubai and corporate performance are rare. An excellence model was implemented in the government of Dubai for more than 22 years, in the government of Abu Dhabi for more than 14 years, and at the federal level for more than 11 years. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to bridge the knowledge gap of the new excellence model. First, this is the first study in the UAE to discuss the benefits and motivations, barriers and obstacles, and CSFs of the new model. Second, this is the first study to use a qualitative approach to gain the opinions of the experts,

specialists, and consultants who implement the new excellence model in public organizations. Third, this is the first study to cover the three major public sectors that implement the new excellence model in the UAE, namely, Abu Dhabi, Dubai, and the federal government. Fourth, this is the first study to recommend changes to the four stakeholders involved in the implementation of the model: the award custodian, government entities, model assessors, and the government.

The researchers investigating most of the literature related to the excellence models summarized their findings, analyses, and recommendations for future works. Table 1.5 shows these integrative reviews of the literature.

Table 1.5: Integrative Review of the Literature with Respect to Excellence Models

Sl.	Title	Author(s)	Year
1	A relevant literary space on the use of the European Foundation for Quality Management model: current state and challenges	Daniel La Rotta & Jorge Pérez Rave	2017
2	Quantitative research on the EFQM excellence model: A systematic literature review	Eva Suárez, Arturo Calvo-Mora, José L. Roldán, Rafael Periá˜nez-Cristóbal	2017
3	Empirical evidence on applying the European Foundation for Quality Management Excellence Model, a literature review	H.J. Doelemana, S. ten Haveb, and C.T.B. Ahausc	2014
4	European Foundation for Quality Management Business Excellence Model An integrative review and research agenda	Dong Young Kim, Vinod Kumar, and Steven A. Murphy	2010
5	Business excellence measurement: a literature analysis (1990–2016)	Ioannis N. Metaxas & Dimitrios E. Koulouriotis	2019
6	A bibliometric and thematic review of business excellence journal papers from 1990 to 2020	Saad Ghafoor, Nigel P. Grigg, Sanjay Mathrani & Robin Mann	2022

Based on an in-depth analysis of the above articles, most of the published research articles were found to discuss major areas, such as the study of the validity of the model's implied relationships (the model's internal consistency), the impact of the implementation of the model, obstacles to the use of the model, benefits of the model, and the CSFs that make the excellence model successful. This will be elaborated on more in the Literature Review section.

1.10 Research Questions

The RQs to be addressed in this study are as follows:

RQ1: What are the main motivations/benefits for using the GEM in the UAE?
RQ2: What are the CSFs affecting the implementation of the GEM in the UAE?
RQ3: What are the main barriers/obstacles to the GEM implementation in the UAE?

1.11 Assumptions and Limitations

In conducting this research, several assumptions were made. First, the participants were qualified in the area of excellence and implementation of the excellence model in government entities. Second, the participants work in government entities in Dubai, Abu Dhabi, and the federal authorities. Third, the interviewees have participated in at least one full cycle of the GEM implementation. Fourth, the participants worked at least one full implementation cycle of a previous model. If these assumptions are not fulfilled, results may be skewed.

1.12 Nature of the Study

This research used the 2015 version of the GEM in the UAE and any amendments in the excellence model up to 2019. The study used a qualitative approach as the rationale because aspects of the benefits and motivations, CSFs, and obstacles and barriers of implementing the GEM in the UAE lend themselves more to a qualitative approach than a quantitative approach to provide a degree of richness in information.

The objective of the current qualitative study is to identify motivations, CSFs, and barriers/obstacles to the GEM in the UAE. The study included interviews with senior management positions of organizations that participated in quality awards based on the GEM in the UAE.

The purpose of the study is to explore the opinions of all senior leaders regarding the motives that drive the organizations to be successful in the implementation of the GEM, what CSFs adoptions are important in the pursuit of excellence, and finally, what are the major obstacles and barriers that slow down the achievement of excellence in the organizations.

To choose the most appropriate designs for research, many points should be considered, such as the research objectives, the availability of the resources and literature, and the depth of the study (Jones, 2008). 'Broadly, qualitative research is generally employed to support a researcher in generating a deep understanding of a given phenomenon. The outcomes of such research range from generating findings that can inform practice (e.g., Lochmiller, 2016) to providing detailed descriptions of a given problem of practice (e.g., Honig, 2006) to offering insights about professional practices within a given context (e.g., O'Reilly et al., 2015), and tackling issues related to the subjective nature of qualitative research (e.g., Cho et al., 2016)' (Lester et al. 2020, p. 95).

The basis for choosing a qualitative approach is discussed in detail in Chapters 3 and 4. It is the appropriate method for collecting information on a topic considered under-researched in the literature (i.e., the motivations, CSFs, and barriers/obstacles of the new excellence model in the UAE). The central phenomenon is the GEM in the UAE. As stated in the first chapter, the purpose of this study does not include knowing the relationships between variables or testing theories. Thus, the quantitative method is not appropriate in this situation (Charmaz, 2006).

1.13 Structure of the Thesis

The current thesis contains six chapters and is organized as follows.

Chapter 1 presents the history of excellence models globally, in general, and in the UAE, in particular. It provides an overview of the GEM in the context of the UAE, followed by the statement of the problem and the main objectives and aim of this research. Next, the significance and rational of the study are discussed. Finally, the research gaps, RQs, and nature of the study are discussed.

Chapter 2 presents the literature review. First, the excellence models in public or government sectors are discussed. Second, a detailed presentation is provided on the excellence models in the literature. Third, the UAE excellence models in the literature are discussed, as this research studies the UAE GEM. Fourth, the three perspectives that formed the RQs are shown in detail. Finally, the gaps in the literature are discussed for each perspective.

Chapter 3 focuses on the methodology of the qualitative approach. First, research philosophies and research approaches are discussed, and then justifications are discussed. Second, a detailed discussion of the research strategy is presented, followed by the reasons and justifications for using a qualitative methodology to gather data. Third, a method for data collection and processing is discussed to achieve the objectives of this study. A detailed description is presented to discuss the ethics, sampling, interview protocol, and interview questions (IQs).

Chapter 4 presents a detailed analysis of the data provided by the participants from the government sectors in Dubai, Abu Dhabi, and the federal government organizations. Qualitative data analysis approaches are discussed, and the justification for using a thematic approach is presented, followed by a data analysis process and structure designed to present the findings. Finally, how the key themes are formulated and presented is discussed, and each key theme is presented with detailed quotations from the participants.

Chapter 5 presents the discussion of this thesis. The discussion is based on a structured approach (including a list of the key themes for each RQ), an introduction for each theme, key theme vs literature themes, and finally, an explanation of the key theme in the context of the UAE excellence model.

Chapter 6 focuses on the detailed conclusions for each theme separately, followed by the overall conclusions for the thesis. The types of contributions of the current study are discussed, and the link with the gaps in the literature is presented. Last, the limitations of this study and recommendations/directions for future research are presented.

1.14 Summary

In this chapter, the basics of the thesis were presented and discussed in an overview of the research. The significance of the excellence model was explored, which provided a clear motivation for conducting this study in the UAE government sector. Chapter 1 discussed the history of excellence models, in general, and in the UAE, in particular. The aim, objectives, research gaps, statement of the problem, thesis structure, and significance were also discussed. This chapter also addressed the RQs and introduced the context surrounding the model. Chapter 2 will review the literature related to the excellence models and identify the main gaps in the literature.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter presents a comprehensive literature review divided into seven main sections. The first section introduces excellence models globally and the roles of national awards in improving the overall performance of organizations. As the research for this thesis was conducted in public-sector organizations, more details about excellence models in the government or public sector will be presented in section two. The third section focuses on a detailed discussion of excellence models in the literature and how the RQs can be developed based on the analysis and discussion. The fourth section presents the history of the excellence models in the UAE, where the research was conducted and explores the evolution of national awards in the UAE. Finally, sections five, six, and seven present the literature review for the three key research areas, along with the gaps in the literature.

Paraphrasing Sir Isaac Newton, intellectual progress comes by standing on the shoulders of giants, meaning one builds on the knowledge gained by those who came before. For this reason, this chapter shows a timeline of papers and articles that traverse the gaps in the old literature by filling them in with the knowledge gained via new papers and articles in the last 5–7 years.

2.1 Introduction and International Excellence Models

'The excellence model is a practical tool to help organizations measure where they are on the path of excellence, helping them understand the gaps and then stimulate developing solutions.' (Hawarna et al., 2020, p. 1415). The main purpose of excellence models is to assess and evaluate the success of enterprises in achieving predefined objectives and to check if the organizations are on the right track to attain excellence (Dahlgaard et al., 2013). Moreover, it is defined as a high level of maturity in a company/organization in terms of management and result achievement (Zdrilić and Dulčić, 2016) and, broadly, success (Veselova, 2019).

Although the exact number of excellence awards globally is still unknown, Al Zawati et al. (2020) reported that approximately 100 awards in 82 countries had adopted excellence models, similar to the number mentioned by Tickle et al. (2016). In addition, Mohammad et al. (2011) reported that 83 countries have 94 business excellence awards between them; these excellence awards would be beneficial for countries in their efforts to achieve excellence at numerous points within the organizations and national levels. Some countries adopted well-known models, such as the EFQM, Deming Prize, and Malcolm Baldrige, or a mix of these models. This number is also cited in other research papers (e.g., Bolboli and Reiche, 2013). The number of excellence models or quality awards is significant, which indicates that most countries are trying to implement best practices in terms of quality to achieve competitive advantages. This is because an excellence model is considered the best tool for measuring the success of organizations, as it helps organizations adopt the best practices implemented in world-class organizations or the field of excellence. Organizations can benefit from assessing their performance and determining solutions to bridge the gap. This helps users identify their strengths and areas for improvement and determine their maturity level. Currently, organizations are getting more involved in incorporating BE practices in their operations to attain

prestige as leaders in their respective fields (Metaxas and Koulouriotis, 2019). Countries relying on excellence models have built rewards and prizes at the national and regional levels that motivate companies and businesses to reach excellence, growth, and wealth creation (Heydari et al., 2019).

The primary purposes of creating the NQAs are to improve quality, enhance performance, and make industries competitive (Safari et al., 2020). Lasrado (2017, p. 60–61) highlighted 'six major perceived benefits of quality awards in the UAE context:

1) Provides independent quality assessment
2) Fosters continuous improvement
3) Promotes a culture of BE
4) Fosters teamwork and organizational learning
5) Provides an opportunity to share, learn, and benchmark
6) Brand recognition and pride.'

Quality awards are one of the most common tools available today for assessing organizational performance and are an excellent method used by most countries involved in promoting quality awareness. Multiple country-level business excellence models/NQAs exist because no fully comprehensive and balanced model covers all aspects of quality management. As a result, each country chooses its own model from among the popular models as a reference and customizes it to suit the country-specific relevant parameters (Gupta and Vrat, 2020). Mavroidis et al. (2007) identified and summarized some factors that affect the framework criteria of an NQA. According to Tan (2002), the first factor that may shape the development of an NQA is culture, along with the economic and social development of a country. This is clearly seen in the European Quality Award, where a higher weight (score) is given on both the 'impact on society' and 'people management' criteria. The second factor is the desire for the NQAs to align with international standards and practices.

Building on previous research studies, Sayeh (2006) presented multiple points of importance for countries during the establishment of quality awards. The top three factors are continuous performance improvement, attaining the required level of excellence, and maintaining invariability. Most researchers and practitioners recommend that all organizations in the public and private sectors, manufacturing or services, large or small, use the excellence model framework as a roadmap for their BE journey. Many countries use excellence models as a basis for award programs. The BE models serve as a mechanism for organizations to gauge their capabilities and help their nations achieve national economic performance. Finally, the award is not the ultimate goal for any organization or country, as the main objectives differ between countries. El-Kahlout (2010) identified the value of excellence in the UAE by mentioning that the primary objective of having the excellence model in Dubai is to identify the strengths and areas for improvement via assessment feedback reports to enhance the overall performance of government entities in Dubai. Specifically, the awards complete the cycle of success for the excellence model.

2.2 Excellence Models in Public or Government Sectors

Does the excellence model fit all types of organizations? Many authors in the pursuit of excellence have raised this question. Lasrado and Uzbeck (2017) and Hammad (2020) claimed that the model could be applied to all types of organizations irrespective of their size. Mann et al. (2011) used different methods, such as questionnaires and surveys, across five Asian countries and 21 discussion groups with organizations that won excellence awards; they found that more than 90% of respondents believe that BE frameworks can be applied at any type of organization. Al Zawati et al. (2020) and Faraj (2018) emphasized that the focus of the EFQM was initially on achieving results for customers, employees, and society to improve the global competitiveness of the Western European industries, later expanding its scope to all organizations no matter their type or size. Criado-García et al. (2020) pointed out that another limitation may be related to the universal character of the EFQM excellence model, that is, its validity for any type of organization, independent of size or organizational structure.

Further, few researchers concluded that some excellence models have a disadvantage in relation to the size of the organization. The EFQM model, for instance, is more suitable for large enterprises than small and medium ones. (Gómez-López et al., 2016). Escrig and De Menezes (2015), in their study to determine if the size of the organization plays a vital role in the implementation process of the EFQM, found that the EFQM excellence model can be adopted at any sized organization, but the size could play an important role in a few enablers that may influence the results.

Government organizations, like private organizations, seek to improve their services and achieve performance outcomes. Therefore, implementing excellence models in government becomes more challenging and interesting. In 1987, the USA established the MBNQA quality award, for several purposes, including 'improve quality standards, increase productivity, improve value to stakeholders, promote quality awareness, and improve the global competition.' The UAE decided to adopt the excellence model and launch many quality awards in different Emirates to achieve one of its strategic goals and become one of the leading countries in the region.

A mix of old and new articles should be researched and compared to the implementation of excellence models between public and private uses. Prabhu et al. (2002) used a quantitative approach and conducted an empirical study to compare excellence model strengths and weaknesses between the public and private sectors in the UK, based on data gained from more than 100 organizations. They identified six business areas, based on benchmarking metrics, to make these comparisons. The results were critically important to the research community, as the authors created a table that compares the strengths and weaknesses of each business area. The major findings were that the public sector has greater strengths in HR, leadership, and service quality than the private sector, while it has weaknesses in innovation, corporate performance, and reducing costs, compared to the private sector. The main limitation of this study is that the case study was conducted in one region of the UK (North-East), without comparing the data with other findings in different regions and with other researchers, such as Eriksson et al. (2003), who used a quantitative approach and George et al. (2003) who used the case-study method. George et al. (2002) used a twin approach to assess

the performance of the local public authority in the UK. They suggested that organizations must focus on the performance of the organization through the implementation of effective methodologies and approaches.

Currently, many research papers focus on the government sector in the context of excellence. El-Kahlout (2010) showed that one of the greatest benefits of implementing the excellence model within the government of Dubai is transitioning the government entities from working in an outdated conventional approach to a new innovative approach focusing on competitiveness. This led to improved services and enhanced customer satisfaction. Additionally, a study of assembling DGEP by Ahrens (2013) found that the vision and direction of the government in Dubai determine the evolution and enhancement of the excellence award.

It is clear that each sector, whether private or public, has its own interest in implementing excellence models. Of course, common factors would be present in both. In 2004, Jacob et al. used secondary data from the Danish Excellence Index and studied several companies in Denmark to determine how companies achieved excellent results via the EFQM excellence model. They showed that private and public sectors do not achieve the results at the same values. Private sectors put a higher emphasis on a system dimension, while public sectors put a higher emphasis on a people dimension. Jacob et al. concluded that private and public sectors had achieved almost the same results in Criteria 6 (customer results) and Criteria 8 (society results). The public sector achieved higher results in Criteria 7 (people results) and Criteria 9 (key performance results).

In 2007, Kanji and Moura E Sá introduced a new approach to measuring performance excellence in the government sectors: KBEM (Kanji's Business Excellence Measurement System), which was applied to measure the performance of some municipalities in Portugal. The authors reviewed the performance of 85 municipalities in Portugal to find the indicators affecting organizational performance. The major findings of this research are as follows:

1) Government organizational performance relies on specific indicators, such as leadership, employee and customer satisfaction, and continuous improvement.
2) These organizations must focus on four areas to improve performance: values, stakeholders, processes, and organizational learning.

The two main lessons learned from this paper are the need to manage the key processes and to collect, analyse, and disseminate reliable and meaningful measurements and the importance of extending the assessment exercise to all essential stakeholders so that a more comprehensive and realistic picture can emerge. Concerning implementing excellence models in the government sector, Ahrens (2013) emphasizes that excellence models do not account for political and government visions or missions, which should be determined by the leadership of the country before adopting the excellence model. Government and public sector governance are considered different from the private or other sectors because the shareholders' relationships are very different regarding profit and cost expenditures (Larcker and Tayan, 2011).

Forrester and Aladwan (2016) studied the challenges in implementing an excellence model in the government of Jordan. He found that some challenges must be resolved to make the model successful. These challenges were comprised of leadership criteria, empowerment, benchmarking, management systems, integration, and resources. Lasrado and Uzbeck (2017) considered that the excellence model could be implemented in any type of organization, irrespective of its size, and this would guide the organization to success. They found that the methodology and approach are similar in the organizations that won the NQA, but the difference is how the organizations put their decisions into action, that is, by optimizing several factors, such as processes, systems, and cultures. McAdam et al. (2013) examined two RQs within a large Dubai government entity that implements the excellence model. The first question was about measuring the perceptions of managers and employees, from different departments, on some key topics concerning the implementation of the GEM. The second question was about making a comparison between these perceptions with western countries that implement excellence models.

In relation to RQ1, the results of the interviews follow the same pattern as the findings of Jabnoun and Khalifa (2005) and Kim et al. (2010), which show the interest of the senior management level in implementing the excellence model, as it is the best tool to improve the whole organization. Regarding RQ2, consistent with Jones and Seraphim (2008), the government of the UAE is driving the implementation of the GEM in all government entities. This study also made two further suggestions: (1) modifying criteria weights to avoid misleading results and (2) focusing on the culture of excellence (CoE) in the government.

Raharjo and Eriksson (2017) stated that studies and research related to differentiating the implementation of the excellence model between public and private sectors need to be strengthened and given more attention in the future. They concluded that the overall performance in the public sector is less than in the private sector. 'The effect of 'leadership' on 'management of processes' is significantly higher in public organizations than in private ones. However, 'management of processes' in public organizations does not seem to translate into 'results.' The effect of 'strategic planning' on creating business 'results' is negative for public organizations and remains inconclusive, due to insufficient evidence, for private organizations.' (Raharjo and Eriksson, 2017, p. 1812). This is compatible with other findings by authors such as Jacob et al. (2004), who concluded that public organizations do not have the same strategic freedom that private companies have because some of their strategic goals are decided by politicians. This also affects the resources available to public organizations. That is, they do not always have the resources needed to meet demand, making it necessary for public organizations to prioritize which customers/users to serve. This is a situation unfamiliar to private companies. Recently, Rodgers et al. (2020) recommended undertaking empirical research with continuous improvement practitioners within the public sector to develop an understanding of how the EFQM and public sector improvement framework are applied, the benefits and challenges of such application, and if and how they are integrated with continuous improvement methodologies. Finally, the most recent study, Al Zawati et al. (2020), provided some evidence that the public sector would need to develop its own excellence model to suit its needs and expectations and the directions of the government, depending on the environment they work in.

Summary of this section:

From reviewing some of the literature (comparing old and new articles), opposing views seem to be present regarding whether the excellence model fits public/government or private organizations. Some authors found that in public organizations, compared with private organizations, the focus will be more on HR, leadership, and the quality of services and less in some other areas, such as innovation, reducing costs, and corporate performance. Other researchers found that corporate performance is the key factor to be studied and investigated when it comes to the difference between public and private organizations. Additionally, it is also suggested that some attention should be paid when implementing the excellence model. Suáreza et al. (2017) showed that in many cases, the researchers attempt to show how the implementation of the EFQM model affects organizational variables, and the results are not affected by the type of activity the organization undertakes. Metaxas and Koulouriotis (2019) undertook research on the published BE measurement literature by studying 139 papers from 39 management journals published from 1990 to 2016 and found that 5% of these articles are dedicated to the public sector, and the highest percentages were to education (13%) and manufacturing (12%).

Two important factors should be considered when studying if an excellence model fits public or private organizations: (1) the weight of the sub-criterion and (2) the objectives of the GEM. Suáreza et al. (2017) emphasized the importance of conducting research in the government and public sectors because the other sectors have been covered in the literature. In the current paper, and based on the literature review, some important areas will be addressed as follows:

1) How should one determine the most important factors that lead to a successful implementation of the excellence model in the UAE? Is the new GEM in the UAE suitable for all kinds of public organizations?
2) What are the internal and external motivation factors that encourage the organization to implement the GEM?
3) How should one measure the successful implementation of the GEM in the UAE?
4) What are the most important obstacles and barriers in the UAE government sector during the different levels of implementing the new GEM?

Finally, Al Zawati et al. (2020) concluded that the new GEM assists the government entities in the UAE, as it is easy to adopt because it focuses on the core business of the organization. They suggested that the new excellence model will help the organization reach leading and pioneering positions worldwide, and the model should be dynamic and continuously evolve to meet the expectations of the government.

2.3 Excellence Models in the Literature

Knowing the history of research conducted on excellence models is important to determine the gaps in the literature. This section will focus on six main research articles (Table 1.5) that have investigated the excellence models by analysing a comprehensive number of the research articles in the literature related

directly to different excellence models. In this way, a thorough study can be conducted in a systematic and intentional way to increase the body of knowledge and find missing/understudied areas to be researched in the future. Analysing the six important research articles will assist in determining the gap in the literature related to the excellence models. The following tables summarize the key important factors among these six articles.

Table 2.1 Overview of Article I

Title	A relevant literary space on the use of the European Foundation for Quality Management model: current state and challenges
Authors, year	La Rotta & Rave, 2017
Purpose(s)	To describe the key challenges of the EFQM and the main characteristics of this model in the literature.
Findings	• 23.33% of the research articles are concerned with how the excellence model assists the process of decision-making. • 16.77% of the research articles are concerned with the validity of criteria in the excellence model and the connections. • 16.77% of studies pertain to the benefits of the excellence model and its impact. • 10% of research articles relate to what factors into the company preferring to adopt the excellence model. • 6.67% of studies pertain to barriers and obstacles of the excellence model. • 6.67% of research articles relate to what motivates and encourages organizations to implement the excellence model. • 6.67% pertain to the achieved results and performance of the excellence model. • 6.67% relate to stakeholder management.
Conclusion	Internal consistency and decision-making themes are the key topics of the excellence model research articles. One of the main conclusions of this study was to develop a framework for future agendas and topics.

Table 2.2 Overview of Article II

Title	Quantitative research on the EFQM excellence model: A systematic literature review
Authors, year	Suárez et al., 2017
Purpose(s)	To show what needs to be done in the future within the field of excellence.
Findings	• 30.2% of research articles are concerned with the connections and relationships among criteria in the excellence model. • 18.87% of research articles pertain to the effect of adopting the excellence model on organizations. • 17% of research articles study the rewarding results of implementing the excellence model on the performance of the organization. • 11.2% of research papers relate to the interconnectedness and the synergy of the excellence model with other management practices. • 9.43% of research articles study the motivations, obstacles, and barriers to adopting the excellence model. • 5.66% of research articles are concerned with how the excellence model assists the process of decision-making. • 7.45% of research articles pertains to the validity, reliability, connections, and weights of the excellence model.
Conclusion	Deep conclusions for 7 areas of the excellence model were discussed: validity and reliability, importance, constructs and dimensions, the relationship between criteria and results, recognition, and motivation and barriers.

Table 2.3 Overview of Article III

Title	Empirical evidence on applying the European Foundation for Quality Management Excellence Model, a literature review
Authors, year	Doelemana et al., 2015
Purpose(s)	To review the literature built on provable observations regarding how the excellence model improves performance.
Findings	The classification of the 24 research articles in the literature into 5 main types of excellence model, i.e. the validity of the model, the connection with TQM philosophy, practical application, the significant role of leadership, and how the excellence model's implementation leads to performance results.
Conclusion	The main conclusion of this study is that there are no systematic and structured reviews of research articles related to the excellence model.

Table 2.4 Overview of Article IV

Title	European Foundation for Quality Management Business Excellence Model An integrative review and research agenda
Authors, year	Kim et al., 2010
Purpose(s)	To discover what approaches, methodologies, themes, and ideas pertain to the excellence model and propose further topics.
Findings	A high percentage of research papers (57%) or 52 articles pertain to performance in the excellence model. 21% (19 articles) are concerned with the EFQM archetype. Human capital and leadership criteria comprised 12% (11 articles).
Conclusion	A high percentage of research studies are concentrated on a handful of subjects and themes such as performance and other topics are almost neglected in the literature. Moreover, the approaches and methods for analysing the data are limited.

Table 2.5 Overview of Article V

Title	Business excellence measurement: a literature analysis (1990–2016)
Authors, year	Metaxas & Koulouriotis, 2019
Purpose(s)	To advance a concrete understanding of relevant literature and to assess whether the temporal trends in BEM literature will help position firms for the emerging business excellence context.
Findings	To present the trends in each of the three axes (sector, framework used, and methodology applied) and key research areas are proposed to guide future BEM research agenda.
Conclusion	The results show that most papers, up to now, used traditional approaches for BEM. Given also that there is a high concentration of papers after 2008, academics and practitioners should focus on these recent papers to develop innovative methodologies for BEM. Otherwise, BEM literature runs the risk of not including the trends of the current turbulent environment.

Table 2.6 Overview of Article VI

Title	A bibliometric and thematic review of business excellence journal papers from 1990 to 2020
Authors, year	Ghafoor et al., 2022
Purpose(s)	To present a bibliometric and thematic review of journal papers specifically related to BE frameworks (BEFs) that are used for national BE awards.
Findings	The peak in publishing BE papers was in 2019; Total Quality Management and Business Excellence is the most popular journal for publishing BE papers; the most popular research area is studying 'Design of BEFs' and there is potential for future research on 'Impact of BE'.
Conclusion	This paper allows scholars to carry out a more in-depth analysis of literature in the identified research areas within BE. For practitioners, this study has a stock of information on case studies from around the world regarding how BE has been promoted, implemented, assessed, and awarded.

Summary of the analysis:

This section used a systematic and organized approach to investigate all the previous research articles conducted on different excellence models in the literature. It began with identifying the available articles that studied relevant literacy on excellence models. Six main articles achieved this purpose; these are (as per the published date): Kim et al. (2010), Doeleman et al. (2014), La Rotta and Rave (2017), Suáreza et al. (2017), Metaxas and Koulour (2019), and Ghafoor et al. (2022). The main reason for studying these specific research articles is because their researchers analysed all previous works on excellence models with respect to many factors, such as the aims of the study, research methodology, excellence models used, business sector, data source, analysis techniques, results, and scope of the work. Eight hundred and seven articles on excellence models were investigated by the researchers to study, in-depth, the history of research with respect to excellence models. The highest number of research articles (415) was examined by Ghaffor et al. (2022) and the lowest (24) by Doelema et al. (2014).

The review of these six articles shows some consensus about the excellence models:

1) The qualitative method as a research approach is used much less than the quantitative method.
2) The scope of research articles on the public sector is always far lower than any other sector.
3) The interview method as a source of data is not commonly used in the literature.
4) Some variables have not been researched sufficiently, such as challenges, barriers and obstacles, motivation, and benefits.
5) The focus on the public sector when studying the implementation of the excellence models.
6) Compared to other sectors, the CSFs that make the implementation successful in the public sector context are not clearly researched. Most of the research articles either studied the CSFs in several sectors in the same study or focused on one sector solely.
7) The role of award custodians is rarely studied in the literature.

Ghafoor et al. (2020) analysed and reviewed the journal papers on BE and found that the most popular studies are related to excellence models' design, followed by its practices, then its impact, and finally, the review of the related literature. Kim et al. (2010) used an integrative literature review methodology to explore the diversity of studies conducted pertaining to the EFQM model. They explored the scope of many papers and articles, and methods used in studies of the EFQM business excellence model to suggest a future research agenda. They reviewed the literature extensively to explore the diversity of all the studies conducted concerning the EFQM model between 1997 and 2010. Their research focused on recognizing the missing avenues of current studies and how these avenues could be improved. This was important because many of the current studies relating to the EFQM model have a narrow scope and do not examine all the required outputs. First, based on most of the research statistics published for the EFQM, the authors show that current studies have focused on only one or two fields in the EFQM. The authors discussed how most papers have employed a single method to generate or test a theory. This paper reviewed most of the studies over 13 years and found that they began in 2000 by producing 75 articles, only 16 of which had

been written before 1999. The limitation of this study is that the results of the authors' analysis are based on peer-review papers written in English and published in traditional channels and did not include other publications from the industry or many parts of the world.

Building on the study of Kim et al. (2010), Suarez et al. (2017) produced a research article titled, 'Quantitative research on the EFQM excellence model: A systematic literature review (1991–2015)'. In their study, they presented state-of-the-art quantitative research on the EFQM model, which will guide future research in this field. Suáreza et al. conducted a systematic literature review from 1991–2015—which is acknowledged in impact journals belonging to the Journal Citation Reports and SCImago Journal & Country Rank—to investigate three RQs, as mentioned in Table 2.6. Suáreza et al. (2017) selected 53 papers and aspects related to the purpose, nature, and instruments of data collection; the type of quantitative analysis employed; and the sectors. The main conclusions and contributions were analysed. Some important information that this article provided is shown in Table 2.6.

Lastly, La Rotta and Rave (2017) extensively reviewed the literature concerning the status quo and the key challenges of the excellence models. They established a framework that proposed 14 questions beneficial for future research in the field of excellence models. This framework is considered a baseline for future agendas to measure the effectiveness of any excellence model and to improve it continuously. The study deduces 14 questions (Figure 2.1) that help define research agendas. It also summarizes the methods used to guide possible decisions by researchers.

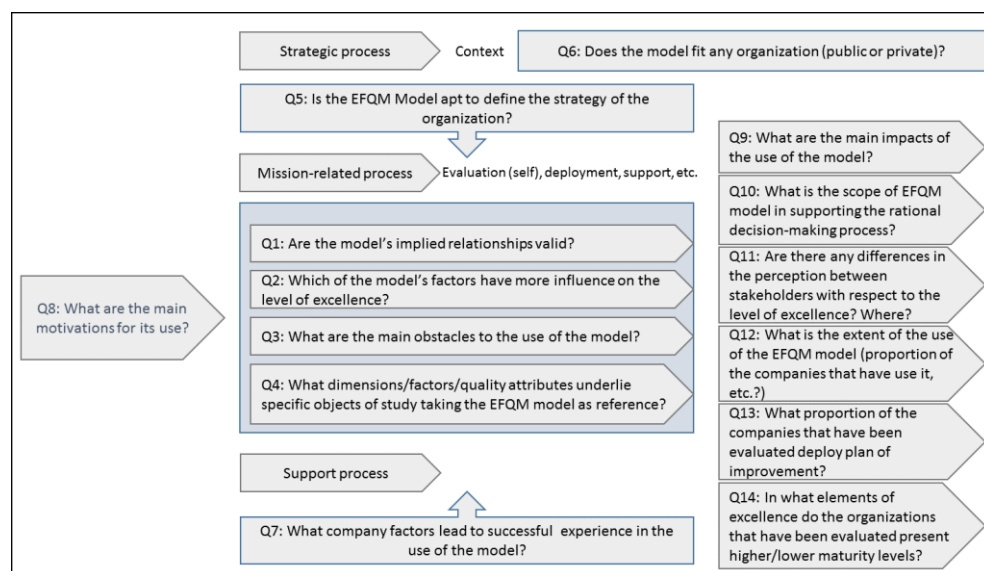Figure 2.1: Possible Guiding Questions for Research Agendas (Source: La Rotta & Rave, 2017, p. 1458)

The following section focusses on each question to have a deep discussion on the government excellence model and understand how to consider the new, possible questions for the investigation of the benefits and advantages/disadvantages of the new excellence model, and have a critical evaluation in the context of the UAE.

Future Research Areas:

The main purpose of this section is to review and explore the nature of the research topics and methodologies used in the previous BE model studies and to suggest what could be built on for the new GEM in the UAE.

It is clear that most of the research articles discussed major areas, such as the study of the validity of the model's implied relationships (the model's internal consistency), the impact of the implementation of the model, obstacles to the use of the model, benefits of the model, and utility of the model in the decision-making process. This will be a good start to covering these areas in the GEM in the UAE. Hence, the following sections will focus on three perspectives:

1) Motivation/benefits for using the model
2) CSFs
3) Obstacles and barriers of the model.

2.4 UAE Excellence Models in the Literature

As mentioned in section 1.8, there is little research on quality, TQM, and excellence awards in Arab countries, including the UAE. In addition, the excellence model was implemented in the government of Dubai for 22 years and in the government of Abu Dhabi for almost 15 years with no emphasis on researching the benefits of the award. In other words, sound reasons exist to examine these aspects and understand the excellence award in the government sector, as it has been implemented for more than 22 years. Previous research also notes that studies in Middle-Eastern countries relating to the in-depth implementation of BE are lacking (McAdam et al., 2013).

Lasrado (2017) also reached the same conclusion regarding the scarcity of research to study the impact of implementing the excellence models and their benefits in Arab countries, in general, and in the UAE, in particular. Lasrado designed her study, 'Perceived benefits of national quality awards: A study of UAE's award-winning organizations', to bridge a significant gap in the literature by relaying the results of the implementation of the NQA in the UAE. This study is the first step in realizing the status of best practices for organizations that won the DQA. Moreover, Lasrado and Uzbeck (2017) and Ahrens (2013) also emphasized that research and studies covering the excellence model implementation within the context of the UAE is significantly lacking.

Few results are found when searching for academic articles published globally concerning the excellence models in the UAE. This leads to the question of why little interest is found in researching this field. Examining the literature, very few research articles were found to study the excellence models in the UAE, specifically, the excellence model being implemented in the government. In this section, an effort was made to review the various papers related to the excellence model and which areas they focused on. Table 2.7 (parts I, II, and III) shows some previous empirical studies on the quality award models done in the UAE.

This section will be highlighted again in the coming parts. However, most Arab countries are ranked low in research and development (e.g., UAE is ranked 74th), which gives some indication as to why little research is found in this area.

Table 2.7 Part I: Previous Studies on the Government Quality Models in the UAE

Authors (year)	Ahrens (2013)
Title of the Article	Assembling the Dubai Government Excellence Program: A motivational approach to improving public service governance in a monarchical context
Award	DGEP & Abu Dhabi Award
Approach	The author used many qualitative approaches (interviews, analysis of records, and dialogue with managers/leaders in the government entities).
Main Purpose	This study provides a summary of different issues involving the excellence award in Dubai and determines the hidden discrepancies.
Main Findings	The vision and direction of the government in Dubai determine the evolution and enhancement of the excellence award.

Table 2.7 Part II: Previous Studies on the Government Quality Models in the UAE

Authors (year)	Ahrens (2014)
Title of the Article	Tracing the evolution of the Dubai Government Excellence Program
Award	UAE & Dubai
Approach	Used many methods in qualitative methodology including interviews with the award custodian, analysis of documents that are publicly distributed, the presentation of the excellence award, and dialogue with senior management in the government entities.
Main Purpose	The main objective of this study is to discuss the evolution of the excellence model in Dubai. This article illuminates how priorities reflect on the development of an excellence model over a certain period.
Main Findings	The excellence model has gone through three major progressions since its development; 1) the motivation behind desiring excellence 2) effectiveness and 3) efficiency. Moreover, there were further changes such as initiating a smart government and teamwork. The model has been developed in answer to factors such as international tendencies in government and the public sector.

Table 2.7-Part III: Previous Studies on the Government Quality Models in the UAE

Authors (year)	McAdam et al. (2013)
Title of the Article	An exploratory study of business excellence implementation in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) public sector, management, and employee perceptions
Award	DGEP
Approach	In-depth interviews with senior-level managers in government entities and questionnaires with employees.
Main Purpose	Focused on the perspectives of two important levels (management and employees) in the big organizations in the UAE that implement the excellence model to study the adoption and self-assessment topics.
Main Findings	Across the different government entities and enterprises, there was a disparity in the adoption of the excellence model. The top-down policy was particularly suited to the cultural traditions of the Middle East. Because of this, a simple employee has no power to affect improvement or change in closing the corrective actions.

However, some research regarding the field of quality and excellence exists. This research was conducted on different sectors in the UAE, mainly in the private sector. Table 2.8 (parts I, II, III, IV, V, and VI) shows some previous research conducted in the UAE private sector.

Table 2.8 Part I: Previous Studies on the Government Quality Models in the UAE

Authors (year)	Nambiar (2012)
Title of the Article	A Grounded Theory Study on Business Excellence Models in the United Arab Emirates
Award	DQA & SKEA
Approach	This study used a qualitative methodology
Main Purpose	To quantify the usefulness or not of the European model criteria for business in the United Arab Emirates. Moreover, to determine the ghost criteria and configure a new excellence framework.
Main Findings	This study discovered that implementation of the EFQM in the UAE is not appropriate because some criteria could be considered not useful. The model that is based on EFQM does not enhance the performance of organizations. It is recommended to develop an excellence award that is suitable for the country and based on their vision, maturity of culture, and the directions of the government.

Table 2.8 Part II: Previous Studies on the Government Quality Models in the UAE

Authors (year)	Al-Marri et al. (2007)
Title of the Article	Excellence in service: an empirical study of the UAE banking sector
Award	TQM
Approach	The sample size of this study was 250 organizations from the banking sector using the case study method.
Main Purpose	This research article studied the CSFs in the UAE.
Main Findings	The main findings of this study were the key success factors considered significant for implementing the TQM.

Table 2.8 Part III: Previous Studies on the Government Quality Models in the UAE

Authors (year)	Lasrado (2017)
Title of the Article	Perceived benefits of national quality awards: a study of UAE's award-winning organizations
Award	DQA
Approach	Secondary data from an official government entity in Dubai that deals with and is responsible for the national quality award.
Main Purpose	The objective of this research is to discover the benefits and advantages that companies get from implementing the national excellence award mainly in the private sector. This research article presented an agenda for future research in the field of excellence in the UAE.
Main Findings	The study focused on the organizations that won the national excellence award in the UAE for exploring the major benefits of this award. The study found that some sectors in the UAE do not participate strongly in the excellence award and do not yet realize the benefits of the award compared with the three main services-oriented sectors (i.e. retail, trading, and finance). These sectors focus on and give their full attention to customers.

Table 2.8 Part IV: Previous Studies on the Government Quality Models in the UAE

Authors (year)	Jaeger et al. (2013)
Title of the Article	MBNQA criteria used in the GCC countries
Award	MBNQA
Approach	A qualitative approach using in-depth interview-style questionnaires.
Main Purpose	1) To study the differences in weights within the excellence model criteria between two main industries i.e. construction and manufacturing in the GCC. 2) To study the difference in perspectives between project managers and those responsible for quality management.
Main Findings	1) The differences between the construction industry and the manufacturing industry were found to be insignificant. 2) The views between project and quality representatives are different when it comes to all criteria within the excellence model. 3) The results in the excellence model were found to be similar. 4) The enablers in the excellence model were found to be different in two main criteria i.e. leadership and measurement.

Table 2.8 Part V: Previous Studies on the Government Quality Models in the UAE

Authors (year)	Lasrado & Uzbeck (2017)
Title of the Article	The excellence quest: a study of business excellence award-winning organizations in the UAE
Award	DQA
Approach	A qualitative method by using secondary data from the award custodian.
Main Purpose	1) Analysing the data from organizations that won the national quality award in the UAE to present their knowledge, experiences, and best practices. 2) Providing a roadmap for organizations that would adopt the excellence model in their journey of pioneering to obtain the benefits they seek. 3) Bridging the literature gap and contributing to the cumulative knowledge of the excellence model field. 4) Achieving competitiveness globally for the emirate of Dubai in particular and the UAE in general. 5) Assisting top management in implementing the excellence model.
Main Findings	All organizations that implement the national quality award 'DQA' reported that this award is a valuable framework for enhancing quality. The assessment feedback report assisted organizations in planning for improvements and applying projects related to excellence and quality.

Table 2.8 Part VI: Previous Studies on the Government Quality Models in the UAE

Authors (year)	Hawarna, et al. (2020)
Title of the Article	Effects of the Dubai quality award on organizational performance in the United Arab Emirates
Award	DQA
Approach	This study collects two types of data from two different sources: the secondary data from the award custodian in Dubai and the primary data from the participants of the national quality award.
Main Purpose	The main purpose of this study is to target the organizations that won the excellence award in Dubai (private sector) and examine their effect on performance results and human resources.
Main Findings	The key findings of this research paper are that enterprises that won the national quality award have improved their performance in a considerable manner. Moreover, human capital is the most important factor for enhancing organizational performance.

The researchers mentioned in Tables 2.7 and 2.8 recommended different future works to be conducted in the context of the models applied in the UAE. Table 2.9 shows some recommendations for future researchers to add to the knowledge of the UAE's excellence awards.

Table 2.9 Part I: Recommended Work for Quality Models in the UAE

Author(s) (year)	Title of the Article	Recommended Future work in the UAE
Ahrens (2013)	Assembling the Dubai Government Excellence Program: A motivational approach to improving public service governance in a monarchical context	A methodological approach that identifies initiatives that are more socially and culturally appropriate would aid the government in finding innovative ways to benefit the people of the Emirates.
Ahrens (2014)	Tracing the evolution of the Dubai Government Excellence Program	Additional case studies are needed in order to more exhaustively explore the relationships and connections between important contextual factors and the government performance management system.
McAdam et al. (2013)	An exploratory study of business excellence implementation in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) public sector-Management and employee perceptions	To sidestep any Western-specific approaches that produce results not applicable to the UAE, a model with more appropriate weights would counteract any ingrained Westernized tendencies. Programs that focus on the cultural needs of the area and take into account the context of the UAE would greatly benefit UAE business excellence practices.

Table 2.9 Part II: Recommended Work for Quality Models in the UAE

Author(s) (year)	Title of the Article	Recommended Future work in the UAE
Nambiar (2012)	A Grounded Theory Study on Business Excellence Models in the United Arab Emirates	A study is needed on the impact of the implementation of the governance code and on how social accountability impacted the organizations' situation. CSR activities also require further study, along with the effect of the Islamic business and banking philosophy on the nation's entity.
Lasrado (2017)	Perceived benefits of national quality awards a study of UAE's award-winning organizations	The core values of leadership, customer focus, people and process improvements require more focus, along with a commitment to TQM core concepts. A longitude study is needed to determine how winning organizations were able to achieve their impressive results in order to carry those methods to other organizations and improve their results, thus bridging the gap.
Lasrado & Uzbeck (2017)	The excellence quest: a study of business excellence award-winning organizations in UAE	Further perspectives are needed to provide deeper insight and a path toward strengthening the quality systems and improving organizational performance. The impact of the awards on the UAE may also help create a comparison between where the UAE is in relation to the International field and where it must strive to be.
Hawarna et al. (2020)	Effects of Dubai quality award on organizational performance in the United Arab Emirates	More studies are needed to give a big picture, a broad view of certain topics such as the UAE's general quality awards.

2.5 Perspective One: Motivations/Benefits of the Excellence Model

This perspective investigates two main factors and is aligned with the recommendations from La Rotta and Rave (2017). It is appropriate to start this section by referring to the article by Jacob et al. in 2012, in which they deliberated removing or cancelling the excellence award in the USA to cut costs. This paper's purpose was to check two kinds of research, academic and professional, to determine if the excellence model benefits two types of stakeholders (organizations and investors). They concluded the national award should not be eliminated or cancelled, as it adds value to stakeholders and raises the market value of the organizations.

The research focused on public organizations, which implies that implementing these models (awards) in public organizations may not improve their performance (Eriksson et al., 2003; Prabhu et al., 2002). Conversely, research in corporate situations indicates a solid relationship between the implementation of quality (excellence) awards and the performance of the organizations (Eriksson and Garvare, 2005; George et al., 2003; Kanji and Moura E Sá, 2007). In the early years after adopting excellence models and NQAs in some countries, Hendricks and Singhal in 1997 concluded that the winners of excellence awards reported that applying the excellence models drove the enhancement of business outcomes and performance of their companies. Moreover, Sternad et al. (2019) summarized the reasons for accepting the excellence model,

which they grouped into two categories: (1) enhancing the organization, quality management, and increasing productivity, and (2) customer demands and competing with others.

Many research papers and articles have found that the implementation of excellence models increased competitiveness on a national level by improving organizational management practices in the respective country, such as in Korea (Lee et al., 2003), the USA (Lee et al., 2006), Canada (Boys et al., 2005), and New Zealand (Saunders and Mann, 2005; Saunders et al., 2007). It is important to point out that few research papers appear to have focused on the impact of excellence awards on public and service organizations. For example, Al-Marri et al. (2007) studied excellence in services through an empirical study of the UAE service sector and provided a framework for future research. They found 16 factors to be critical to excellence model implementation success. This conclusion has also been supported by recent research: Dong et al. (2010) have explored the types of research and approaches (methods) used in the EFQM BE model studies and concluded that only a few studies were undertaken to evaluate the impact of the excellence model. Dong et al. reviewed all the articles from 1997 to 2007 and revealed that research of the EFQM quality award only truly began in 2000 (75 articles, 82%); only 16 (18%) papers were written from 1994–1999. They also found that most of the studies concentrated on a narrow scope, with a limited focus on different methodologies (e.g., using mostly a case-study approach).

Hansson and Eriksson (2002) concluded that organizations that implemented excellence awards and TQM could not prove that their performances are better than their competitors' performances. Tutuncu and Kucukusta, in 2007, reported that adopting the excellence model in an organization has many advantages. Some of these advantages include image and reputation, customer satisfaction, and commitment within the organization. Other studies, such as Nabitz et al. (2009) and Tutuncu and Kucukusta (2009), found that one of the variables most impacted by using the model was employee satisfaction. Bayo et al. (2011) and Gutiérrez et al. (2010) stated that the impact on the organization appeared on the innovation side. A group of researchers considered the upper level of the impact of the model on the organizations by trying to show that the benefits are linked to the greater competitiveness of the business and obtaining competitive advantages (Pesic and Dahlgaard, 2013; Santos-Vijande and Alvarez-Gonzalez, 2007). In 2020, Jabnoun found that excellence models have achieved global success. He also found that the excellence model, in his study, takes into consideration the importance of new economic directions and improves the overall performance of the companies by providing benefits to all stakeholders.

Researchers and authors have strongly recommended identifying the CSFs before trying to measure the relationship between excellence awards and performance in government and public sectors (Al-Marri et al., 2007; Kanji and Moura E Sá, 2007). In 2010, Fatima studied the effect of TQM on corporate performance using a quantitative approach to examine five hypotheses: process performance, financial performance, employee-related performance, customer-related performance, and supplier performance. Fatima (2010) found that process performance, employee-related performance, customer-related performance, and sales per employee indicators in financial performance were affected after the implementation of TQM and the excellence award, with less effect on supplier performance. Additionally, Wen et al. (2017) widened the

scope of the impact of the excellence award at the country's economic level. They studied the organizations that received the NQA and concluded the importance of the government in sponsoring the excellence model and encouraging companies to implement it. Heras–Saizarbitoria et al. (2011) conducted a survey of 107 experienced and independent quality-management assessors, followed by a personal interview of various stakeholders involved in the adoption of the models. They found that some significant motivations for adopting an excellence model in Europe are internal, such as improving resource utilization, increasing productivity, reducing costs, and enhancing product and service quality. Medne et al. (2020) concluded that research papers and articles in the area of excellence proved that an excellence model is one of the best tools for determining improvements and adopting best practices to achieve sustainability.

Dong et al. (2010) stated that most articles have focused on one research method (usually the case-study method) to generate or test a theory; this approach does not fully allow validated contributions to theory and practice. This means that more focused research must be done to extend the research to help organizations measure the impact of excellence awards and performance. Heras–Saizarbitoria et al. (2011) evaluated the impact of both the ISO 9000 standard and the EFQM self-evaluation model, the TQM model most employed in Europe. Mohammad et al. in 2011 developed an excellent model based on literature review findings, document reviews, and semi-structured interviews; this model shows some initiatives and systems to be implemented to improve organizational performance. Such models have four levels: (1) beginning, (2) progressing, (3) advanced, and (4) role model. To directly compare the results obtained by the two models, Mohammad et al. (2011) decided to analyse them together in the same temporal frame using the same methodology but in a new way, utilizing a sample of independent assessors of quality management models. To this end, they first performed several objective analyses of data regarding the impact of the models—data obtained from the ISO and EFQM international organizations. They then conducted a survey of 107 experienced and independent quality-management assessors, followed by a personal interview of various stakeholders involved in the adoption of the models. The results obtained pertain to the different motivations of organizations for implementing ISO 9000 standards and the EFQM model, the obstacles detected in this implementation, the degree to which both are actually adopted, and the results of the models. Escrig and De Menezes (2016) added value to the field of excellence by finding that companies in Spain that participated in the excellence award in the EU implement the related model in the same way that leading companies do. Further, they found that these companies know what to present to assessors when they are considered for the award.

La Rotta and Rave (2017) highlighted two studies that motivate the use of the excellence model, led by the same author: Heras–Saizarbitoria et al. (2011) and Heras–Saizarbitoria et al. (2006). The main benefits and motivations for the use of the excellence model are classified into three categories: (1) the management of organizations, including the development of a schematic for strategy and planning enhancement; (2) the enhancement of efficiency; and (3) the standing of the organization (La Rotta and Rave, 2017). Mann et al. (2011) found that the top reason for adopting the excellence model for organizations was to become world-class. Building on this, Gómez-Gómez et al. (2016) highlighted the same conclusion about the two main studies that discussed this issue. They presented a descriptive analysis of the reasons that have led

companies to implement TQM through the EFQM. They classified the reasons into two groups, internal and external; the top three reasons in each group are presented below.

1) External reasons:
   - Show the effectiveness of management practices
   - Improve company image
   - Improve competitive position
2) Internal reasons:
   - Corporate-level decision
   - Improve internal organization and productivity
   - Base to improve its own quality management system

Gómez-López et al. (2016) examined why organizations in Spain adopt the excellence model and what motivates them to implement the model. The findings show that internal motivation is considered significant when implementing the excellence model. Suáreza et al. (2017) listed all the areas in which most of the researchers were trying to study the impact of the model on different organizational variables, such as leadership, commitment to the organization, working conditions, the capacity of innovation, human resources management, information systems, and knowledge management. Suáreza et al. (2017) discovered that many researchers studied the impact of excellence models on other factors, such as customer satisfaction, profit, external performance results, and key corporate results.

Wei and Juanli (2013) studied a large sample size of organizations (424) to determine the effects of the national award and what motivates organizations to implement the excellence model. They found that the excellence award is more suitable and more effective on large organizations than on small- and medium-sized organizations. Some researchers have indicated that organizations applying excellence models and TQM will gain important benefits, including growth in both financial profit (Boulter et al., 2013; Hendricks and Singhal, 1996, 2000; Jacob et al., 2004; Link and Scott, 2001, 2006, 2011a, 2011b, 2011c) and non-financial outcomes (Curkovic et al., 2000). Studies have also suggested that BE model implementation does not necessarily bring positive benefits for enterprises (Fisher et al., 2001; Stephens et al., 2005). Dahlgaard et al. (2013) indicated that the reasons behind the different conclusions on this issue involve many factors, such as the degree of motivation and commitment, degree of people's involvement, size of the organization, industrial sector in which the organization operates, organizational and system infrastructure, organizational culture, and degree of quality maturity of companies. A study of the relation between the principles of the EFQM excellence model and organizational performance proves that the effective implementation of EFQM principles can lead to performance improvement in both the short and long term (Moll and Kohler, 2013). McAdam et al. (2013) report that all interview respondents in their study (Group A: department directors and Group B: quality and strategy managers and specialists) agreed that the model provided a framework for performance improvement. An exploratory study of BE implementation in the UAE public sector, conducted by McAdam et al. (2013), regarding management and employee perceptions, presents four important motives for using and implementing the excellence model:

1) To adopt the quality/excellence award

2) To concentrate on and implement TQM

3) It is mandated by the government

4) It leads to improved performance

Half of the participants said that the excellence model motivates the adoption of TQM, along with its tool and approaches. The other half of the participants said that the excellence model improved the CoE/quality among employees. The model also provided a common management language between organizational units. Saunders et al. (2008) identified many reasons for adopting BE, such as assisting the organization in determining the strengths and opportunities, providing a platform for continuous improvement, encouraging and re-organizing many initiatives, measuring the performance related to stakeholders, promoting a culture of success internally, helping to become pioneering globally, enabling a comparison with best-in-class organizations.

Talwar (2009) concluded that the reason organizations apply the excellence model is to compete with local and international markets. Boys et al. (2005) found that two levels of motivation exist for organizations to implement any excellence model: internal and external. Internal factors include the satisfaction of employees within the organization, standardization of the processes, and increasing the performance and capability of internal processes. External factors include client recognition, stakeholders' relationships, and responding to environmental and social matters. However, some research articles claim that companies adopt an excellence model to improve financial performance and business outcomes and to sustain their performance results (Zhao, 2004). Some organizations in emerging economies adopt an excellence model for two reasons: to improve their business outcomes and increase their competitiveness in the international market (TQA, 2011).

Boys et al. (2005), in their study in Canada with respect to the impact of an excellence model on a company's level, stated that many companies considered that if they adopt the excellence model, they will get the improvements they desire because the model is considered a tool for improvements and enhancements. Mann and Grigg (2008) reported that in the short term, companies might have financial benefits, while, in the medium to long term, the excellence models could improve the whole country. Talwar (2011) found positive impacts of BE in various aspects, such as improved process orientation, customer orientation, and improvement orientation, while Boys et al. (2005) recorded the impact in terms of improved documentation, customer satisfaction, consistency across the organization, and cost management.

Al-Refaie et al. (2012), in their study in Jordan regarding the impact of an excellence model on companies' performance, found that implementing the excellence model led to improvements in organizational outcomes, customer satisfaction, and innovation. Gómez-Gómez et al. (2016), in their article, 'Weighting the dimensions in models of excellence: A critical review from a business perspective', discovered that the scores assigned to all criteria within the excellence models do not simulate the reality of the business that companies do. They recommended changing the weight of the criteria to achieve the overall objectives of

implementing the excellence models. Further, they recommended some future research: to differentiate between the implementation of the excellence models in different sectors, the weight of the criteria for each sector, and the type of business itself—government or private. Additionally, Jaeger et al. (2013) analysed the other excellence models implemented in this region for two industries and found that the results were the same. Clear differences existed for other criteria, such as leadership and measurement/analysis.

Moreover, many research papers and articles studied the impact of some criteria on the results (e.g., Calvo-Mora et al., 2014; Sabella et al., 2014). Calvo-Mora et al. (2014) investigated if the result parts were influenced by the enabler's criteria. Sabella et al. (2014) studied the MBNQA model and found that enabler criteria, such as processes, human resources, information, and analysis, all influence performance. The influence of enabler criteria, such as process management, on results has been well-maintained and documented (Calvo-Mora et al., 2014; Curkovic et al., 2000; Fotopoulos and Psomas, 2010). Raharjo et al. (2015) found that a correlation exists between enablers and results for two excellence models implemented in two public sectors (in Italy and Sweden) with different correlation degrees.

This and the next paragraph will summarize the above analysis and establish the motivation factors that should be investigated in the context of the UAE. First, it is useful to mention that Gómez-López et al. (2016) conducted a systematic review of the literature on motivations for implementing the EFQM excellence model and identified only two main research articles—Heras–Saizarbitoria et al. (2011) and Heras–Saizarbitoria et al. (2006)—that studied the internal and external motivations for using the excellence model. These studies have identified only four main reasons for implementing and using the excellence model. Both research articles agreed on one internal motivation factor, 'internal company organization and planning', while Heras–Saizarbitoria et al. (2011) pointed out that service/product quality might be another internal motivation factor. In addition, Heras–Saizarbitoria et al. (2006) identified another factor for internal motivation—strategic framework.

Regarding the external motivation reasons, Heras–Saizarbitoria et al. (2011) identified one main reason, 'increase market share', and Heras et al. (2006) pointed out another reason, 'improving company image'. Owing to the lack of academic research in this area and considering that the EFQM excellence model and the ISO standard (Quality Management System) have been broadly recognized as globally well-known, Gómez-López et al. (2016) conducted a systematic review of the literature on the motivations for implementing the EFQM excellence model review and ISO 9001. They identified 14 external reasons and eight internal reasons for EFQM and ISO certification. Considering all the motivation reasons for implementing the excellence model, as well as the review of all the research articles mentioned in this part, Table 2.10 summarizes a review of the literature of all the reasons to implement the excellence model to consider these items in the UAE context.

Table 2.10: Main Reason for Implementing the Excellence Model

Authors/Researchers (Year)	Main Reasons
Gómez-López et al., (2016, p. 1229-1230)	'14 external items: • Show the effectiveness of management practices • Improve company image • Improve competitive Position • Anticipate future customer Demand • Anticipate market trends • Increase market share • Commercialization Advantages • Required for competing in Sector • Meet national and international market demand • Customer demand • Competitor pressure • Operate in global markets • Government pressure • Supplier pressure 8 internal items • Corporate-level decision • Improve internal organization and productivity • Base to improve its own quality management system • Improve product/service quality • Optimize necessary resources • Motivate staff • Costs reduction • Company survival'
Heras–Saizarbitoria et al. (2006, p. 819)	'Creation of a strategic framework, and the improvement of planning and administrative capacity, the improvement of internal efficiency (internal control, organization performance, and employee motivation), the improvement of the company's image.'
Heras–Saizarbitoria et al. (2011, p. 211)	'Internal character: productivity, optimization of resources, improvement of the quality of products and services, and reduction of costs. In general, the motivations can be grouped into external market reasons, external reasons of requirements, and internal reasons.'
McAdam et al. (2013, p. 435)	'To create a focus on the TQM model portrayed by the award criteria. Formal regulations from the government. An indication of the "non-voluntary" reason for using the model agreed that the model provided a framework for performance improvement.'
Saunders et al. (2008, p. 656)	• 'Business Excellence (BE) provides a rigorous and sensible approach to identifying strengths and opportunities; • BE guides the organization's continuous improvement effort; • BE co-ordinates a range of initiatives; • BE provides an external measure of performance; • BE educates staff on the characteristics of successful organizations; • BE allows companies to become "world-class"; • BE improves organizational performance; and • BE allows benchmarking against others in the same industry as well as those from other industries.'

Gaps in Perspective One:

Suáreza et al. (2017) showed that most of the articles they studied, approximately 16%, were related to this area of research (i.e., the impact of the implementation of the model on organizational variables). This has also been verified by La Rotta and Rave (2017), who confirmed that almost 17% of the articles they examined served the same objective (impacts arising from the use of the model). In addition to this, Laurett and Mendes (2019) conducted research after a structured review of the literature in the field of excellence and discovered that the implementation of the excellence model has several advantages, such as customer satisfaction, improving internal communication, determining the areas for improvements, enhancing the culture of quality, and service improvement. Hammad et al. (2020) wrote an important article, perhaps the

first study to discuss and evaluate the impact of new GEMs on entity performance in Dubai. They concluded that adopting the new models improves the overall performance of Dubai government entities. Their results show that all 24 questions they used had a positive impact (above zero); the three highest scores were attributed to specialized work (1.53), global leadership focus (1.52), and general criteria (1.47). The lowest three scores were attributed to leadership (0.26), sustainable excellent results (0.45), and knowledge management (0.47).

It appears from the literature review on the impact of excellence awards that some researchers have found a strong positive relationship between the implementation of excellence awards and organizational performance (Eriksson et al., 2003; Prabhu et al., 2002). Other researchers concluded that excellence awards do not provide empirical evidence about the improvement in the performance of organizations (Eriksson and Garvare, 2005; George et al., 2003; Kanji and Moura E Sá, 2007). Boulter et al. (2013) performed an excellent study to compare 120 excellence award winners with non-award winners over a long time and found that those that won the award achieved better results with respect to financial measures. They recommended that researchers should study the benefits of the excellence award over a long time. Similarly, the surveys of Bou-Llusar et al. (2005 and 2009) also show that an important relationship exists between the two parts of the model, that is, enablers and results. Table 2.11 summarizes the future works recommended by the research papers discussed above, which can be used to recommend future works for the UAE.

Table 2.11: Some Future Work Recommendations for Measuring the Motivation/Benefits of the Excellence Model.

Sl.	Recommended future works
1	Study the impact of the excellence award on the economy.
2	The impact of the excellence award on stakeholders' happiness, the overall performance of the government entities, and innovation.
3	Have different excellence models and criteria for different industries.
4	Keep conducting research papers and articles over a long period of time.
5	Study the motivations for implementing and applying the excellence model in the government sectors and analyse the real data from all concerned parties.
6	Do continuous research papers and articles to shed light on a specific level of employees inside the organization i.e. excellence and quality managers as they lead the implementation of the business excellence model inside the entities.
7	Take into consideration the real and empirical data from the external assessors who evaluate and assess the excellence model.

It is highly recommended that CSFs be identified before measuring the relationship between excellence awards and performance in government and public sectors. This recommendation is supported by many authors, such as Kanji and Moura E Sá (2007), who introduced a new approach to measuring performance excellence in the government sectors and found that government organizational performance relies on specific indicators, such as leadership, employee, and customer satisfaction, and continuous improvement. Additionally, Lasierra (2007) emphasizes that the EFQM model does not pay attention to the political nature of public sector organizations, and therefore, the model requires prior determination of organizational objectives by the political leadership.

To apply this to the context of the UAE excellence models, studying the impact of the new UAE GEM on overall performance is important. There are different ways to study the overall impact of the excellence award, as explained in this perspective (perspective one); however, knowing the main objectives of the new GEM is possible; this should be studied to ascertain the impact of the model on performance. In this research paper, and based on the literature review, the following important areas will be studied:

1) What are the organizational variables that the GEM most impacts?
2) Does the implementation of the GEM increase the competitiveness ranking of the UAE? Does a relationship exist?
3) What are the internal and external motivation factors that encourage the organization to implement the GEM?
4) How should one measure the success of implementing the GEM in the UAE?
5) Is the model having a direct effect on all stakeholders?

To assess the impact on organizational performance, it is recommended that the UAE incorporate an academically validated approach to measuring the effectiveness of the implementation of their NQAs. This approach would help the government departments and ministries to focus on and set priorities for quality programs to ensure they are effective and efficient.

Suggested Research Question: Perspective One

Based on the gaps in the literature regarding perspective one (motivation) for the use of the excellence model, the following RQ is recommended:

RQ1: What are the main motivations/benefits for the use of the GEM in the UAE?

2.6 Perspective Two: Critical Success Factors

This perspective answers the question related to what company factors lead to a successful experience using the excellence model. Most organizations want to know how to sustain excellence results. The excellence models (EFQM), Deming Prizes, and MBNQA have existed for more than 28 years. Many countries have adopted excellence awards to improve the overall performance of their organizations, whether in the private or public sector. Mohammad et al. (2011) identified that, currently, 94 national quality/BE awards are used in 83 countries. NQAs represent the basic tool for improving organizational performance and promoting a quality culture. The primary objective of an NQA is to enable organizations to attain continuous performance improvement, maintain consistency, and achieve the desired level of business performance excellence (Sayeh, 2006), as all excellence models are based on the requirements of the TQM philosophy. For example, Dubai first adopted the Malcolm Baldrige program but later found that it was beyond their TQM maturity; therefore, they moved to the EFQM model with slight modifications (Sayeh, 2006).

As noted on the EFQM website, 'The EFQM is the most known and applicable excellence award in the world since it is considered a non-prescriptive framework based on nine criteria.' Five of these are enabler criteria, and four are results criteria. The enablers cover what an organization does, while the results cover what an organization achieves; results are assumed to be caused by enablers. 'The EFQM model is based on the premise that excellence results with respect to performance, customer, employee, and social [aspects] are achieved through effective leadership, sound people management and development, effective use of partnerships and resources, clear and well-directed policy and strategy, and effective processes (EFQM, 2019).'

Al Ghufli (2012) was one of the first researchers to study the factors affecting the deployment of excellence models in the context of the government sector. He focused his study mainly on the Abu Dhabi Police. His research is considered a roadmap for identifying the CSFs for implementing BE models in the public sector. He used a mixed-methods approach to conclude that these factors affect the entire implementation process of excellence models. Al Zawati et al. (2020) concluded that Al Ghufli (2012)'s study was the only research that studied these factors in the context of the UAE public sector and stated that research was only based on the EFQM model at that time (before 2012). Al Zawati et al. (2020) raised a vital point on how to succeed in the deployment of the GEM, that is, by learning from previous quality awards through researching the most suitable CSFs that are necessary to know. Zairi and Youssef (1995) conducted an early study in this area, who used a predetermined set of CSFs from previous research papers and checked their relevance to other countries and industry sectors. They concluded that not all CSFs apply to any kind of organization; however, some can be relevant to all organizations, such as commitment and customer satisfaction. This opens a dialogue about what CSFs are suitable for each organization to make the excellence model a success. Yusof and Aspinwall conducted another early empirical study in 2000, which analysed the TQM CSFs. They found that 10 CSFs are associated with small and medium organizations. This is also supported by Osseo-Assare et al. (2005), who found that leadership is considered one of the most important CSFs for all organizations that apply the excellence models. Karuppusami and Gandhinathan (2006) studied research articles and papers concerned with CSFs over 14 years, starting from 1989. They concluded that every

organization could set its own CSFs, depending on its business, culture, and other internal and external factors. This study paved the way for all researchers interested in studying the CSFs of implementing TQM in organizations. Additionally, this area was part of the study conducted by Salaheldin in 2009, who designed a questionnaire to study the CSFs in an industrial area. He identified 24 CSFs, grouped into three categories: strategic, tactical, and operational.

Kim et al. (2010) conducted a comprehensive review of the literature to study the research topics related to the EFQM and the approaches used in the research papers and articles. This study is consistent with other studies, such as the paper developed by Najeh and Kara-Zaitri (2007) in the Middle East. The conclusion appears to be that western countries are more advanced with respect to research than the Middle East is. Some researchers also raised the point that the research papers on the excellence models are less developed in the Middle East. (Al-Marri et al., 2007; Jones and Seraphim, 2008; Najeh and Kara-Zaitri, 2007). However, the early studies within the UAE context that were conducted by Badri et al. in 1995 and Al-Marri et al. in 2007 showed similar results regarding CSFs, that is, the role of top management in making the quality and excellence model a success. Tutuncu and Kucukusta (2011) studied the relationship between an excellence model and job satisfaction. They used a qualitative approach with a structured questionnaire survey to study the relationship between the implementation of the excellence model and the commitment of the winning organizations in Turkey. The main finding of this study suggested that commitment plays an important role in implementing the excellence model effectively and efficiently.

La Rotta and Rave (2017) highlighted from their extensive review of the literature that a few research articles were written to investigate the CSFs for implementing an excellence model, two from Spain and one from Turkey (Osseo-Assare et al., 2005; Tari, 2006; Tutuncu and Kucukusta, 2010). They note the importance of a quality unit that provides ongoing advice during the process. However, despite the study's importance, the conclusions provided are considered insufficient to answer the RQs effectively, much less so, as they come primarily from one country. Nonetheless, the highlighted, versatile uses of the model, as well as the diversity of contexts in which it can be used (cultures, industries, company origin, sizes, etc.), requires further exploration, which can even be segmented differently by studying the stages of evaluation, deployment, and sustainability of the EFQM processes across time (La Rotta and Rave, 2017, p. 1462). This is also verified by Brown (2013, p. 108), who 'points to the importance of leadership commitment, training, engagement, human resource management (HRM), and customer focus in ensuring organizations experience success with quality.' CSF research (Antony et al., 2002; Black and Porter, 1996; Saraph et al., 1989; Sohal and Terziovski, 2000; Tamimi, 1998) determines many CSFs that are important for organizations to succeed in implementing quality and excellence. Unfortunately, many research papers and articles addressed this area in the implementation phase and, therefore, could not consider the entire process of applying the excellence model to sustain the results over the long term. Most studies pointed out some common CSFs, such as top management commitment, training, human capital development, process and service management, and satisfaction.

Tari (2006) examined the implementation of the EFQM in an education sector based on certain services

provided by a university. He summarized eight steps to ensure the successful implementation of the self-assessment. Tari also highlighted some benefits, obstacles, and key factors that must be considered while implementing an excellence model. The two main factors that he discovered are as follows:

1) Commitment across the organization (staff and top management).
2) The role of the excellence and quality organizational unit in implementing the excellence model a success.

Bolboli and Reiche (2013) found that one of the key success factors for implementing an excellence model is the culture of the organization. Calvo-Mora et al. (2015), in their research article, 'Contextual and mediation analysis between TQM critical factors and organizational results in the EFQM excellence model framework', used a sample of 116 Spanish firms to test the RQs and proposed hypotheses. According to the findings, the EFQM works as a framework for the successful implementation of the TQM. They also pointed out that the size of the organization—not the nature of the sector or the business—affects the implementation of the excellence model. Another issue raised by researchers regarding the evaluation of the excellence model is addressed by Mai et al. (2018), who studied the scoring points of MBNQA organizations and proved that the model is a strong framework for improving the organizations. However, the relationships among the criteria are not significantly correlated, and understanding this is important to develop different excellence frameworks for different industries.

Laurett and Mendes (2019) identified the most important CSFs, which must be carefully considered to make the excellence model a success. The CSFs include a commitment from management and employees, training and development, internal communication, information systems, and external environment factors. Joshaghany et al. (2019) found similar results: to be an excellent organization, leadership, quality, and alignment with the organization's strategy in a work unit are necessary. Effective human resources management and employee workspace are prerequisites for successful quality management. The working units of organizations should aim to optimize and manage scarce resources (money, information, infrastructure, and natural resources). Periañez-Cristobal et al. (2020) found that organizations received a high score in the excellence award because of their effective vision, strong stakeholder relationship management, and investment in human capital.

Gaps in Perspective Two:

Zdrilić and Dulčić (2016) showed that companies applying the core values of BE in their operations achieve better business results. Karuppusami and Gandhinathan (2006) recommended that researchers in the field of excellence and quality might develop frameworks to measure and maintain the same degree of TQM implementation. This study will help the researchers in the field of excellence and quality in choosing the most reliable group of CSFs. Although different CSFs were presented by various researchers in this field, it is suggested that each organization must know its CSFs to benefit from the excellence model and utilize it to sustain overall performance. Some researchers suggest that different factors might affect the CSFs that each organization must determine to achieve a successful experience in using the model.

Doeleman et al. (2014) conducted a comprehensive review of 24 articles from 2002–2012 and, based on that, their evaluation of the various studies shows that the excellence models, in general, must be implemented for a long period (more than five years) to get the required benefits from the model. Dong et al. (2010), in their study, 'European Foundation for Quality Management Business Excellence Model: An integrative review and research agenda', identified possible research agendas after exploring the topics researched in the field of excellence and the methodologies and approaches that were used in the research articles and papers. They recommended one RQ for future studies related directly to identifying the CSFs required to make the model a success. Sayeh (2006), in his PhD dissertation, determined the most common and important CSFs (18), outlined in Table 2.12, by comparing research papers and articles in many countries globally.

Table 2.12: Most Commonly Extracted Factors Across Countries Worldwide (Source: Sayeh 2006, PhD Thesis)

Sl.	TQM Factor	No. of studies in which the factor was extracted	No. of country categories in which the factor is present
1	Top management commitment and leadership	67	23
2	Customer focus	53	21
3	Information and analysis	53	17
4	Training	50	19
5	Supplier management	47	17
6	Strategic planning	38	16
7	Employee involvement	32	18
8	HR management	26	16
9	Process management	26	13
10	Teamwork	22	9
11	Product and service design	21	11
12	Process control	21	8
13	Benchmarking	16	12
14	Continuous improvement	16	10
15	Employee empowerment	16	6
16	Quality assurance	15	12
17	Social responsibility	10	9
18	Employee satisfaction	9	6

Very few studies have investigated CSFs in the public sector. Moreover, little research has been conducted to identify the CSFs for the GEM. Al Ghufli (2012) concluded there 18 factors are considered critical in the implementation process of excellence models in the public sector of the UAE (Table 2.13). He categorized them into three main groups: commitment, implementation, and measurement. Al Zawati et al. (2020) designed a unique approach, as they identified 28 factors for implementing the GEM in the government of the UAE. The outcomes of the current study will be compared with the two aforementioned research articles in Chapter 5 (Thesis Discussion).

Table 2.13 Al Ghulfi's CSFs in Public Sector Organizations in the UAE

Sl.	CSFs	Sl.	CSFs
1	Top management commitment	10	Providing sufficient training
2	Setting a shared long-term vision	11	Employee involvement
3	Understanding the use and purpose of the BEM	12	Employee empowerment
4	Stimulating a change culture	13	Aligning BEM with the performance measurement system
5	Establishing an excellence steering committee	14	Aligning BEM with information systems
6	Supportive organizational structure	15	Developing an action plan
7	Developing internal capabilities	16	developing a recognition scheme for BEM implementation
8	Aligning BEM with the strategic planning process	17	Aligning BEM with organizational processes
9	Effective communication	18	Implementation plan

In this paper, based on the literature review, some important questions will be addressed:

1) How should one determine the most important factors that lead to a successful implementation of the excellence model in the UAE?

2) Can the CSFs be classified to study the impact on the implementation of the excellence model in the UAE?

3) Do other factors (i.e., culture, size of the organizations, industries, etc.) affect the successful implementation of the excellence model in the public sector?

4) Do the CSFs help the organization to be excellent? Do they ensure the effective implementation of the model?

5) How should one ensure that the organization can remain sustainable in achieving excellence?

6) Do CSFs differ in the public sector compared to the private sector?

Suggested Research Question: Perspective Two

Based on the gaps in the literature regarding perspective two (CSFs), the following RQ is recommended:

RQ2: What are the CSFs affecting the implementation of the GEM in the UAE?

2.7 Perspective Three: What are the Main Obstacles and Barriers to the Use of the Model?

In 2019, Cook and Zhang concluded that their data analysis confirms the Baldrige Award's prolonged decline and strongly suggests that it is in the final stage of a management practice less popular and visible in today's economic environment. Sternad et al. (2019) found that the main obstacles for small- and medium-sized enterprises to adopt a BE approach relate to resource constraints, managerial and employee attitudes, and conceptual concerns.

La Rotta and Rave (2017) highlighted that few research articles pertaining to the study of obstacles and difficulties regarding using and implementing an excellence model. Additionally, the disadvantages and barriers owing to the implementation of excellence models are rarely studied. Most researchers concentrated on different topics in this field, and a few focused on developing a model to identify the main obstacles and the advantages/disadvantages of excellence models. In 2011, Conti published an article, 'No panaceas for organizational diseases, but better knowledge and systems thinking', concluding that 90% of BE initiatives failed owing to various causes. Tari (2006) summarized the key difficulties and benefits derived from analysing data from five universities. However, this study cannot be generalized, as it is not supported by any kind of statistical figures and depends on the culture of the investigated sector and the study's country. The rest of this paragraph summarizes the difficulties and benefits (in order of importance according to mean and median). Difficulties include a lack of staff commitment and time consumed in the process, implementation of improvement actions, support by the quality unit, lack of commitment by UA management, not knowing where to start, and lack of resources. The benefits include encouraging the improvement of service quality, creating awareness and knowledge of quality-related issues, creating a common improvement approach for the whole service, enhancing employees' awareness of the importance of quality, identifying improvement actions, giving an overview of the service processes, and increasing employees' involvement.

Lasrado (2017) found that very few research papers and articles were studied in other countries, such as the UAE. Six major benefits were found in the study of organizations that participated in the NQA in the UAE: 'Independent quality assessment, continuous improvement, CoE, teamwork, learning and benchmarking, and image' (Lasrado, 2017, p. 61). In the same context, McAdam et al. (2013) highlighted the main benefits of using the DGEP in self-assessment based on the responses from directors and quality specialists in the UAE public sector. They listed six major benefits of the use of the model in the UAE. The most important benefit was that it 'provided a framework for performance improvement'. Two benefits follow in importance: 'Encouraged the use of TQM principles, tools, and techniques (brainstorming, suggestions system, best practice, benchmarking, etc.)' and 'helped in raising awareness and change of culture toward TQM'. Two further benefits rank third in importance: 'Provided a common management language in the organization' and 'increased employees satisfaction.' The last benefit was 'improved strategic partnerships with other organizations' (McAdam et al., 2013, p. 436). Gómez-López et al. (2017) stated that the main purpose of their study was to find the obstacles and barriers to the excellence model in the private sector in Spain. They found that the most significant obstacles and barriers are related to resources and time, which

is consistent with the results of Tari (2009). All the previous research articles indicate that after several years of the implementation of an excellence model, studying the challenges, obstacles, barriers, etc., regarding the use of the excellence model is better. To summarize, Gómez-López et al. (2017) included a table in their research article, which showed the top three barriers to implementing the EFQM, as identified by the researchers (Angell and Corbett, 2009; Beer, 2003; Dahlgaard-Park, 2009; Heras–Saizarbitoria et al., 2011; Mann et al., 2011; Mathews et al., 2001; Soltani et al., 2005):

1) Lack of top management motivation and participation
2) Lack of employee motivation and participation
3) Lack of commitment/ implication

Bolboli and Reiche (2014) conducted an extensive literature review to study the obstacles and difficulties that organizations face while implementing excellence models. They discussed the obstacles considered urgent to organizations, and that affect the implementation of the excellence models, such as the resistance within the organization to adopt the excellence model, the method of applying the model, human resources, and understanding the way the model is implemented. Figure 2.2 shows all the barriers to implementing BE after grouping them. To take control of these obstacles, organizations must understand their culture, as culture is considered the most important factor in achieving excellence. Eriksson et al. (2016) explored quality challenges and the validity of excellence models and investigated how current excellence models incorporate these challenges. The researchers concluded that excellence models seem to be suitable as a framework for continuous improvement, but they need to be developed and enhanced to overcome all the challenges that organizations may face in the future.
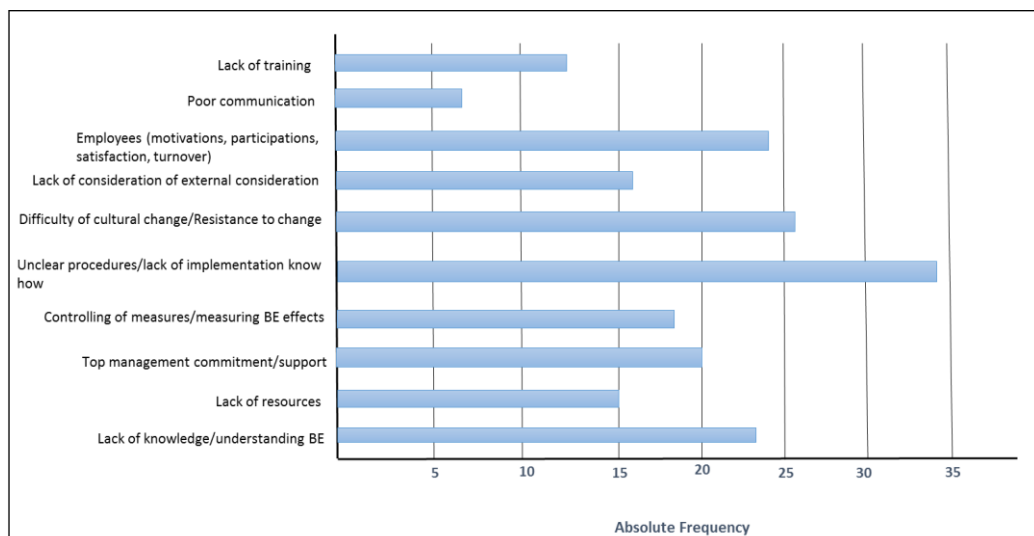
Figure 2.2: Barriers to Implementing Business Excellence (Source: Bolboli and Reiche, 2014)

Other researchers were interested in identifying the challenges and obstacles in the model itself. Eriksson et al. (2016) found that three significant challenges must be considered when reviewing an excellence model for the purpose of improvement. First, the foremost issue should be excellence and quality in the

organizations; second, participation from clients in the improvement process; and third, evolving processes to implement the excellence model. Additionally, in 2015, Bolboli and Reiche identified different important challenges that could be considered to increase the acceptance of the excellence model by observing the impact of corporate culture over a period of time. They identified four main steps to increase the maturity level of excellence and culture:

1) Assessment of excellence maturity level
2) Assessment of corporate culture
3) The setting of excellence model measures
4) Controlling the performance of excellence model measures

Dahlgaard et al. (2013) concluded that some organizations faced issues when implementing the excellence model, such as the complexity of assessment criteria, too much paperwork, and where to concentrate. They proposed and developed a new framework to help organizations implement excellence models practically. When reviewing the literature on the excellence model and TQM, many obstacles and barriers can be found, such as resource limitations, commitment, change management issues, extra work, employee education on quality and excellence, involvement, and engagement. (Corbett and Angell, 2011). 'The literature on obstacles of the excellence models identified a wide range of barriers, including a lack of top management commitment and/or participation, lack of vision, planning and/or constancy of purpose, limited resources, fear of change, work overload, lack of comprehensive quality improvement education, lack of customer orientation, lack of clear measurement systems, lack of staff involvement, and complacency' (Ahire et al., 1996, p. 47; Soltani et al., 2005, p. 1018). The other obstacle, discussed by Rusjan in 2005, is the initiatives that organizations adopt to get a high score while participating in the excellence award, which is sometimes considered insignificant and not executed at the right time. Cortis U. (2006) investigated, in-depth, the benefits, considerations, and disadvantages of implementing the MBNQA criteria for performance excellence. More organizations may adopt and implement the criteria if the benefits and considerations can adequately be defined. If the disadvantages can be minimized through the adoption of specific leadership and change models, organizations may more effectively address the implementation of the MBNQA criteria for performance excellence. This current study uses a mixed-method approach, including quantitative and qualitative methodologies requiring an understanding and appreciation for both methodologies.

Heras–Saizarbitoria et al. (2011) studied the impact of the ISO 9001 standard and the EFQM model from the view of the assessors. They analyzed the two models simultaneously, using the same methodology but in a new way, utilizing a sample of independent assessors of quality management models. To this end, they first performed several objective data analyses regarding the impact of the models, using data obtained from the ISO and EFQM international organizations. They then surveyed 107 experienced and independent quality-management assessors, followed by a personal interview of various stakeholders involved in the adoption of the models. They concluded that factors related to improved worker participation, group work, motivation, and communication should be essential to the EFQM model's successful adoption and are significant owing to the low level of importance attached to them. The main barriers to implementing the

excellence model are resource limitations and the intricacy of the excellence model. Heras–Saizarbitoria et al. (2011) highlighted the principal obstacles to implementing the EFQM model. In order of importance, these are as follows:

1) Lack of physical/financial resources
2) Quality of external assessment
3) Motivation and involvement of the employees
4) Resistance to change
5) Lack of adequately trained human resources
6) Motivation and involvement of the managers
7) Integration in day-to-day operations
8) Bureaucracy
9) Organizational changes

Eriksson et al. (2016), in their research article, 'Exploring quality challenges and the validity of excellence models', identified and explored important quality-related challenges facing organizations and investigated how current excellence models incorporate these challenges.

The key challenges identified were (1) being agile, (2) culture, (3) management being responsible for quality, (4) quality is a strategic choice for owners, (5) stakeholders' needs and expectations, (6) customers' engagement, (7) competitiveness, (8) change management, and (9) process development (Eriksson et al., 2016).

Moreover, Bhat and Rajashekhar (2009) conducted a study to identify the barriers to implementing TQM in India via a survey that targeted the organizations that participated in an excellence award. They found two significant obstacles: benchmarking and change resistance. These findings are also supported by Gómez-López et al. (2017), who found that the most significant barriers are related to time and resources. More support came from Mann et al. (2011), in their article, 'Deployment of business excellence in Asia: an exploratory study', who distributed a survey in different countries for different industries. The findings support the previous research articles when it comes to resources, commitment, participation, training and education, and culture. Additionally, Mann et al. (2011) recommended some future work for the award custodian or award administrator to focus on. These recommendations are related to the award process, such as feedback report(s), the publicity surrounding the award, guidelines for submitting the award applications, assessor training, and opportunities for both assessors and applicants to suggest improvements.

Brown (2013) examined the nature of challenges experienced by organizations and how to manage and overcome these challenges. This study targeted the managers of organizations that won the excellence award in Australia. Brown identified five categories of challenges. The six key themes emerged: embedding excellence, ensuring it is not onerous, engaging people, providing meaning, driving innovation, and

consistency (Brown 2013, p 108). In the same year, Dahlgaarda et al. (2013) published an article titled 'Business excellence models: Limitations, reflections, and further development', and found that organizations faced difficulties when implementing the excellence models because of various weaknesses, such as the complexity of the assessment tool, lack of focus, and difficult procedures for implementation. They suggested a new framework that must be used along with the excellence model to guarantee successful implementation.

As barriers and obstacles are rarely studied in the context of the excellence model or quality awards, globally, some researchers have focused on studying these in the TQM context. Some researchers recommended maintaining a close similarity between excellence models and TQM to simplify the studying of barriers and obstacles that organizations face (e.g., Bohoris, 1995; Curkovic et al., 2000; Ghobadian and Woo, 1996; Lee et al., 2003; Van der Wiele et al., 2000; Yong and Wilkinson, 2001). However, other researchers, such as Curkovic et al. (2000), concluded that more research is needed to fill the gap in the literature and, specifically, study the barriers in the excellence model context. The findings of this study put forth the excellence model as an operational framework for TQM. Considering the comparison between the previous studies, Mann et al., in their article, 'Awareness and impact of business excellence in Asia', concluded that most excellence models were primarily designed from the concept of TQM, and now, more countries are adopting the excellence model. Based on the above facts, Sălăgean et al. divided the group of barriers to the implementation of TQM into five categories:

1) Strategic barriers: Strategic issues are significant barriers to the implementation of TQM and are considered the most critical in affecting the successful implementation of the excellence model related to leadership and management of enterprises.
2) Structural barriers: These are concerned with resources, internal systems, and organizational structure.
3) Human resources barriers: These include the involvement and engagement of employees, as well as change resistance.
4) Contextual barriers: These are the difficulties related to culture and context.
5) Procedural barriers: These include process difficulties, customer focus issues, partnership engagement difficulties, and lack of self-assessment systems.

Rokke and Yadav (2012, p. 656) provided an overview of the challenges and barriers to TQM. They summarized the challenges found with each of the previously identified principles:

1) Leadership and top management commitment
2) Strategic planning
3) Human resource inclusion
4) Transforming organizational culture
5) Integration of supply chain
6) Dynamic customer focus

7) Continuous improvement

Mosadeghrad, in 2014, summarized the failure of TQM into three categories:

1) Ineffective or inappropriate TQM models: This means that the organizations are not sure what the main components of TQM models are and what to implement. This might lead the entities to different results.

2) Inappropriate methods for implementing TQM: This means that many ways exist, some of them the wrong fit, to implement methods or practical approaches (Claver et al., 2003; Hansson and Klefsjo, 2003; Seetharaman et al., 2006).

3) The wrong environment for implementing TQM: This means that to succeed in implementing TQM, some CSFs must be present in the organizations.

Gaps in Perspective Three:

Most research papers studied suggested that participation, involvement, and commitment from top management are significant factors in ensuring that the excellence and quality models are successful and deployed effectively and efficiently (Angell and Corbett, 2009; Beer, 2003; Dahlgaard-Park, 2009; Heras–Saizarbitoria et al., 2011; Mann et al., 2011; Mathews et al., 2001; Soltani et al., 2005). Moreover, the lack of human resources training and development and employee participation may result in the incorrect implementation of the quality and excellence model because of the internal changes they face.

Soltani et al. (2005) examined the importance of senior management commitment to successfully implementing TQM initiatives. The authors changed the pattern of investigating the published studies that reported why the lack of commitment from top management is considered a significant factor that affects the implementation of the quality models. Specifically, they investigated the reasons behind not attaining the commitment from management. Further, this study discussed the barriers and obstacles to implementing the TQM, such as knowledge issues, keeping the work status quo, and top management commitment. The highlight of this paper is that it presents the need for writing more research papers to study how to make the implementation of TQM successful. In this regard, Al-Dhaafri and Alosani (2022) proved that the relationship between leadership and excellence is positive and important.

Other difficulties that organizations face during the deployment of excellence models are not only related to financial and non-financial resource issues and organizational resources (Angell and Corbett, 2009; Heras–Saizarbitoria et al., 2011; Mann et al., 2011; Mathews et al., 2001; Soltani et al., 2005) but also the time allotted to implementing the models (Dahlgaard-Park, 2009; Heras–Saizarbitoria et al., 2011; Mann et al., 2011; Mathews et al., 2001). Additionally, ineffective internal communication and collaboration among various organizational units is considered a major obstacle to implementing the model (Beer, 2003). Moreover, another obstacle might arise from employees not reporting their difficulties and concerns to top management, as well as from top management not communicating key messages to all employees (Angell

and Corbett, 2009; Beer, 2003; Soltani et al., 2005). In addition, organizational units might observe some unknown obstacles and not clearly communicate with other stakeholders, which affects the implementation of excellence models (Mathews et al., 2001; Soltani et al., 2005). Moreover, the intricacy of an excellence model and the inability to understand the criteria and the language of the model may lead to firms abandoning the process (Angell and Corbett, 2009; Dahlgaard-Park, 2009; Heras–Saizarbitoria et al., 2011; Soltani et al., 2005).

Finally, McAdam et al. (2013) used a multi-level case study approach involving repeated in-depth interviews with managers (12) and questionnaires with employees (96) to explore the implementation issues at all levels. They concluded that employee involvement, contribution, and empowerment led to leaving the corrective actions raised by the self-assessment unresolved. The main contribution of this article was a list of all the obstacles and difficulties that exist in the implementation of the excellence model in the public sector in the UAE. The top five were as follows:

1) Documentation of evidence is difficult and time-consuming
2) The assessment method is not efficient (it requires all evidence in a meeting room, a short period of assessment, etc.)
3) The routine workload is very high
4) The model is difficult and needs to be clarified
5) The role of the central quality department in coordinating the assessment process

Table 2.14 Summary Literature Review for Obstacles/Barriers to Implementing the Excellence Model in the UAE.

Sl.	Obstacles and barriers	SL.	Obstacles and barriers
1	Lack of staff commitment	2	Difficulties in improvement actions
3	Support by the quality unit	4	Lack of management commitment
5	Lack of resources	6	Not knowing where to start
7	Lack of time	8	Lack of employee motivation and participation
9	Lack of top management motivation and participation	10	Lack of implementation know-how
11	Resistance to cultural change	12	Lack of training
13	Lack of consideration of external stakeholders	14	Unclear procedures
15	Measuring the effects and impacts of the excellence model	16	Understanding the excellence model
17	involving customers in the improvement activities	18	Too sophisticated assessment criteria
19	Excessive paperwork	20	Lack of focus
21	Fear of change	22	Lack of clear measurement systems
23	External assessment quality	24	Integrations in day-to-day operations
25	Bureaucracy	26	Organizational changes
27	Integration of Supply Chain	28	Environment
29	Documentation of evidence	30	Assessment method

Although studies related to the obstacles in implementing the excellence model were rarely found in the literature, a few authors have studied the barriers to TQM implementation. For the government of the UAE to achieve the objectives of the model, it is recommended to study the actual barriers during the implementation of the model.

The barriers might be studied from different perspectives and different opinions. Three perspectives are suggested to find these barriers. The following needs to be studied during the implementation of the excellence models in the UAE: (1) the submission process, (2) the assessment process, and (3) the implementation process. In addition, these might be verified by the opinions of (1) employees, (2) quality/excellence managers, (3) top management, and (4) assessors and validators.

Suggested Research Questions: Perspective Three

Based on the gaps in the literature regarding perspective three (main obstacles/barriers), the following is the recommended RQ:

RQ3: What are the main barriers/obstacles to the GEM implementation in the UAE?

2.8 Summary of the Review of the Literature

This chapter has examined many topics regarding the excellence models: the main objectives, implementation of the excellence model in the government sector, implementation in the UAE, overall reviews of all excellence models, and major gaps in the literature with respect to the excellence models. In Arab countries, in general, and in the UAE, specifically, the amount of research on excellence models was found to be very little compared to other countries. As stated in Chapter 1, the UAE has decided to implement a unique excellence model, which is different from other excellence models in other countries. The new model comes with its own major purposes and objectives. A relevant question arises: how should one prove that this model is suitable for the government sector in the UAE? In addition, how should one determine if this model can be implemented in such a way as to achieve the overall goals of the model? The literature review revealed that certain areas must be studied and researched to evaluate the excellence models: motivation/benefits, CSFs, and obstacles/barriers. An extensive literature review was conducted and presented to ensure the accuracy of the study and establish a foundation for other researchers to build on and strengthen the implementation of the excellence model in the government sector. The discussion in Chapter 5 is linked directly with the outcomes of this chapter to give an academic dimension to the analysis.

2.9 Research Questions vs Research Method

The primary purpose of the current qualitative research method was to explore the main motivations, CSFs, and obstacles in the new GEM in the UAE. The secondary purpose was to compare the findings of this study with similar results in other excellence models, such as the EFQM and MBNQA. The final purpose was to discover participants' experiences during the implementation of the GEM.

An interview protocol facilitated the collection of textual data. The qualitative approach and interviews were suitable to fulfil the study goals of obtaining the opinions of excellence experts, specialists, and advisors in the UAE regarding the specific points important to know during the early stages of the new model implementation. In the next chapter, the research methodology will be discussed in detail.

Chapter 3: Research Design and Methodology

3.1 Introduction

In Chapter 2, the literature review was presented. The chapter concluded that studies in Middle-Eastern countries relating to the in-depth implementation of BE are lacking. Additionally, as mentioned in the significance part of this study, little research pertains to quality, TQM, and excellence models in the government sector in the context of Arab countries, including the UAE. Furthermore, the excellence model has been implemented in the government sector of Dubai for more than 21 years and in the government of Abu Dhabi for almost 14 years, with no emphasis on researching the award benefits.

The main objective of this chapter is to justify the use of a qualitative method to gather data. First, the chapter begins by explaining the research philosophy and approaches. Second, the research strategy and method used are described. Third, the data collection procedures and ethical issues are mentioned. Fourth, the data analysis process used to analyse the findings is discussed. Finally, a summary of the overall chapter is provided.

3.2 Research Philosophy

A research philosophy is how researchers gather, analyse, and use data. The term philosophy in research refers to the development of knowledge and the nature of that knowledge. Choosing the right research philosophy is an important part of research methodology. Moreover, research philosophy helps researchers choose the most appropriate methods, approaches, and techniques in research (Ates, 2008). Two principal methodologies exist in the social sciences: positivism (quantitative) and interpretative (qualitative). Quantitative studies emphasize measuring and analysing causal relationships between variables, not processes. In interpretative (inductive) research, the word 'qualitative' emphasises processes and meanings that are not rigorously examined or measured in terms of quality, amount, intensity, or frequency. Qualitative research involves using qualitative data, such as interviews, documents, figures, gathered information, and participant observation data.

3.2.1 Positivism

Positivists believe that reality is stable and can be observed and described from an objective viewpoint (Levin, 1988), that is, without interfering with the phenomena being studied. Positivism relies on the hypothetico-deductive method to verify priori hypotheses that are often stated quantitatively, where functional relationships can be derived between causal and explanatory factors (independent variables) and outcomes (dependent variables) (Soo et al., 2020, p. 690). This is the same conclusion reached by many authors, such as Haegele and Hodge, in 2015. They clarified that positivism posits that the natural world is deterministic, supposing that all events that come about globally result from a cause-and-effect relationship. In 2020, Myers, in his book, 'Qualitative Research in Business and Management', describes positivism studies as generally attempting to test a theory to increase the predictive understanding of phenomena. The researcher generalizes, leading to predictions, explanations, and understandings (Creswell, 1994).

3.2.2 Interpretivism

Interpretivism comes from the root word 'interpret', which means explaining or creating meaning where it is not explicitly stated. This uniquely human trait is subjective in nature and cannot be provided by physical phenomena. Interpretivist research strives to add to the body of knowledge by creating deeper, more nuanced understandings of social interactions (Saunders et al., 2019, p. 140). Walsham (1993) suggested that no right or wrong theories exist, and the researchers are willing to decide this based on how 'interesting' the theory is in the interpretive context. 'Interpretivism is directed by the assumption that reality is socially constructed and hence is subjective and multiple' (Creswell, 2007; Hesser-Biber, 2011). 'The emphasis is placed on understanding the individual and their interpretation of the world around them' (Kivunha and Kuyini, 2017).

3.2.3 Positivism vs Interpretivism

Ragab and Arisha (2018) described the difference between the two poles of the research paradigm spectrum, as shown in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Research Paradigms

Research Paradigms		
Paradigm	Scientific	Humanistic
Epistemology	Positivism	Interpretivism
Views	The world is tangible and predates individuals	The world is socially constructed and created by the minds of individuals
	The researcher is external to and independent of the phenomena being researched	The researcher is part of and interacts with the phenomena being researched
	The research attempts to reduce phenomena to context-free generalizations	The research attempts to provide a contextually bounded understanding of the phenomena

Thompson in 2015 summarized the methods used in both paradigms. Positivists believe society shapes the individual and use quantitative methods, while interpretivists believe individuals shape society and use qualitative methods. Table 3.2 illustrates the 'main differences of the paradigms with respect to the methods used, validity, and reliability' (Thompson, 2015, website).

Table 3.2- General Focus of Social Research with Respect to Methods, Validity, and Reliability

Positivism	Interpretivism
The point of research is to uncover the laws that govern human behaviour just as scientists have discovered the laws that govern the physical world.	The point of research is to gain in-depth insight into the lives of respondents in order to facilitate an empathetic understanding of why they behave in the way that they do.
Quantitative methods are preferred, allowing the researcher to remain detached from the respondents.	Qualitative methods are preferred, allowing for close interaction with respondents.
Research must be valid, reliable, and representative.	Reliability and representativeness may be sacrificed for greater validity.

3.2.4 The Philosophy Position Taken for this Research

Based on the gaps in the literature, three RQs need to be addressed to determine if the existing excellence model implementation in the government of the UAE, Abu Dhabi, and Dubai is effective. Thus, an interpretivism perspective was used for the following reasons:

1) To obtain meaning from participants and build a deeper understanding of the implementation process of the excellence model from individuals who are in the field of excellence within government entities.

2) No single reality or truth exists regarding the effective implementation of excellence models in organizations; multiple realities actually exist, and all should be interpreted.

3) The government model is a recent model and has not been researched sufficiently yet. Therefore, individuals' understanding and opinions must be researched in depth to determine the way the model is being implemented, as the three RQs are designed to be answered based on individuals' understandings.

3.3 Research Approaches

3.3.1 Deductive Approach

In deductive research, a conceptual and theoretical structure is developed and then tested by empirical observation, and, in this way, deductive research moves from the general to the particular. A deductive approach is built on the traditional, classic scientific method of having a hypothesis and then testing it by building research (Wilson, 2010, p. 7). The deductive approach, which allows the synthetization of hypotheses, as well as the statistical testing of expected results to a level of probability that is acceptable, is especially compatible with the positivist approach (Snieder and Larner, 2009). Thus, a deductive approach means that the researcher should think from the particular to the general. Moreover, a deductive approach is used to study the link or causal relationship that exists in theory (Gulati, 2009).

3.3.2 Inductive Approach

Inductive research is used when a theory is developed from the observation of empirical reality; that is, inductive research moves from the particular to the general. Inductive research involves searching for a pattern from observation and developing explanations—theories—for those patterns through a series of hypotheses (Goddard and Melville, 2004). In this approach, initially, no framework informs the data collection; thus, the research focus can be formed after the data has been collected (Flick, 2011). The inductive approach does not require the researcher to build a theory or hypothesis. Neuman (2003) emphasized that inductive reasoning begins with detailed observations of the world, which moves toward more abstract generalizations and ideas.

3.3.3 Inductive Approach vs Deductive Approach

The main difference between deductive and inductive research is illustrated in the model shown in Figure 3.1.
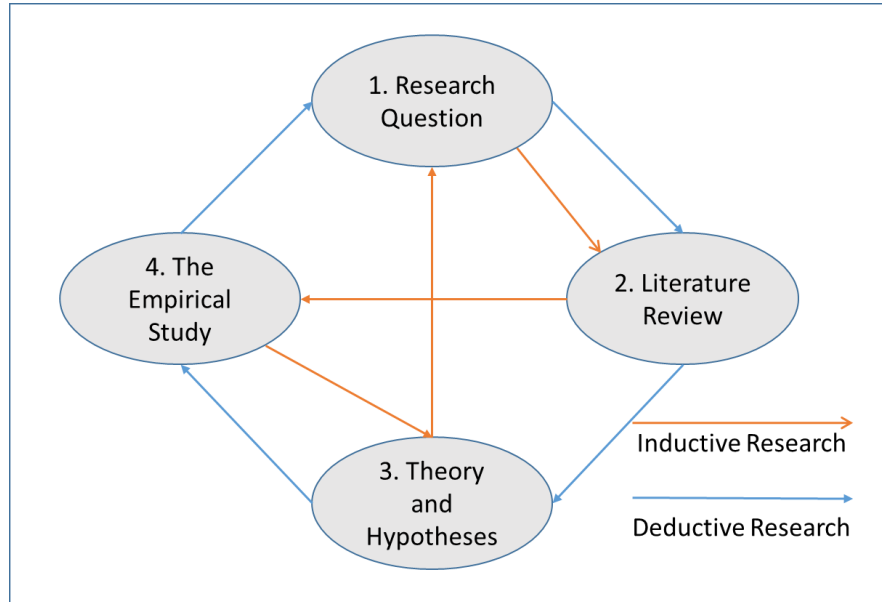
Figure 3.1: Inductive vs Deductive Research (Source: Cavana et al., 2001, Applied Business Research, Qualitative and Quantitative Methods)

3.3.4 Which Approach to Use?

The inductive approach was used in this research for a variety of reasons. First, the reasoning is based on learning from experience. Second, patterns are observed to reach conclusions or generate a theory. Third, the focus will be on individual opinions and experiences. Fourth, as explained in Chapter 1, as the new excellence model is being implemented in the UAE, this research moves from specific observations to broader theories. Thus, the concern of this research is exploratory, with the intention of gaining an understanding of the phenomena involved in the implementation process of the new excellence model.

3.4 Research Strategy

A research strategy is an overall plan for conducting a research study. It describes how the researcher intends to carry out the work (Saunders et al., 2007). In this section, the focus will be mainly on two different research methods and which one was chosen for this research.

3.4.1 Quantitative Method

In quantitative research, the investigator uses cause-and-effect thinking by reducing specific variables, hypotheses, and questions—using measurement and observation—to test theories by employing strategies of inquiry, such as experiments and surveys, and by collecting data using predetermined instruments that yield statistical data (Creswell, 2003). A major advantage of quantitative research is the ability to measure

the reactions of large populations using a limited set of questions, which leads to a comparison of variables and statistical aggregation (Patton, 1990). This specific measurement allows a broad, generalizable set of findings and conclusions to be presented succinctly and parsimoniously. Quantitative methods and studies focus on measuring and analysing causal relationships of variables, not processes (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000). Quantitative methodology is normally used to isolate cause and effect, operationalize theoretical relationships, and measure and quantify phenomena leading to the generalization of conclusions and findings (Flick, 1998).

3.4.2 Qualitative Method

In qualitative doctoral research, the methodological approach and the research design are extremely important in ensuring the rigorousness of the work (Myria and Maria, 2020). Using qualitative research involves the investigator making knowledge claims based primarily on multiple meanings of individual experiences, meanings which are socially or historically constructed, with the intent of developing a theory or pattern or participatory perspective (Creswell, 2003). The term 'qualitative research' indicates an investigation that yields findings revealed without statistical procedures or other means of quantification (Strauss and Corbin, 1998). Qualitative research can delve into life, experiences, behaviours, passions, emotions, and feelings while reviewing organizational functioning and other interactions of individuals. While some of the data may be quantifiable, it differs from quantifiable research in that it is interpreted by the researcher (Cortis, 2006).

Qualitative methodology allows the researcher to study topics and problems in depth and detail without predetermined objectives (Patton, 1990). According to Miles and Huberman (1994), qualitative researchers usually work with smaller populations, nested in their context, and perform in-depth studies to gain a richness of data with depth and definition. In qualitative research, the researcher is the instrument, which suggests that validity and reliability rest upon the skill, competence, experience, expertise, and rigour of the researcher (Patton, 1990).

Qualitative research provides the researcher with a framework for studying the problem in more depth and detail. This methodology is not constrained by a predetermined design or categories of analysis, which encourages openness and observation of the reactions of the participants (Patton, 1990). In qualitative research, data are collected through observations and in-depth interviews where the participant is considered the expert (Cortis, 2006).

3.4.3 Qualitative vs Quantitative Method

Table 3.3 illustrates the main difference between the qualitative and quantitative methods.

Table 3.3: Qualitative vs Quantitative Methods

Parameter	Qualitative	Quantitative
Focus	Quality (feature)	Quantity (how much, numbers)
Method	Ethnography/observation	Experiment/correlation
Goal	Understanding/meaning	Prediction/test hypothesis
Design	Flexible	Structured
Sample	Small/purposeful	Large, random, representation
Data Collection	Interviews/ observations/ documents	Questionnaires, scales, tests
Analysis	Inductive	Deductive
Findings	Comprehensive, description, detailed, holistic	Precise, numerical
Researcher	Immersed	Detached

3.4.4 Which Research Method to Use?

This research studied the 2016 version of the GEM in the UAE and included amendments in the excellence model up to 2019. The study used a qualitative approach, as aspects of the benefits and motivations, CSFs, and obstacles and barriers of implementing the GEM in the UAE lend themselves to this approach, providing a degree of richness in information. 'The three most common qualitative methods are participant observation, in-depth interviews, and focus groups. Each method is particularly suited for obtaining a specific type of data.

1) Participant observation is appropriate for collecting data on naturally occurring behaviours in their usual contexts.
2) In-depth interviews are optimal for collecting data on individuals' personal histories, perspectives, and experiences, particularly when sensitive topics are being explored.
3) Focus groups are effective in eliciting data on the cultural norms of a group and in generating broad overviews of issues of concern to the cultural groups or subgroups represented' (Tolley et al., 2016, p. 96).

The method used in this study was an in-depth interview because the objective of the current qualitative study was to identify motivations, CSFs, and barriers/obstacles to the GEM in the UAE. The other main objective of this study was to propose changes to the current excellence model based on experts/advisors/consultants' points of view, who work daily to deploy the excellence model in government entities. Moreover, the study included interviews with senior management staff in organizations that participated in quality awards based on the GEM in the UAE. Qu and Dumay (2011) stated that interviews are strongly recommended to produce the richest dataset to be considered a constructive approach. There is insufficient knowledge and little research regarding the new model in the UAE public sector—

specifically, its implementation. Therefore, the interview method is appropriate for exploring the opinions of all targeted participants regarding the motives that drive the organizations to be successful in the implementation of the GEM, what CSFs must be adopted in pursuit of excellence, and finally, what major obstacles and barriers slow down the achievement of excellence in the organizations. Several research designs and methods are available, but the most appropriate choice is often dependent on a few factors, including the purpose and depth of the study, as well as the availability of resources and literature. For the current study, the qualitative method was appropriate for collecting information on a topic in which little is published in the literature (i.e., the motivations, CSFs, and barriers/obstacles of the new excellence model in the UAE) (Mills et al., 2006). The central phenomenon was the GEM in the UAE. Moreover, the study did not plan to test theories or explore trends and relationships between known variables, making the quantitative approach unsuitable (Charmaz, 2006).

The main purpose of this research is to understand the GEM applied in the UAE by exploring the perspectives of excellence leaders in the government of the UAE, Abu Dhabi, and Dubai. A qualitative approach was chosen to discover the participants' experiences to understand the research's central phenomenon (Szeto, 2010). Rowley (2012) recommended the interview technique as a suitable tool to generate ideas and useful understandings. Therefore, the current research involved interviewing excellence managers/leaders in the federal authorities, the governments of Abu Dhabi, and Dubai. Following this, an interview with each participant was completed using structured, open-ended questions with a developed interview protocol to collect the information from participants.

The qualitative approach interacts directly with respondents/participants to assist in realizing their views (Mello and Flint, 2009). Their focus on the participants' perspectives makes the qualitative method a better choice than the quantitative method. Qualitative research is committed to understanding the unique experiences of individuals from their perspective by identifying shared meanings (Pernice, 1996). Qualitative research was appropriate for this research, as the objective was to explore the opinions of industry excellence senior management staff regarding the three perspectives identified in Chapter 2. Myers (2009) stated that the researchers used semi-structured interviews to determine the focus of their study and allow the interviewees to add their expert insights and opinions. The RQs for the current study were open-ended to elicit and extract the opinions of excellence leaders/experts regarding the UAE GEM for the three perspectives identified earlier.

3.5 Sampling Design

The sample size required for a qualitative approach is always less than that required in a quantitative approach. However, it should be sufficient to collect the data necessary to answer the RQs. In this section, the researcher discusses the approaches to determine the sample size that differentiates between the population and the sample.

3.5.1 Approaches to Determine Sample Size

Sim et al. (2018) identified four approaches to choosing the sample size in qualitative research:

1) Rules of thumb
2) Conceptual model
3) Numerical guidelines
4) Statistical formulae

1) Rules of Thumb

This approach was presented by several authors and depended on the studies and research that were completed in the same field, as well as the methodologies considered. Glaser and Strauss (1967) recommend the concept of saturation for achieving an appropriate sample size in qualitative studies. Different authors have made many recommendations, as presented in Table 3.4.

'Table 3.4-Different Recommendations for the Sample Size' (Source: Sim et al., 2018, p. 621)

Author(s) (years)	Recommendations
Morse (1994, 2000)	Morse (1994) recommends at least 6 participants for phenomenological studies and approximately 35 for studies based on grounded theory; Morse (2000) gives similar figures, pointing out that the number of interviews per informant is important, as well as the number of informants.
Adler and Adler (2012)	Recommend a 'broad range of between 12 and 60, with 30 being the mean.
Bernard (2000, 2013)	Bernard (2000) recommends 30–60 for ethnographic studies. Elsewhere (Bernard, 2013, p. 175), he suggests that '10–20 knowledgeable people are enough to uncover and understand the core categories in any well-defined cultural domain or study of lived experience'.
Boddy (2005, 2016)	Suggests an upper limit of 12 focus groups or 30 in-depth interviews, if researching a relatively homogeneous population.
Creswell (1998, 2013)	For phenomenological studies, Creswell (1998) recommends 5–25. Recommends 20–30 informants for a grounded theory study, 4–5 cases per study for case study research, and 2 or 3 for narrative research.
Dukes (1984)	Recommends 3–10 participants in a phenomenological study.
Kuzel (1999)	Recommends 5–8 participants in a homogeneous sample (or homogeneous subgroups within a sample) or 12–20 if looking for disconfirming evidence or to achieve maximum variation sampling.
Lincoln and Guba (1985, p. 235)	Recommend between 12 and 20 participants in interview studies.
Marshall, Cardon, Poddar, and Fontenot (2013)	Recommend 20–30 interviews for grounded theory studies and 15–30 for single-case studies.
Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2007)	Do not recommend specific numbers, but advocate examining sample sizes in previous studies of similar designs in which saturation was reached and using a figure within the range of such sample sizes.
Parse (1990)	Recommends 2–10 participants in order to achieve 'redundancy or saturation' (p. 10).
Ray (1994)	Suggests that phenomenological studies usually focus on a group of between 8 and 12 people, but may also focus on just a single person (p. 127).
Ritchie, Lewis, Elam, Tennant, and Rahim (2014)	Advise an upper limit of 50 for interview studies, on the basis that the quality of data collection and analysis may suffer with larger studies (p.118).
Corbin and Strauss (2015)	Propose at least five one-hour interviews for theoretical saturation in grounded theory studies.
Warren (2002)	Suggests that the norm in terms of the minimum number of interviews is in the range of 20–30 in order to 'have a non-ethnographic interview study published' (p. 99).
Dworkin (2012)	Recommends that 25–30 participants is the minimum sample size required to reach saturation and redundancy in grounded theory studies that use in-depth interviews.

The above recommendations can help a researcher estimate how many participants they will need, but ultimately, the required number of participants should depend on when saturation is reached.

2) Conceptual Model

Sim et al. (2018) suggested that the use of a formal conceptual model should be based on factors such as the aim of the study, the analysis approach, and the theoretical model and framework. Morse (2000) stated the conditions for identifying the sample size for research studies: scope, quality of data, research design, and shadowed data.

3) Numerical Guidelines

Slim et al. (2018) presented the third approach, considered popular: numerical guidelines derived from an empirical investigation are used to determine the sample size. Hennin et al. (2017) also consider sample size in relation to saturation. They examined some interview transcripts to identify when saturation occurred. They found that code saturation was reached at nine interviews. Extending Guest et al.'s (2006) work, Hagaman and Wutich (2017) concluded that 16 interviews were sufficient to reach saturation and determine common themes: however, more than 20 and up to 24 were needed to reach meta-themes. Finally, Ando et al. (2014) found that 12 interviews are enough.

4) Statistical Formulae

At least five studies pre-emptively calculated a sample size using statistical formulae based on the likelihood of finding a large sample population (Sim et al., 2018, p. 623). Fugard and Potts (2015a) developed a tool to help researchers to identify the desired number of participants for detecting the number of themes. Van Rijnsoever (2015) recommended 20–46 to achieve saturation using computer simulation.

3.5.2 Sample Size

In conclusion, this study followed the approach of Hennink et al. (2017) to determine the sample size. In examining 25 in-depth interviews, the researchers found that code saturation was reached at nine interviews, whereby the range of thematic issues was identified. However, 16 to 24 interviews were needed to reach meaningful saturation, where they developed a richly textured understanding of issues. This approach was compatible with other authors' recommendations, such as those of Warren (2002); Dworkin (2012); Marshall, Cardon, Poddar, and Fontenot (2013); Kuzel (1999); and Lincoln and Guba (1985).

Fifteen to twenty interviews were recommended for this study. All the participants were employees working in government entities and were selected randomly. The focus was on full-time employees who worked eight hours per day. The sample size depends on the saturation concept that was presented earlier by most of the researchers.

3.6 Data Collection Method

3.6.1 Ethical Implications of the Study

'Researchers face ethical challenges in all stages of the study, from designing to reporting. These include anonymity, confidentiality, informed consent, researchers' potential impact on the participants, and vice versa.' (Sanjari et al., 2014, p. 1). According to Bryman and Bell (2007), the following 10 points represent the most important principles related to ethical considerations in dissertations:

1) Research participants should not be subjected to harm in any way whatsoever.
2) Respect for the dignity of research participants should be prioritized.
3) Full consent should be obtained from the participants prior to the study.
4) The protection of the privacy of research participants must be ensured.
5) An adequate level of confidentiality of the research data should be ensured.
6) The anonymity of individuals and organizations participating in the research must be ensured.
7) Any deception or exaggeration about the aims and objectives of the research must be avoided.
8) Affiliations in any form, sources of funding, as well as any possible conflicts of interest must be declared.
9) Any type of communication in relation to the research should be done with honesty and transparency.
10) Any type of misleading information, as well as representation of primary data findings in a biased way, must be avoided.

All participants involved in this research volunteered, and no personal or confidential information was sought. Participants could withdraw at any time during the research. No harm was caused to participants, and this researcher was aware of the necessity to keep the information discussed strictly confidential. The IQs were not of a personal nature; the participants were asked to address their experiences in a general nature.

Finally, prior to the research, ethics approval was granted by the Social Sciences Human Research Ethics Committee at the University of Wollongong (UOW), and all the required information and documents relating to this study were provided to the UOW Human Research Ethics Committee; moreover, all the qualitative interviews were approved by the committee (IRMA, approval date: December 2019) (see Appendix 1).

3.6.2 Sampling Locations

The study focused on the government departments that apply the GEM in the UAE federal government entities, Abu Dhabi, and Dubai local government entities. The researcher chose these two Emirates because they applied the excellence model for more than 14 years (Dubai from 1998, Abu Dhabi from 2004, and

the UAE federal ministries from 2009) to develop a competitive advantage locally and internationally.

'The Cabinet of the United Arab Emirates is the Executive Branch of the federation, handling the execution of all internal and external affairs related to the federation as per the UAE Constitution and the Federal laws, under the supervision of the President and the Federal Supreme Council.' (The UAE Cabinet site, 2021). The cabinet consists of the Prime Minister, two deputy prime ministers, the ministers of the UAE, and an active General Secretariat. The UAE federal government entities have 49 governments (https://uaecabinet.ae/en/federal-government-entities).

Dubai has more than 32 local government organizations, and their services cover all the main public services, such as transportation, tourism, commerce, civil defence, free zone services, municipality activities, customs, utilities, water and electricity, land services, charitable activities, and Islamic services. Chapter 1, Section 1.4 mentions the website that includes a list of government departments in Dubai implementing the DGEP (Source: http://www.dubai.ae, 2010). Dubai has over 60,000 employees working in these government departments. The annual budget for all these departments was approximately AED 53 billion in 2017.

Abu Dhabi has similar government departments to Dubai and provides similar public and government services. Chapter 1, Section 1.4 mentions the website that includes the list of government departments in Abu Dhabi that implement the Abu Dhabi Excellence Award; it also shows the structure of the government (Source: http://www.abudhabi.ae, 2010)

3.6.3 Population and Sampling

A population refers to the entire group of people, events, or things of interest to be investigated, while a sample is a subset of the population (Sekaran and Bougie, 2013).

The first step in studying organizations' implementation of the excellence models in the UAE was selecting expert participants based on their experience with the excellence model process, as per the RQs formulated in Chapter 2, based on the gaps in the literature. This study targeted all the government entities participating in the GEM in the UAE at the three levels: Dubai, Abu Dhabi, and the federal level. The targeted participants held the following positions/titles:

1) Excellence directors
2) Excellence managers
3) Excellence experts and specialists
4) Excellence consultants

The main reasons for selecting the above participants were as follows:

1) The targeted participants are responsible for implementing the excellence model in their organizations; therefore, they have experience in this area.
2) The targeted participants knew how to answer the RQs from an organizational point of view. That is, they were able to share the other employees/leaders' opinions of the new excellence model.
3) The targeted participants had experience with the old and new models.

In contrast to random sampling techniques, selecting the participants based on their expertise and experience is known as purposeful sampling, where participants are selected as representative samples of a population. Patton (1990, p. 169) promoted purposeful sampling and substantive theory: 'The logic and power of purposeful sampling lie in selecting information-rich cases for study in depth. Information-rich cases are those from which one can learn a great deal about the issues of central importance to the purpose of the research, thus the term purposeful sampling.'

3.6.4 Interviews

Interviews were done at many places and in many ways. The locations for data collection were decided between the researcher and the participants. Interviews were done in three main locales:

1) At the UOWD library room
2) At a café as per the participant's request
3) At the participant's workplace

Knox and Burkard (2009) stated that all potential participants should receive adequate information for the completion of the necessary informed consent forms. Thus, the IQs (see Appendix 2), participant information sheet (see Appendix 3), and consent form (see Appendix 4) were sent to the selected participants. The researcher must maintain and retain other important factors as part of the interviewing process, such as privacy, confidentiality, and anonymity, as well as consent from the participants. (McCallin, 2003: Nambiar, 2012). The researcher called all the participants and provided them with all the necessary information related to the objectives and aim of this research and ensured the ethical issues were addressed via official email (Appendix 5). No attempts were made to deceive any of the participants at any time. For this research, all participants were asked to volunteer, be confident of privacy and confidentiality, and be allowed to check accuracy (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000) throughout the research.

Thus, all the face-to-face interviews were conducted one-to-one with each participant. All interviews followed the same protocol. Each interview began by introducing the researcher, explaining the topic and the goals of the interview, and highlighting the participant information sheet and consent form. The researcher asked all interviewees to sign the consent form, which they did. All interviews were audiotaped and transcribed, as per the UOW Human Research Ethics Committee's request.

3.6.5 The Interview Protocol

The interview protocol is considered to be a survey tool that is used to ask questions and collect information related to the purpose of the research (Patton, 2015). The main purpose of the interviews is to collect detailed and in-depth qualitative data from the experiences of interviewees (Rubin and Rubin, 2012). Castillo-Montoya, in 2016, developed an 'interview protocol refinement (IPR) framework comprised of a four-phase process for systematically developing and refining an interview protocol. The four-phase process includes: (1) ensuring the IQs align with RQs, (2) constructing an inquiry-based conversation, (3) receiving feedback on interview protocols, and (4) piloting the interview protocol. The IRP method can support efforts to strengthen the reliability of interview protocols used for qualitative research and thereby contribute to improving the quality of data obtained from research interviews.' (p. 811) (Table 3.5).

Table 3.5: Phases and Purpose of the Interview

'Interview Protocol Refinement (IPR) Method' (Castillo-Montoya, 2016, p. 828)	
Phase	Purpose of Phase
Phase I: Ensuring interview questions align with research questions	To create an interview protocol matrix to map the interview questions against the research questions
Phase 2: Constructing an inquiry-based conversation	To construct an interview protocol that balances inquiry with conversation
Phase 3: Receiving feedback on the interview protocol	To obtain feedback on interview protocol (possible activities include close reading and think-aloud activities)
Phase 4: Piloting the interview protocol	To pilot the interview protocol with a small sample

The sampling pool of this research consisted of individuals who work with the GEM in the federal authorities of Abu Dhabi and Dubai. An email soliciting the participant was sent to leaders/directors/managers, asking them to nominate potential participants based on their level of experience and familiarity with the GEM process. They could also nominate themselves to participate in this study or nominate others from the approved group, such as experts, specialists, and consultants. As the GEM was assessed twice in the UAE at the federal level and once in Abu Dhabi and Dubai, it was recommended that all participants should be involved in at least the first cycle of the implementation (or assessment) in their organizations and have participated in any cycle of the previous model in the government sector. A multi-stage research plan was utilized for this research. It was completed in stages:

- Stage 1: An official approval letter to conduct the research was obtained from the higher authority of the award custodian (The Prime Ministry's Office-PMO). The PMO developed the new excellence model and is considered the main award custodian in the UAE (see Appendix 6).
- Stage 2: Interview questions verification – In this stage, the IQs were verified by a group of experts/managers who work in the UAE government entities and have in-depth knowledge of the GEM in the UAE. The questions were tested by having actual in-depth interviews with individuals approved to participate in this stage. Before verifying the questions, a letter/email

was sent to the participants in this phase to allow them to review the questions before conducting the actual in-depth interviews.

- Stage 3: First modification of the IQs – After conducting the interviews and getting feedback from the participants, the IQs were modified (Appendix 2).

- Stage 4: Selection Stage – The purpose of this stage was to select the targeted group at the top managerial level in the excellence field at the federal ministries in the UAE, specifically in the Abu Dhabi and Dubai government entities. In this phase, 19 excellence directors/managers were chosen from all government entities/ministries that participated in the first cycle in 2016 and 2017. The researcher communicated with the award custodians to get the names of the excellence experts, managers, specialists, and advisors to participate in this research.

- Stage 5: Interviewing the participants – Interviews with the participants were conducted using the first modified questionnaire containing qualitative questions. The researcher interviewed the participants using the questionnaire and recorded the entire interview.

- Stage 6: Thank you – A final thank you note was sent to all participants, along with a summary of the findings and conclusions of the research.

As the respondents were able to understand and respond in English, the interviews were conducted in English. Although the official language in the UAE is Arabic, English is also well understood and used widely for communication across the UAE. As a result, the researcher did not face any difficulties conducting the interviews in English. The interviews lasted 60–80 minutes; in-depth interviews usually lasted about one to two hours (Seidman, 2006). The interviews were audio recorded, uploaded, backed up, and stored in a secure location. According to Mays and Pope (1995), one of the advantages of using audio recordings to record interviews is to improve the rigour of the study.

3.6.6 Possible Research Bias

The possibility of bias should be stamped out during the research study, as its presence will lead to incorrect findings and conclusions (Šimundić, 2013). Bias can occur either on purpose or accidentally (Gardener and Resnik, 2002). Galdas (2017) posited that the question of 'how much of a researcher's own values and opinions need to be reflected in qualitative study questions, data collection methods, or findings for it to constitute bias?' is invalid. Instead, he said that there must not be any separation between the ones conducting the qualitative research and the process or the result. This separation is unnecessary and is, detrimental. The concern should be on how transparent the researcher is and how reflective they are of their own biases, both conscious and subconscious (Galdas, 2017). The current researcher has many years of experience in the field of quality and excellence in the UAE and is an accredited certified assessor. Moreover, the researcher has worked on the previous version of the excellence model in the UAE (from 2004–2019) and witnessed the launching of the new version (the GEM) from 2015 to the present. This researcher has been working in a government department for more than 18 years; the excellence model to be examined is designed for the government. The researcher believes that both models (old and new) have advantages and benefits but still need to be improved based on the opinions of qualified and concerned

excellence leaders. Additionally, the researcher believes that room for improvement always exists, and many areas could be studied and examined to improve the current excellence model. This researcher used the qualitative method to collect the data required in this research. The participants were all volunteers in Abu Dhabi and Dubai who worked with this model and had sufficient experience to express their opinions and perspectives. The researcher made sure to record all the interviews and participant comments. Finally, other bias types are to be discussed in the next chapter concerning the data analysis and findings.

3.6.7 Designing the In-Depth Interview Questions

'Guidelines were offered by a researcher for writing RQs: Pose a question; begin with 'how', 'what', or 'why'; indicate the participants and the research site for the study.' (Creswell, 2008). These guidelines were used in this research to interview the targeted participants. Modifications of questions are allowed, and alteration of the sample size as well (Yim, 2009). As discussed in Chapter 1 (Introduction) and Chapter 2 (Literature Review), three RQs are addressed in this study, as follows:

RQ1: What are the main motivations/benefits for the use of the GEM in the UAE?

RQ2: What are the CSFs affecting the implementation of the GEM in the UAE?

RQ3: What are the main barriers/obstacles to the GEM implementation in the UAE?

This study attempts to discover the benefits, motivations, CSFs, barriers, and obstacles to implementing the new version of the excellence model. If the benefits and motivations can adequately be defined, organizations may utilize them to achieve the overall objectives of the model in the UAE, which leads to the country developing in other areas. If the barriers and obstacles can be studied and identified, organizations will become worldwide role models and acquire competitive advantages and leading positions in the UAE. Finally, if CSFs can be discovered, organizations can adopt them to promote society's welfare. Therefore, the primary questions in each interview were designed to fulfil the goals of this cycle. Most questions were adapted from the relevant literature (see Table 3.6). The interview protocol contained seven questions to answer the three main RQs.

Table 3.6: Research Questions vs Literature Review

No.	Research Questions	References Literature
1	What are the main motivations/benefits for the use of the government excellence model in the UAE?	La Rotta & Rave (2017) Heras–Saizarbitoria et al., 2011; Heras–Saizarbitoria et al., 2006 Mann et al. (2011) Suáreza et al. (2017) Rodney et al. (2013) Gómez et al. (2016) Bendell, and Dahlgaard (2013)
2	What are the critical success factors affecting the implementation of the government excellence model in the UAE?	Youssef and Zairi (1995) Osseo-Assare et al. (2005) Salaheldin (2009) Kim et al. (2010) La Rotta & Rave (2017) Tutuncu & Kucukusta (2010) Brown (2013) Tari (2010) Bolboli and Reiche (2013) Doeleman et al. (2014)
3	What are the main barriers/obstacles to the government excellence model implementation in the UAE?	La Rotta and Rave (2017) Lasrado (2017) Gomez et al. (2017) Heras–Saizarbitoria et al. (2011) Henrik et al. (2016) Bolboli and Reiche (2014) Seyed and Markus (2015) Cortis U. (2006) Eriksson et al. (2016)

3.6.8 Data Collection Challenges

Five main challenges were faced during the research period:

1) The geographic location of the population. This research covered three major excellence models in three locations: Dubai, Abu Dhabi, and the federal ministries. The researcher lives in Dubai, and a few participants live in places ranging from 120–300 km away from the researcher's location. To solve this issue, some interviews were conducted over the phone.

2) The interviews occurred in the last quarter of 2019 and the first quarter of 2020; this period is considered the busiest time for all organizations as they prepare to participate in the excellence model award. For example, in Dubai, the award cycle runs every two years. The submission

date is January 15, and the actual assessment for organizations is in February and March. Several meetings were postponed, and the researcher had to arrange different times.

3) Owing to the nature of this study and the types of participants, the communication with the participants took a long time, as the researcher had to explain to every participant the main purpose, research objectives, RQs, IQs, and confidentiality. Interview time ranged from 60–90 minutes, as the participants wanted to discuss the expected outputs of the thesis.

4) Before conducting the interviews, the researcher had to search for many documents, such as excellence model guidelines and excellence model criteria, as the excellence models are implemented in different ways to achieve different purposes. Moreover, the researcher had to look at the national agenda and other Emirates' strategic plans to understand the implementation process of the excellence model.

5) All the interviews were transcribed, and to avoid mistakes, the researcher reviewed all the transcriptions. This process took a long time, as the amount of information provided by the participants was huge.

3.7 Data Analysis

According to Creswell (2014), the most popular qualitative data analysis software programs are MAXqda, QSR Nvivo, and Atlas. NVivo qualitative analysis software facilitated the coding process. Creswell (2007) noted the advantages of using software in qualitative research for data storage and access. Creswell also suggested that computer programs fostered data analysis, and the product's mapping capability could support visualization for relationships among codes and themes. However, Onwuegbuzie and Teddlie (2003) warned against using the computer program as a 'substitute for a thorough reading of the text' (p. 372). NVivo contains the ability to facilitate code assignment by importing transcripts and searching the text for keywords or phrases. Another feature of this product allows users to track their coding processes by creating code definitions. Additionally, NVivo supports quantitative data importing and exporting for mixed-methods projects and is considered one of the best computer tools for a qualitative approach (Creswell, 2008). For a researcher to determine what analysis strategy is appropriate for their study, they must consider what their objectives for the study are. Thus, if the goal is developing theoretical concepts, they might choose a disaggregating data strategy that involves coding the data or creating indexes/categories allowing analysis of the data. However, if the objective is to find relationships and associations in a narrative/discourse analysis, a holistic approach is more beneficial in which the data is not broken up into indexes or categories and is instead analysed as a whole (Silvana and Judith, 2008, p. 2; Maxwell, 1996). Focusing on the analysis case by case as opposed to looking for comparisons across cases is another form of a contextualizing strategy.

This research applied the first strategy (disaggregating) to analyse the collected data, as the main purpose of this study is to explore the answers to the three RQs from the participants' points of view and compare the answers within and between the categories. All the interviews were recorded and then transcribed into a word document to allow the researcher to go through them comprehensively to determine and classify the main themes.

Memo-ing is a tool used in combination with both disaggregating and contextualizing strategies. It is a way to synthesize the data—to put it back together to elaborate on the relationships and patterns that one finds in the data. 'A code in qualitative inquiry is most often a word or short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing, and/or evocative attribute for a portion of language-based or visual data.' (Saldaña, 2013, p. 3).

In a qualitative study, data is considered huge, and the researcher needs to be careful about what portion of the data is suitable for analysis. Guest, MacQueen, and Namey (2012) recommended winnowing the data or focusing on part of the data and neglecting the rest. Researchers normally use computer software tools to analyze the transcription or interview notes; the software will do the coding and determine the emerging themes and patterns. According to Kamali (2018), the basic process of reporting the findings of any qualitative study is to develop descriptions and themes from the data. Further, more detail about the data analysis, thematic analysis, coding, and transcription will be discussed in Chapter 4.

Certain processes in qualitative research studies guarantee reliability and validity. The main objective of validity and reliability is to ensure that the results of the research paper or study are explicit (Cooper and Schindler, 2008). The validity of results associated with research studies means that data can be generalized to different settings, measures, people, and times (Vijayan, 2012). When different samples of data are taken by the same researchers and lead to the same results, this is called reliability. (Cooper and Schindler, 2008). In qualitative research, the researcher is the instrument that suggests validity, and reliability rests upon the skill, competence, experience, expertise, and rigour of the researcher (Patton, 1990). Interpretive validity is defined as the level of confidence that all respondents' and interviewees' opinions, thoughts, and experiences are precisely documented, recorded, and reported by the researcher. (Johnson, 1997). In this study, interpretive validity was ensured by the discussion of preliminary findings with participants for clarity and accuracy. The validity and reliability of this research will be discussed further in Chapter 4.

3.8 Chapter Summary

This chapter described in detail the research philosophy, the two types of research approaches, and why inductive research was chosen. This chapter has also outlined the research strategies and the justification for the use of qualitative methods. The qualitative method and, specifically, in-depth interviews were found to be suitable because the aim was to explore the opinions of BE leaders regarding the three perspectives of the existing BE models in the UAE. The participants were leaders in implementing the excellence model in the UAE, for example, excellence directors, managers, experts, specialists, and consultants. The reason for choosing these participants was because of their depth of experience in the implementation of the GEM in the UAE and their close work with the custodian of the excellence award in the UAE. The data collection method was also explained, which includes the interview protocol, ethical considerations, and the in-depth interviews as a tool for data collection. It outlined the sampling design and the approach to data analysis. Finally, Chapter 4 will present the data analysis, findings, and discussion of the qualitative cycle of the research design.

Chapter 4: Data Analysis and Findings

4.1 Introduction

Chapter 3 explained in detail the research design and methodology used in this study. It explained the justifications for the use of an exploratory qualitative research methodology to collect data from interviewees working at organizations in the UAE (federal, Abu Dhabi, and Dubai Governments). Chapter 3 also illustrated all the points related to the data collection process, including the interview protocol, sampling design, how in-depth IQs were developed, and how the data was collected.

As mentioned in Chapters 1 and 2, the main objectives of this research are to conduct a critical evaluation of the new GEM; discover the benefits, considerations, and disadvantages of implementing the new GEM; and study the difficulties facing the government organization sector during the implementation process. The purpose of the current chapter is to introduce the qualitative analysis techniques used to analyse the data.

The following aspects will be discussed in this chapter: the qualitative technique that was used to analyse the data; data analysis process; reporting structure; key themes; data analysis; and findings for each theme, which are presented in three parts – introduction, determining the theme, and interviewees' feedback; and finally, the conclusion of this chapter.

4.2 Qualitative Method

4.2.1 Qualitative Data Analysis Approaches

Qualitative data is commonly concerned with information considered not numeric. It comes in different forms, such as transcription, interview notes, documents, recordings, and texts. Lester et al. (2020, p. 94 and 95) stated that 'from framework analysis (Ritchie and Spencer, 1994) to content analysis (Schreier, 2012) to discourse analysis (Wood and Kroger, 2000), among many others, there are a plethora of distinct ways in which a researcher might complete their qualitative analysis.'

According to Business Research Methodology (BRM), 'qualitative data analysis can be divided into the following six categories:

1) Content analysis. This refers to the process of categorizing verbal or behavioral data to classify, summarize, and tabulate the data.

2) Narrative analysis. This method involves the reformulation of stories presented by respondents considering the context of each case and the different experiences of each respondent. In other words, narrative analysis is the revision of primary qualitative data by the researcher.

3) Discourse analysis. A method of analysis for naturally occurring speech and all types of written text.

4) Framework analysis. This is a more advanced method that consists of several stages, such as familiarization, identifying a thematic framework, coding, charting, mapping, and interpretation.

5) Grounded theory. This method of qualitative data analysis starts with an analysis of a single case to formulate a theory. Then, additional cases are examined to see if they contribute to the theory.

6) Thematic analysis: Identifying themes and patterns of meaning across a dataset in relation to the research question.' (BRM website: https://research-methodology.net/, 2021)

4.2.2 Which Approach to Choose?

In this research, a thematic analysis approach was used to analyse the qualitative data that was gathered from the in-depth IQs. Braun and Clarke (2006) refer to thematic analysis as a fundamental method for qualitative analysis. According to Braun and Clarke (2013, p. 178), identifying patterns and themes within data is known as thematic analysis, and it allows the researcher to analyse data from a variety of qualitative data-gathering methods, like focus groups, surveys and interviews, and does not restrict them to a specific dataset size. Many authors agree, such as Savin-Baden and Major (2013), Balley (2011), and Lester et al. (2020). This type of analysis is now used in various fields, such as psychology, as pointed out by many researchers (e.g., Frith and Gleeson, 2004); medicine (Cassol et al., 2018), health services (Norris et al., 2017), tourism (Costa et al., 2016), human research development (Israel et al., 2017; Perkins, 2018; Tsai, 2016), and education (Halverson et al., 2014).

Saunders et al. (2019) mentioned that the primary objective of a thematic analysis approach is to seek themes or patterns while analysing the qualitative data. 'Thematic Analysis can be used to help the researcher:

1) Comprehend often large and disparate amounts of qualitative data
2) Integrate related data drawn from different transcripts and notes
3) Identify key themes or patterns from a data set for further exploration
4) Produce a thematic description of these data and/or
5) Develop and test explanations and theories based on apparent thematic patterns or relationships
6) Draw and verify conclusions' (Saunders et al., 2019, p. 651).

In summary, the thematic analysis approach is used in this study to analyze the in-depth interviews for many reasons:

1) To seek themes and patterns across a data set
2) To explain a large amount of data using qualitative methods
3) Its ability to deal with large or small amounts of data
4) To capture complex, messy, and contradictory relationships in the data
5) To draw conclusions

4.2.3 Thematic Analysis Process

According to Braun and Clarke (2013), the following five major steps are recommended to conduct the thematic analysis:

Step 1: Transcribing, Reading, and Familiarization

Researchers must understand and be familiar with the qualitative data they collect. Data must be recorded and transcribed into written notes. This will help researchers to go through the written documents continuously to start the coding process (Lester et al., 2020, p. 99). This is consistent with Saundres et al. (2019), who suggested that a continuous reading of qualitative data would allow the researcher to become familiar with the collected data and identify the patterns and themes that he/she believes are recurring. Finally, Lester et al. (2020) explained the phase of memo-ing the data to create memos—the first step of identifying the first reflections of the collected qualitative data. These memos are, in simple terms, a 'conversation with ourselves about our data' (Clarke, 2005, p. 202).

Step 2: Coding

According to Braun and Clarke (2013, p. 207), to a researcher, a 'code' is anything that solidifies why a piece of data is pertinent. It can be a phrase, a word, or even an idea. Lester et al. (2020) suggested starting with clear and short words that describe the meaning of the data during the coding process. Codes can be pulled directly from the data (data derived)—these are concrete and overt encapsulations of the data—or can come from the researcher themselves (researcher derived) (Braun and Clarke, 2013). According to Saunders et al. (2019), the main objective of the coding process is to make data ready for analysis. The coding process helps researchers manage the huge amount of collected data for retrieval purposes.

Step 3: Identifying Patterns – Codes to Themes (Sub-Themes and Themes)

This step starts when completing the coding process of the whole dataset by studying the patterns within the data. In this regard, Braun and Clarke (2013) recommended linking the RQs with the determined distinguished features of the data by investigating the frequency of appearance of the codes. Applying the codes, establishing the categories, and forming the themes are included in this process (Lester et al., 2020). In some cases, researchers must be careful with codes that do not frequently appear in analysis but are relevant to answering the RQs. Therefore, the RQs determine the patterns in the data considering the repetition of codes and their importance. When searching for codes, some researchers recommended questions/notes to guarantee the success of identifying the themes and patterns, recurrence of codes, importance of codes, linkage between codes, concepts of codes, patterns in the codes, and non-frequent codes that are still important.

Step 4: Searching, Reviewing, and Finalizing Themes

This step summarizes the general and broader patterns suitable to answer the RQs. After this, finalizing the themes and sub-themes is important. 'A theme captures something important about the data in relation to the RQ and represents some level of patterned responses or meaning within the data set.' (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p. 82). 'These patterns are broader than the codes because they contain many facets. These authors further state that a theme is a central organizing concept which is a collection of codes and is thus a collection of ideas or aspects that can be recorded under a specific theme.' (Braun and Clarke, 2013, p. 224). Saundres et al. (2019) realized the importance of revising the generated themes to identify the relationships among them, which is considered a major part of the analysis of the data.

Step 5: Developing the Analysis

The analysis in the qualitative method is considered a time-intensive process because it is important to relate the analysis with the scholarly literature to contribute to the body of knowledge. The researchers must understand all the themes and sub-themes that are already available for the same context in the literature (Braun and Clarke, 2013).

4.2.4 Deductive vs Inductive Coding

In most of the literature, two common ways are mentioned to approach the thematic analysis:

1) Inductive – Data content is the most direct way for developing the themes and coding, which are extracted from the terms and phrases the participants said in their own words, as opposed to using the researcher's own terminology that is often theoretical in nature and might not be actually used in practical application. (Linneberg and Korsgaard, 2019, p. 263). Coding helps researchers in an inductive way to gain transparency and interpretation of the data in an efficient and reliable way (Gioia et al., 2013).

2) Deductive – Concepts and ideas are directly used for creating coding and themes. Issues that have been discovered in the existing literature benefit from this approach (theory testing/refinement), as it focuses the coding on the issues. Researchers set certain pre-established codes before analysing his/her research to code data.

Some researchers recommended a mix of the two abovementioned methods, which will help them in using thematic analysis in the practical analysis. This is called a blended approach, according to Graebner et al. (2012) or abduction, according to Alvesson and Kärreman (2007). Choosing which method to focus on is essential, as each method has its own pros and cons. The researcher must decide which method is most suited to their particular needs. An inductive approach starts from the data and expands into the theory, making the data the 'lead'. A deductive approach begins from the theory, putting the focus on the overarching view before zooming in on the data (Linneberg and Korsgaard, 2019, p. 264). The current research used a mix of inductive and deductive coding owing to many reasons:

Reasons to choose an inductive coding approach:

1) The GEM that the research focused on is new, and the previous research cannot help in identifying the codes.

2) Many criteria in the new GEM are totally new and, therefore, cannot be found in the literature, such as the national agenda (the UAE's strategic plan, future insight or shaping, innovation, and project management).

3) The assessment tool that is used to assess the criteria is new and different from the previous tool used in other models, such as RADAR logic.

4) The way the assessment is done is different from other models globally, as it has three main assessment teams: SMEs who assess the core business of the entity, HR/innovation management experts, and the third team is specialized in smart government.

5) The submission process is very different from other models.

Reasons to choose a deductive coding approach:

1) As the motivation/benefits of the excellence model constitute the first part of the in-depth interview, questions are available in the literature, and the researcher used previous coding and themes to analyse the results.

2) The success factors in the second part of the study were discussed in the literature.

3) Few papers have discussed the advantages/obstacles of the excellence model.

4.3 Data Analysis Process

This section will detail how the thematic analysis method was used to analyse the interview feedback.

1) Transcribed the interviews and checked them for any ambiguity. The transcribed interviews were structured the same way that they were conducted: by first stating the questions from the interviewer and then the answer to each question by the interviewee.

2) Summarized the answer for each IQ using the direct response from the interviewee (Appendix 8: Questions vs Responses document).

3) Found and listed all the keywords for each interview and the same IQ (Appendix 8: Keywords vs Responses).

4) Created categories for all the keywords for the same IQ (Appendix 9: Categories vs Keywords) or created sub-theme categories; the sub-themes were proposed out of the categories (Appendix 9).

5) Found the key themes (Appendix 10).

6) Determined the key themes based on the found sub-themes (Appendix 11: Theme generation). Considering the coding methods (inductive vs deductive methods) means that some themes were

already collected from the literature, while others are emerging themes. The categorization of codes reflects themes.

7) Found all the responses for each final key theme (Appendix 11: Theme generation). This was done by searching for the key sub-theme again in the transcribed interviews. This will be presented in the next section of the data analysis structure as direct and indirect interviewee feedback.

8) Reported the storyline, conducted the analysis, and connected the themes.

4.4 Data Analysis Structure

In the following section, the paper will outline the interview responses, and the qualitative data from the responses will be presented.

4.4.1 Interview Questions vs Research Questions

Chapter 2 (Literature Review) discussed the major gaps in the literature and how the RQs were formulated. Furthermore, the IQs were discussed in Chapters 2 and 3. Table 3.6 summarises the reference to each RQ.

Table 4.1 shows the IQs linked with the RQs. To make the connection easier, the IQs were divided as per the guidelines in Chapter 3 (Research Design and Methodology).

Table 4.1: Link Between RQs and IQs

No.	Research Questions	Interview Questions
1	What are the main motivations/benefits for the use of the government excellence model in the UAE?	Q1) What are the benefits of implementing the government excellence model? Please mention as many as possible. Explain why and how these are the most important ones. Q2) Explain your motivations for using the government excellence model and why you think so. Can you point out the benefits that you have achieved through the government excellence model? Moreover, what factors led to achieving these benefits?
2	What are the critical success factors affecting the implementation of the government excellence model in the UAE?	Q3) In your opinion, what are the main internal reasons for implementing the government excellence model? Explain why you think these are the most important internal reasons. Q4) In your opinion, what are the main external reasons for implementing the government excellence model? Explain why you think these are the most important external reasons.
3	What are the main barriers/obstacles to the government excellence model implementation in the UAE?	Q5) What are the main barriers/obstacles to the government excellence model implementation in the UAE? Why? Are they different from any other framework implementation? What is the difference? Q6) What are the most significant challenges of implementing the government excellence model? Please mention at least two disadvantages. Explain why and how you overcome them. Q7) What other comments do you have about improving the government excellence model? From your experience could it be further improved or how can we get the most benefit from the government excellence model? How could the implementation be improved?

4.4.2 Personal Profiles of the Participants

Nineteen interviews were completed for this study. All information regarding the interview participants was explained in Chapters 1 and 2. All participants work in government entities (federal, Abu Dhabi, and Dubai), as the model is solely implemented in the government. The participants were leaders in implementing the excellence model in the UAE, for example, excellence directors, managers, experts, specialists, and consultants. The reason for choosing these participants was because of their depth of experience in the implementation of the GEM in the UAE and their close work with the custodian of the excellence award in the UAE. The main reasons for selecting the above participants are as follows:

1) The targeted participants are responsible for the implementation of the excellence model in their organizations; therefore, they have experience in this area.
2) The targeted participants know how to answer the RQs from their organization's point of view; that is, they will share the other employees'/leaders' opinions of the new excellence model.
3) Generally, the targeted participants have experience of the old and new models.

All the participants hold university degrees in different fields. Four participants have a PhD; five are PhD candidates; seven have MSc Degrees; and the rest have BSc Degrees. Before conducting the interviews, all participants met the criteria for participating in this study. All the participants have more than ten years of experience in the excellence field, some with more than 20 years. All the participants are already assessors and have done many assessment jobs in their careers. All the participants have experience working with the previous generation of the excellence model, as well as the new one. In Appendix 7, the personal profiles of the respondents are shown in terms of gender, education level, and profession.

4.4.3 Key Themes

As explained in Chapter 3, this study followed a thematic analysis approach, and a mix of the inductive and deductive coding approaches was used. Table 4.2 shows the key themes.

Table 4.2: Key Themes for the Study

Sl.	Research Questions	Section	Themes
1	RQ1	Benefits and Motivations	1) Pioneering 2) Happiness 3) Core Business-Oriented Model 4) National Agenda/Government Plan 5) Recognition
2	RQ2	Key success Factors	6) Culture of Pioneering 7) Commitment 8) Resources 9) Capability Building 10) One Government 11) Award Custodian
3	RQ3	Obstacles and challenges	12) Assessment Process 13) Size and Work Nature of the organization 14) Benchmarking

In this chapter, the structure for laying out the data analysis and findings for each key theme followed the rubric below.

Part 1: Listing the key themes for each RQ

Part 2: Including an introduction section to discuss the overall thoughts of the respondents and the theme generation process

Part 2: Discussing the key themes for each IQ

Part 3: Explaining the key themes

In Chapter 5 (Discussion), the structure for each key theme will be as follows:

Part 1: Discussion – Key themes versus excellence model

Part 2: Discussion – Comparison between the key themes and the literature

Part 3: Overall discussion

4.5 Data Analysis and Findings: First Research Question

The first RQ is 'What are the main motivations for the use of the government excellence system in the UAE/ the benefits of implementing the government excellence system in the UAE?' This RQ was divided into two main questions during the interviews:

1) Interview question one (IQ1): What are the benefits of implementing the GEM? Please mention as many as possible. Explain why and how these are the most important ones.
2) Interview question two (IQ2): Explain your motivations for using the GEM and why you think so. Can you point out the benefits that you have achieved through the GEM? Moreover, what factors led to achieving these benefits?

4.5.1 Key Themes for IQ1

In this section, the key themes extracted from the interviewees' answers to a direct question about the benefits of the new model— 'What are the benefits of implementing the GEM? Please mention as many as possible. Explain why and how these are the most important ones?'—are listed below.

Theme 1: Pioneering
Theme 2: Happiness
Theme 3: Core business-oriented model
Theme 4: National agenda/Government plan

The data analysis and findings will be discussed, as explained in section 4.4.3.

4.5.2 IQ1 Themes vs the Features of the Government excellence model

The award custodian in the UAE Prime Ministry Office launched the new excellence model with many features that are suitable for the future plans of the UAE. Table 4.3 compares the main themes that were extracted from this study with the key features of the model that were accredited by the award custodian when developing the model.

Table 4.3-Key Features of the Model vs Key Themes

Key Features (Award Custodian)	Key Themes (Findings)	Level of importance		
		Strong	Medium	Weak
Focusing on innovation and future shaping	Not considered			√
Taking into account the work nature of government entities	Not considered			√
Focusing on efficiency and corporate governance	Not considered			√
Focusing on developing services and smart government	Services improvements	√		
A simplified method to participate in awards associated with the system	Not considered		√	
Performing to achieve society's happiness, results constitute 70% of the criteria's weight.	Happiness	√		
Focusing on the main specialized work results and achieving the government's direction	Core business and achieving the agenda	√		
User-friendliness and clarity of criteria	Not considered			√

Strong: means that more than 75% of respondents mentioned this in IQ1

Medium: means between 50-74% of the respondents mentioned this in IQ1

Weak: means less than 49% of respondents mentioned this in IQ1

The above table shows the key themes that were extracted from the data analysis of IQ1; these were then linked with the key features of the GEM that were already identified by the award custodian. However, some features were not considered important to the participants; therefore, they did not focus on them when answering IQ1. Three of the four themes regarding the benefits of implementing the GEM in the UAE are linked directly with the feature of the model—with the exclusion of 'pioneering'. In the next chapter, more attention will be given to those themes that have low importance.

Theme 1: Pioneering

Part 1: Introduction

The respondents highlighted many benefits of the use of the excellence model in the government. Looking for the keywords in the interview vs response sheet and the categorization in the theme generation worksheet, respondents offered different definitions of pioneering:

1) Ranking among the top countries globally in terms of leadership in the respective industries.
2) Interest in the competitiveness indices related to both core and support business within the organizations.
3) Applying worldwide best practices and doing continuous benchmarking.
4) Results-oriented model.

Appendix 12-1 shows the data analysis for the first theme, 'pioneering', and the number of times this theme and related words were mentioned in the interviews.

Part 2: Determining the Theme

The emerging theme extracted from the interviewees' responses was 'pioneering'. Pioneering, as per the Cambridge Dictionary, is expressed as many keywords, such as 'ahead', 'leading edge', 'in the front line', 'lead the field', 'front', and 'lead'. Most of the respondents assured the interviewer that this model is helping organizations to focus more on how to become pioneers in their industry. Some of the respondents focused directly on how to become pioneers or achieve leadership at the national and international levels. Moreover, some respondents focused on implementing best practices in all areas, which will lead the entities to become leading organizations at the international level. Finally, some respondents focused on doing continuous benchmarking, which will achieve the leadership goal.

As shown in Table 12.1 in Appendix 12, the theme of pioneering was mentioned 160 times (expressed by terms like 'top countries', 'pioneering', 'worldwide ranking', 'top governments', and 'competitiveness ranking') during the interviews (107 times by the interviewees and 53 times by the interviewer). Other related categories that support the theme, such as implementing global best practices and doing benchmarking to be the best, were mentioned 233 times (202 times by the interviewees and 31 times by the interviewer). The grand total of the words that expressed this theme was 393.

Part 3: Interviewees' Feedback

Some respondents clearly answered IQ1 by mentioning aspects directly related to the theme of pioneering. Some of those respondents also reported aspects indirectly related to the theme. The respondents who most often directly stated words related to this theme are R13, R12, R11, R6, R8, R1, R7, R2, and R17 in order of most mentions. Most respondents felt that this theme was important, and this was appropriately captured in the following quotes by respondents.

> 'The model allows you to achieve the Agenda of Emirates 2021, and competitive indicators will allow the UAE federals to reach top ten governments. I think now the new model is talking about the core business, and if you divide each entity based on their business, this will allow each sector and entity to be pioneer based on their field. It will be one of the parts to help you to reach to pioneering.' (R1)

> 'The excellence model pushes the entities to focus more on the competitiveness report that's related to the core business such as in my organization, after implementing the 4G, we focus on the ease of doing business to give it a bigger area to Jump in ranking globally.' (R2)

> 'We had to also benchmark with international practices, because, at the end, this model teaches us how to become a leader in your industry, which is something that's very important as a baseline to become an excellent organization. This model has been done to make the governmental organization as leading worldwide.' (R5)

> 'Applying the government excellence model is a framework to achieve these results. At the same time, it is talking about future shaping, innovation management, and other criterias[*sic*]. Also, it is asking you to be worldwide, so we cannot only compete locally or regionally because you have to compete with other international companies and organizations. It is very challenging, which means that you need to move forward. From this perspective, I think yes, of course, it pushes

the participants to be worldwide ranked and pioneers in their fields.' (R12)

'The entire idea of the excellence model is based on the leadership or the pioneering of organizations worldwide. Since we are talking about Dubai, the objective that they mentioned is to be a pioneer globally and to be number one worldwide. Even in the results criteria, there is a weight to see you where are you amongst the same entities worldwide.' (R13)

'Now, it's not being satisfied with the current situation or with the things that we are best at in the region, and being the best in the UAE, but now we are also looking to be best worldwide, which is challenging.' (R14)

'There are certain requirements that are being included within the same standard that a pioneer and an excellent organization should implement.' (R15)

Other respondents did not directly answer regarding this theme. They replied with the same concepts but in other parts of the interviews. Respondent 3 indirectly stated, in other parts of the interview, that for doing benchmarking in the core business, 'We moved to China', and for happiness meters, 'we moved all the way to Korea and Singapore'. He also replied that 'organizations need to learn from others and implement best practices which will help the organization to become excellent in its field'. Respondent 8, in other parts of the interview, indirectly answered a question related to the main difference between this model and the previous one; referring to this model, Respondent 8 said: 'It's all well-established, so they focused on how to achieve the leadership worldwide'. Respondent 17 raised a point that, sometimes, finding competitiveness indices related to the government entity is not easy by saying: 'Also, another comment related to the competitiveness indicators, it is not easy to find International competitiveness indicators, especially when you have shared government services'.

Theme 2: Happiness

Part 1: Introduction

Looking for the keywords in the interview vs the response sheet and the categorization in the theme generation worksheet, respondents offered different definitions of happiness:

1) The happiness of the UAE's citizens
2) The happiness of employees and customers
3) Reach a high level of happiness and satisfaction worldwide
4) The happiness of stakeholders

Appendix 12-2 shows the data analysis for the second theme, 'happiness', and the number of times this theme and related words were mentioned in the interviews.

Part 2: Determining the Theme

The emerging theme extracted from the interviewees' responses was 'happiness'. The theme of happiness was mentioned 76 times during the interviews (69 times by the interviewees and seven times by the interviewer). This theme was expressed as either happiness or satisfaction. The word happiness itself was

mentioned 50 times.

As per the Cambridge Dictionary, happiness is expressed in different definitions, such as the feeling of being pleased or joyful. The government of the UAE started using the term happiness to express the satisfaction levels of all stakeholders; this allowed organizations to create and optimize the positive emotional connection that academics and industry experts now recognize as key to business success. Happiness is the state of bliss in the heart or mind, while satisfaction is the state of contentment.

Part 3: Interviewees' Feedback

Some of the respondents emphasized that the major benefit of implementing the GEM is to achieve a certain level of happiness/satisfaction for all the stakeholder classifications. In Part 2, the words satisfaction and happiness were clearly mentioned in interviews 54 times (by the interviewer and interviewees). Those respondents clearly answered IQ1 by mentioning things directly related to either happiness or satisfaction. The respondents who most often directly stated words related to this theme are R3, R5, R2, R19, and R8 in order of most mentions. Responses from R2, R3, R5, R6, R7, R8, R9, and R12 were reported first to show direct and indirect feedback. Most comments suggest that the main benefit of this model is to achieve happiness. R2, R3, R8, and R5 expressed this theme in a proper way.

> 'Is the important happiness of the UAE's citizens of the local government-citizens, and this is the importance of any government to support and help the citizens of the community itself. To improve happiness, they need to focus on the service that's been provided by the entity itself.' They also suggested to merge the happiness meter that is used by Dubai Smart Government with the customer satisfaction survey used by The Executive Council-TEC. (R2)

> 'It is also focused on the happiness of the customer. Nobody says service centre, but they say that I am at a happiness centre. We also have to focus on the happiness centres.' (R3)

> 'Here in the Emirates and Dubai, there are directions by the leadership in Dubai to take care about the happiness of our customers, so our main aim is to serve the customers in a very excellent way. In order to reach such a level of happiness and satisfaction worldwide.' They suggested restudying the overlap between award custodians in measuring happiness and reported, 'Actually, there is a society, customers, and employee's happiness within the model itself and by different models like Dubai model.' (R8)

> 'The model greatly focuses on employees' happiness, work environment, and the employees' well-being. So, government organizations' give more focus on applying these concepts. Then to enhance the level of happiness in customers.' (R19)

> 'To achieve that as well, we have to look again into our employees' happiness because employees without happiness will not achieve the customer happiness, so this is the minimum.' (R5)

Other respondents mentioned happiness and satisfaction indirectly and in other parts of the interviews. Respondent 13 stated, 'At the end, you have to mention the results of the country, the government, the reputation, and the happiness of the citizens.' Respondent 12 stated: 'Also, the happiness and satisfaction

of the customers and public whether it's in the federal or local government. Talking about the satisfaction and happiness of the customers is also a perspective.' Respondent 6 mentioned the word satisfaction three times. They said that one of the key success factors is to have sufficient financial resources; it plays a role in gaining customer satisfaction: 'This is one of the requirements to get new technologies or to get customer satisfaction.' They also responded to IQ5 concerning external factors that should improve the satisfaction level: 'To increase the customer satisfaction level, which I consider it as external reason because the excellence model tells you how to focus on the requirement of your customers and how to achieve your goals.' Respondent 7 discussed how each organization should have its own internal system, which in turn, 'Will benefit the organization in achieving happiness for their employees.' Respondent 9 emphasized taking care of employees and customers as the main outcome for all organizations and said, 'I don't care if you have excellent strategic plan, excellent processes, and at the end, your customers are not satisfied, and your employees are not satisfied.' Respondent 17 said, 'The aim of this model is to bring happiness to customers, employees, and the society.'

Theme 3: Core Business-Oriented Model

Part 1: Introduction

Looking for the keywords in the interview vs response sheet and the categorization in the theme generation worksheet, respondents offered different definitions for 'core business', such as focusing on the entity's services, mandate, and being assessed by SMEs.

Appendix 12-3 shows the data analysis for the third theme, 'core business-oriented model', and the number of times this theme and related words were mentioned in the interviews.

Part 2: Determining the Theme

The emerging theme extracted from the interviewees' responses was the 'core business-oriented model', This theme was directly mentioned 112 times by the interviewees and 12 times by the interviewer. This theme was also expressed in different keywords:

1) Core business: This was a direct keyword
2) Mandate: This was chosen because it expressed the authorities that were given to each government entity, or, as per the dictionary: authority to act in a particular way to a government
3) Services: This was selected because the services that are provided by the government are considered under its core business responsibility
4) SMEs/Experts: This was chosen to express that these are experts in the core business of the government organizations

All the above categories formed this theme; these were mentioned 607 times (531 by the interviewees and 76 times by the interviewer).

Part 3: Interviewees' Feedback

Most respondents claimed that the new model is very different from the previous one, as it focuses on the core business of the organization. The respondents who most often directly stated words related to this theme are R8, R17, R7, R2, R4, R5, and R12 in order of most mentions. Respondents clearly stated that one of the major benefits of the current model is that it is core-business oriented. Respondents 1, 2, 4, and 9 stated in response to IQ1 that one of the biggest benefits of the GEM is that it focuses on the core business directly. The following quotes show the importance of this theme.

> 'The new model is focusing on the core business of the entity itself, so this is the main benefit of the model.' (R13)

> 'Based on my opinion, the benefit from implementing the 4G is to make all the government's entities concentrate on their work and their core business.' (R17)

> 'The old model was focused on support business more than core business. The new model focuses on work nature.' (R4)

> 'The third thing is that it focuses on the core business of the government, which will be mentioned by most of the experts. Allowing the decision-makers to focus on the core business more, so now they are focusing on the core business from the budget point of view, from HR, recruitment point of view.' (R14)

> 'The excellence model pushes the entities to focus more on the competitiveness support that's related to the core business such as in my organization, after implementing the 4G we focus on the ease of doing business to give it a bigger area to Jump in ranking globally.' (R2)

> 'The 4G is an excellent practical model because it focuses on the core business for the organization, which we miss in other models. Other models they put the support and the core business in the same level. The core business here is very important and crucial for the organization.' (R8)

> 'It focuses more on the core business where they should have a more specialized workforce to specialize in the core business, where they can impact and bring more capabilities to the core business which represents more than 60% of the model itself.' (R7)

> 'This model gives you the ability to see yourself based on other entity not just locally but globally; we are here talking about leadership. The new model is focusing on the core business.' (R12)

> 'In the new model, it's talking about the core business, so you need to bring subject matter experts in your business, and in this case, you are looking for international practices and organizations.' (R15)

Other respondents mentioned the word 'mandate' to express the focus of this model. Respondent 7 raised a point about the difficulty in comparing the core business and mandates of the organization to determine which organization is better than the other. They responded,

> 'If we are a governmental entity with different mandates, how can you compare that? For an example, if the entity that's responsible for the health is better than another entity that's responsible for the police, or another entity that's responsible for road and transportation.'

Other respondents expressed that this model is a service-oriented model, which focuses on the services of the organizations—the core business of the organizations. Respondent 2 mentioned,

> 'To improve happiness, they need to focus on the service that's been provided by the entity itself. There is a special criterion that focuses on the improvement of the services, and the service centre that provides many services by the entity to the customer itself.'

Finally, other respondents focused more on the SMEs to show how this model is a core business-oriented model. Generally, when 'SMEs' are mentioned in the interviews, this means that the model focuses on the core business because SMEs are experts in the field/core of the entity. Respondent 5 reported, 'The subject matter experts, we appreciate their backgrounds and their experience to add value to our industry.' Respondent 4 said, 'In the previous assessment, there were three assessors; two of them are field experts. They were very good in their area.'

Theme 4: National Agenda/Government Plan

Part 1: Introduction

Looking for the keywords in the interview vs response sheet and the categorization in the theme generation worksheet, respondents offered different definitions for the 'national agenda/government plan':

1) National agenda, Abu Dhabi plan, Dubai plan, or government plan.
2) Others, such as government directions, initiatives, and projects.

Appendix 12-4 shows the data analysis for the fourth theme, 'national agenda/government plan,' and the number of times this theme and related words were mentioned in the interviews.

Part 2: Determining the theme

Another emerging theme from the interviewees' responses was the 'national agenda/government plan.' This theme was directly mentioned 115 times by the interviewees and five times by the interviewer. This theme was also expressed using different keywords:

1) Government plan: The interviewees who work in Abu Dhabi and Dubai (local governments) call the plan either the Abu Dhabi plan or the Dubai plan.
2) National agenda: Those interviewees who work in ministries or federal entities call the plan the national agenda.
3) Government directions, projects, and initiatives: These keywords were used by those who expressed the importance of the directions that come from the government.

All the categories above formed this theme, and the extracted words from the interviewees were said 274 times (254 by the interviewees and 20 times by the interviewer).

Part 3: Interviewees' Feedback

As this study focused on the implementation of the excellence model in the context of the UAE and, specifically, Dubai, Abu Dhabi, and the federal government, this theme was extracted from the respondents' answers with different terminologies, as mentioned in the previous part. Most of the respondents who mentioned this as a benefit of the implementation of the GEM stated that this model helps their entities align their organization's strategic plan with the government plan/national agenda. The respondents who most often directly stated words related to this theme are R4, R9, R12, R8, R5, and R1 in order of most mentions.

Respondents 1, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 12, 17, and 14 directly mentioned that one of the benefits of implementing the excellence model in the UAE is to achieve the overall government plan, whether at the local or the national level.

> 'They will let the entity to achieve its strategic planning goals. As well as, all of the initiatives, that come from the government. Then, when we are talking about the local levels, we have to achieve all of the government directions at that level, such as Dubai's plan or the other initiatives, which the government excellence will allow you to achieve all of that. The federal-level will allow you to achieve the Agenda of Emirates 2021.' (R1)

> 'The second thing is not to only have a strategy but to have a linked strategy with the government strategy. The new model pushes every department to link themselves with their strategy to Dubai's government strategy, which is a very positive attitude. We might dream to have a directly linked strategy results for each government entity with the Executive Council themselves.' (R2)

> 'We found this model very useful to align our strategy with national agenda.' (R5)

> 'To know the role of every entity in Dubai's plan, how to achieve the strategy, operations, operational plans, initiatives, projects, customer service.' (R16)

> 'First, it gives clear guidelines for the management to plan strategically in a very excellent way.' They added, 'Another confident factor is the alignment between the entities strategy with a local strategy.' (R8)

> 'The main objective of doing an assessment is to increase the level of excellent standard in each organization and to achieve the national agenda.' (R17)

> 'In Abu Dhabi, one of the main criteria of the model is the Abu Dhabi plan, which is the main plan for Abu Dhabi Emirates and one of the criteria as well as Abu Dhabi plan, which will measure how much the entity is achieving and contributing towards the success of this plan, which is something very good.' (R9)

> 'The second thing is that it also tackles the environment of the UAE in general. The main perspective is the government direction of the UAE, which talks about the national strategies, the national policies, specialized strategies, like industrial and innovation strategies, and all of these had been tackled by the new model to suit the needs of the governmental organizations.' (R14)

> 'The excellence model is setting a standard for certain practices, which are very important to address within the organization. For an example, if we are talking about the strategy, there's a strategy execution, strategy development, strategy implementation, and cascading of objectives.' (R15)

Some of the respondents mentioned other keywords related to the same theme. Respondent 2 clearly said, 'The model minimizes the number of initiatives like projects that are not related to the entity.' They added that the government of Dubai is agile in responding to any change in the working environment and that 'They request all of the entity departments to follow this initiative or the new project that's been assigned just to us. This will take resources and will focus more on this to cover the requirements.' Respondent 5 reported that 'we have a criterion that's called achieving the strategy of the organization. The government gives us a clear and nice document of how to build a strategy. This is the best way to do a strategy.' Respondent 19 raised the point that more work has to be done regarding the national agenda: 'Not all departments are involved in the national agenda. In addition, some departments have national agenda indicators, but others don't have any involvement in the national agenda indicator. So, it has to be customized.'

4.5.3 Key Themes for IQ2

In this section, the key themes that were extracted from the interviewees' answers to question two—'Explain your motivations for using the GEM and why do you think so? Can you point out the benefits that you have achieved through the GEM? And what factors led to achieving these benefits'—are listed below.

Theme 5: Recognition

The data analysis and findings will be discussed below, as explained in section 4.4.3.

Part 1: Introduction

Looking for the keywords in the interview vs response sheet and the categorization in the theme generation worksheet, respondents offered different definitions of 'recognition':

1) Recognition and getting the award
2) Non-financial awards, including public image and reputation
3) Financial awards, including employees' awards, rewards, and internal awards

Appendix 12-5 shows the data analysis for the fifth theme, 'recognition', and the number of times this theme and related words were mentioned in the interviews.

Part 2: Determining the Theme

The emerging theme extracted from the interviewees' responses was 'recognition'. This theme was directly mentioned 69 times by the interviewees and 68 times by the interviewer. This theme was also expressed in different keywords:

1) Recognition and getting the award: This ranges from winning the model award by the top leaders of the government to being recognized as the best entity in the government.

2) Non-financial awards, including public image and reputation: This expressed all the non-financial recognition for the organizations and employees.

3) Financial awards, including employees' awards, rewards, and internal awards: This includes all the financial awards given to the employees as a result of implementing the model.

This theme has been expressed in the interviews more than 163 times (83 times by the interviewees and 80 times by the interviewer).

Part 3: Interviewees' Feedback

Respondents were asked questions about what motivates government entities to implement the excellence model. The answers were all centred on four areas:

1) Achieving first place in the government competition and being rewarded

2) Internal rewards for all employees

3) Improve the entity's image and reputation

4) Financial and non-financial awards

The respondents who most often directly stated words related to this theme are R2, R1, R7, R3, R19, and R9 in order of most mentions. Although R8 and R12 mentioned this theme a lot, they opposed the theme itself. Respondents 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 17, and 19 mentioned directly that one of the benefits of implementing the excellence model in the UAE is to be recognized by the leaders of the government and win the award. Most comments suggest that recognition is the first motivation to implement the model and be rewarded among the government entities:

> 'First, at the corporate level and then at the individual level. In the individual level, if anyone participates in achieving the work, they will get promotions and awards, and they will shake hands with the Sheikh. On the other hand, the image of the entity will be different when you win over all of the entities in Dubai. For inside the entity, you will have internal awards as the inside recognitions. The entity itself has internal awards and recognitions that you have based on the groups and individuals which will motivate people to work and implement the excellence model.' (R1)

> First, 'public image of the entity'. Second, 'competition between other entities, they keep on improving their services and fighting to win the award itself'. Third, 'winning the award'. Fourth, 'rewarding the entity itself and the employee'. Finally, they added that the internal budget in their entity for rewarding, 'There is an awarding budget for all of the teams working in the entity itself which encourages other people to work'. (R2)

> 'First of all, is to be number one as an entity. The second thing is the excellence award from Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid.' (R3)

> 'There are different types of motivations. The first motivation and the most important one, is the leadership. Regarding the leadership, they want to implement the model and achieve the highest score to become recognized by Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid.' (R15)

> 'Also, the Government of the UAE has strict conditions if you want to win the

award of the excellence model.' (R19)

'It's good for the reputation and there's a rewarding system in the organization and for our staff which is a good motivator.' (R4)

'I believe that as an entity, everyone would like to be a decision-maker and to be recognized as the winner for Abu Dhabi excellence award. In Abu Dhabi, we have almost fifty plus entities who participate in this award in every cycle, so to be a winner amongst every entity it's not an easy thing to achieve.' (R9)

'There are financial and non-financial awards, that's based on our organization internally.' (R6)

'First of all, is the internal recognition that is the recognition by the Prime Minister office and the leadership, which a lot of entities are looking for. The other thing is the reputation of the entity itself.' (R7)

'This assessment will encourage all the organizations that even if they are small, big, or have different core business, they can still work on their mandate and achieve it and become the winners of the award, which will encourage them.' (R17)

'Explicit: to get the award and reputation. Implicit: to improve and implement best practices.' (R14)

Other respondents had opposing views, such as R8, R12, R13, and R16. They stated that the award itself should not be the first target of the entities to implement the excellence model, but rather, achieving excellence should be part of the culture within the organizations. Respondent 8 stated, 'The excellence model is related to all awards, and people think that we have to imply the excellence model to have awards, and this mentality isn't the right one. I believe, as I mentioned, that it should be a culture within the organization at the top management level.' They added that if the organizations focus on improving, the award will follow. Respondent 12 stated, 'to me, the awards are just a ceremony to recognize the companies.' They added, 'They should have it as a daily process and have it in their DNA, which is the primary objective.' Respondent 13 stated that recognition could be a motivation for employees, but 'It isn't the main focus, to be honest, but this is the end result. I cannot hide it because it is one of the biggest motivations that we have. It's a human nature that we want to be the best.' They added, 'I don't want the end for the entities to focus on winning, which is not the objective. Even in the excellence program, they always told the government and entities that it's not the objective to win, but the objective is to be a pioneer, to be better, to be amongst the number one in the world.'

4.6 Data Analysis and Findings: Second Research Question

The second RQ is about the key success factors of the excellence model: What are the CSFs you think are needed to make the new model (the GEM) a success? This RQ was divided into two main questions during the interviews:

Interview question 3 (IQ3): In your opinion, what are the main internal reasons for implementing the GEM? Explain why you think these are the most important internal reasons.
Interview question 4 (IQ4): In your opinion, what are the main external reasons for implementing the GEM? Explain why you think these are the most important external reasons.

4.6.1 Key Themes for IQ3

In this section, the key themes extracted from the interviewees' answers to IQ3— 'internal key success factors'—are listed below.

Theme 6: Culture of pioneering
Theme 7: Commitment
Theme 8: Resources
Theme 9: Capability building

The data analysis and findings will be discussed below, as explained in section 4.4.3.

Theme 6: Culture of Pioneering

Part 1: Introduction

Looking for the keywords in the interview vs response sheet and the categorization in the theme generation worksheet, respondents offered different definitions for the term 'culture of pioneering':

1) CoE/maturity

2) Corporate or employee culture/maturity

Appendix 12-6 shows the data analysis for the sixth theme, 'culture of pioneering', and the number of times this theme and related words were mentioned in the interviews.

Part 2: Determining the Theme

The emerging theme extracted from the interviewees' responses was the 'culture of pioneering'. This theme was mentioned 133 times by the interviewees and 27 times by the interviewer. It was directly extracted from the interviews by using major keywords, such as 'culture' and 'maturity'. A difference exists between corporate culture, a CoE, and a culture of pioneering; the reason for choosing this theme is discussed in Chapter 5 (Discussion).

Part 3: Interviewees' Feedback

The respondents who most often directly stated words related to this theme are R6, R8, R12, R5, and R1 in order of most mentions. However, R6, R8, R7, and R4 discussed this theme with the interviewer more than others did. The respondents mentioned the words 'culture/maturity' around 98 times with the interviewer. Further, they mentioned this theme in many places when answering the IQs. They focused on how the government entities must build the CoE, or enhance it, as the main factor to implement the excellence model effectively or how the award custodian wants it to be implemented. Respondents 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 12, and 17 mentioned directly that one of the internal key success factors is the CoE, which should be considered in all organizations, in particular, and in the UAE in general. Most comments mentioned that this model changes the whole CoE in government entities, as it focuses on the directions of the government.

'Because one of the factors of having an excellence culture is the employees. If your employees do not know anything about the excellence, then that will be a big barrier for you to succeed. The type of employee, the level of experience, the way of how the employee will implement the excellence is a big challenge.' (R1)

'The second point is the culture. You have to build a culture in your organization, which is based on the excellence. Building a culture of excellence comes from awareness, and training sessions that you are doing. So, spreading the culture amongst the organization is something that's very important to achieve all that you are looking for.' (R13)

'We have to have the right management system in each authority. If we have the right leadership, we will be the number one, not just in excellence, but in excellence, happiness, and economics. Of course, if we have all of these and we will have the excellence culture in FEWA, it will help to make the excellence model a success.' (R3)

'We have a lot of geographical locations. Our entity has a huge number of staff, so we need to be careful when we spread the culture of the organization and the change from the old model to the new model.' They also determined that the organizations, not the government or award custodian, should spread it, 'the organization itself, taking the responsibility of spreading the excellence culture within the organization.' (R4)

'If you have a good leader in the top management with a very high culture in the excellence model, definitely this will be the most important reason to implement the excellence model in the right way in your company. If you have a top management that did not care about the excellence and the culture of the excellence, then the implementation will be very difficult. From my experience in the last company for four years, I faced this problem where the top management didn't care about the excellence, and they don't care about how they implement it and what they should do to implement it.' (R6)

'Internally, one of the key success factors that we need to have is to change the culture of the employees.' (R17)

'First of all, as I mentioned, the excellence should be a culture. For internally how to enhance the culture, you will need to have a proper training and awareness for all levels starting from the top management, the second level, and the third level as well. I believe that the supervisor level should have it. Still, in the Arab region, we lack such culture of excellence.' (R8)

Other respondents, such as R2, R3, R5, R15, and R9, considered the CoE either an obstacle or a challenge, but certainly, a factor that should be considered to make this new model a success. Respondent 2 considered this theme a challenge; their proposal for dealing with it is as follows:

'First, I will talk about the culture of excellence and how to sustain the culture in the department. Overcoming this challenge means to invest more in training and awareness, and simplifying the excellence requirement to make it easier to understand for any level of the employees.'

Respondent 5 highlighted how important the CoE is in implementing the model:

'Another thing is the readiness of the organization. The organization that adapted the excellence culture for many years they don't face that problem, so there is no barrier because this is something that's not new so in terms of principles and concepts which there. So, the organization that participated in the external assessment before didn't face a lot of challenges, no barriers and so on.'

Respondent 14 stated, 'The first internal success factors is the culture, is system thinking of excellence. This has been mentioned by Kumar, and he has his evaluation as a theory about the GEM in 2016. He talked about the system thinking of excellence as a part of the culture. The culture itself can be a barrier and a supporter for the critical success factors.' Respondent 15 commented on culture as an obstacle by stating, 'First of all, is that we have a problem with the culture itself. The culture of the organization is different.' Respondent 9 clearly mentioned that this theme is an obstacle for their organization: 'The first one is the maturity of the excellence model within entities because it's not that high or at a good level.' Finally, Respondent 18 considered this theme a key benefit of implementing the model: 'The key benefit of implementing this excellence model is the culture.'

Theme 7: Commitment

Part 1: Introduction

Looking for the keywords in the interview vs response sheet and the categorization in the theme generation worksheet, respondents offered different definitions of 'commitment':

1) Commitment
2) Other related words, such as 'involvement', 'internal support', and 'engagement'.

Appendix 12-7 shows the data analysis for the seventh theme, 'commitment', and the number of times this theme and related words were mentioned in the interviews.

Part 2: Determining the Theme

The emerging theme extracted from the interviewees' responses was 'commitment'. This theme was directly mentioned 40 times by the interviewees and 15 times by the interviewer. It was directly extracted from the interviews by using the major keyword 'commitment'. The other related words were mentioned 56 times by the interviewees and five times by the interviewer. The words that expressed the theme were mentioned 116 times. The internal success factor, 'commitment', sometimes is expressed in different sub-themes, such as support from top management/employees, engagement from the committee(s)/employees/top management, and responsibilities of internal employees to implement the model. Commitment is an internal factor; this means that it does not include any sub-themes that refer to external support/commitment from outside the organization.

Part 3: Interviewees' Feedback

The word 'commitment' was linked with top management 20 times by the interviewees and five times by the interviewer. This indicates the importance of commitment from top management. In addition, interviewees concentrated on other organizational levels, such as employees, committees, project team leaders, directors of the units, and section managers. The respondents who most often directly stated words related to this theme are R6, R2, R4, R1, R12, R3, R5, R8, R18, and R19, in order of most mentions.

However, most of the respondents mentioned that commitment is a very important key success factor for the model. Respondents 5, 2, 4, 12, and 7 indirectly mentioned other words that also expressed the theme of commitment, such as 'management support', 'employee support', 'employee engagement', and 'involvement'. Most of the respondents agreed that commitment would play a key role in effectively implementing the GEM. The commitment theme extracted from the interviews was from different layers in the organizations: top management, department directors and managers, section managers, and employees. Some respondents confirmed that the main key players for the effective implementation of the excellence model in the UAE are the section managers and then the directors (middle management).

Respondent 2 mentioned that the internal factor is management commitment and reiterated this four times. First, they reported that 'The first one is the management commitment. What I mean is that all of the head of the entities' involvement in the excellence model itself is not clear because the CEO themselves are busy in a lot of government requirements.' Second, they emphasized that winning the award comes from top management commitment: 'Any article regarding the excellence model shows that all of the global winners' entities when they are seen in the interview, the top management is important.' Third, they reported that 'The teams' commitment to providing the output wasn't controllable because it was linked to the employees' availability itself, and some of the team members were missed and couldn't attend.' Fourth, they reported the importance of leadership commitment: 'to understand the importance of the excellence model and by that, they can solve barrier and obstacle.'

> 'The main success factor is the top management. If there is a commitment from the top management, it'll go to the managers and the staff, so this is the only success factor.' (R18)

> 'Let's start with the internal key success factors; the main key success factor is about the leadership commitment and understanding about the excellence model itself.' (R19)

> 'First of all, I think the strong management commitment.' (R3)

> 'Let's say that the commitment is internally. Now, once the entity becomes matured, the commitment will be within all things.' (R1)

> 'Without the support of the management and leadership commitment, you will not get anything. So, one of the key factors that we use is the commitment and the presence of the leadership.' (R15)

> 'There should be management commitment and management engagement. The highest management and top management should participate in the process, support the teams, motivate the staff leading the change. At the end of the day, it is a change process, and to manage every change process, you need to manage the resistance, connect the ideas, prepare the required resources. When I talk about the management support, it is not only about the commitment or meetings, but it also has to do with the support. To support their business, to support them financially, and supporting them with encouraging their teams and motivating them to participate effectively in the implementation, planning, and investing a lot of their time in this process. Also, taking the responsibility of spreading the excellence culture within the organization.' (R4)

> 'The management commitment. The leadership style. The HR management.

Employees focused organizations. Employee commitment and attitude.' (R14)

'Another thing-internal factor- is the commitment from the department head. I don't want to say the department head, but I want to say the director themselves because directors are the higher level of the middle management, and they also have the authority and empowerment to give decisions.' They also elaborated, 'Those people sometimes are busy and have a heavy agenda on the platform, so we can't find them at any time, and we don't find it the way that we want, so their supporting the cooperation is very important.' (R5)

'The main thing is the commitment. Commitment is related to all of the entity, departments, and the employees. One more important thing about the commitment is that you cannot have the full commitment if you cannot have the leadership support.' (R13)

'The top management commitment. If they will implement such a thing, then everyone will follow- the second level and the third level- you need people to help you to facilitate and manage such a thing.' (R8)

'The leadership commitment is important because, without the commitment and support from the top management, we want to achieve the desired results. Number three, we need teamwork. No division, sector, and section can collect all of the results and make it ready in the proper way, so cross-functional teams are important. So, teamwork is important inside the organizations, and it's one of the main key success factors.' (R12)

Theme 8: Resources

Part 1: Introduction

Looking for the keywords in the interview vs response sheet and the categorization in the theme generation worksheet, respondents offered different definitions for 'resources':

1) Financial resources
2) Non-financial resources, such as technical, human, and information/systems
3) Resources

Appendix 12-8 shows the data analysis for the eighth theme, 'resources', and the number of times this theme and related words were mentioned in the interviews.

Part 2: Determining the Theme

The emerging theme extracted from the interviewees' responses was 'resources'. This theme was mentioned 120 times by the interviewees and 38 times by the interviewer. It was directly extracted from the interviews by using major sub-themes, such as financial resources and non-financial resources. Financial resources include all the keywords related to the term, such as 'budget'. Non-financial resources include the following keywords: 'human resources', 'technical resources', 'technological resources', 'systems', and 'information'. Non-financial resources were mentioned more times than financial resources in the interviews: 89 times. The word 'resources' was used as a sub-category, as the interviewees/interviewer did not specify what kind of resources were needed.

Part 3: Interviewees' Feedback

As per the website www.dictionarybusiness.com, resources include tangible resources, such as goods and equipment; financial resources; and labour resources, such as employees. The respondents used these three aspects to express that resources are important to make the model a success in government organizations. The focus was on the resources extracted from the answers of the respondents, which were technology, human, and financial.

The respondents who most often directly stated words related to this theme are R17, R4, R6, R2, R1, R9, R5, and R7 in order of most mentions. However, most of the respondents mentioned the resources theme as a very important key success factor for the model. Respondent 7 focused on three main resources: employees, financial, and technology. They responded to IQ3 as follows: 'First of all, a specialized workforce because now it focuses more on the core business where they should have a more specialized workforce to specialize in the core business, where they can impact and bring more capabilities to the core business which represents more than 60% of the model itself.' Then, they said, 'There should be a good technological infrastructure that will help to make the people life easier in terms of doing business.' They also reported that the main responsibility of leadership is to provide financial resources. Other respondents also supported this theme:

> 'I will start with the internal factors; the first thing is financial wise because the new model is focusing on the core business. If you don't have enough budget to do your projects or your initiatives, you will not compete, which is the main thing as the internal.' (R1)

> 'The 4G also makes all organization to utilize their resources because it focuses more on the efficiency and effectiveness, so they reconsider about the capabilities they have in terms of the resources, either financial resources, human resources, or information technology resources, in order to utilize it and maximize the profit and benefits of these resources.' (R17)

> 'A success factor is the financial and human resources that are needed,' and they added after, 'I think my last point is the digital system with respect to each criterion such as, for strategy, achieving the vision, the performance management, and risk management for the governance itself.' (R2)

> 'We have to have the right management system in each authority.' They also reported a shortage of staff in the excellence section in their entity, which affected the implementation of the model, 'In my authority, we have around 2300 employees. In my department, we are not more than ten, and in the excellence itself, we are only three.' (R3)

> 'So, without having the leadership support in terms of funding and resources to make sure that the entire organization follows what the government says.' They discussed other important resources, 'The second factor from an experience that we had is the availability of the information, and history of the information.' They also considered the resources an external factor that the Government should help in providing to the entities, 'Where the government gives us full support and also the full resource of information.' (R5)

> 'More budget and resources will make a difference.' (R16)

Some of the respondents considered resources a challenge or an obstacle. Respondent 2 considered it an

obstacle: 'availability of the resources in the financial and human resources in our entity. It was an obstacle when we were preparing for the model and the competition, where we had a challenge that there was no availability of the resources.' The main challenge is how to study such a theme in a government organization context, as a few other respondents did not consider it an internal success factor. Respondent 12 claimed that the entities should have no issue with financial resources, as the government provides them with a suitable budget to accomplish their priorities. Respondent 8 advised the government entities to conduct some research before investing in excellence: 'I do believe that for the governmental entities, there are certain limitations regarding the budget, and it's not advised to invest so much in excellence. If you want to enhance systems, then you need to pay for that, but you have to do it in a rational way, like doing analysis.' The next chapter will elaborate more on resource management.

Theme 9: People Capability Building

Part 1: Introduction

Looking for the keywords in the interview vs response sheet and the categorization in the theme generation worksheet, respondents offered different keywords for this theme: 'training programs'; 'education'; 'investment in the employees'; 'awareness'; 'specialized employees'; and 'internal capabilities', such as 'management system', 'methodology', 'approaches', 'policies', and 'processes'.

Appendix 12-9 shows the data analysis for the ninth theme, 'people capability building', and the number of times this theme and related words were mentioned in the interviews.

Part 2: Determining the Theme

The emerging theme extracted from the interviewees' responses was 'capability building'. This theme was directly mentioned 181 times by the interviewees and 46 times by the interviewer. It was directly extracted from the interviews by using major keywords mentioned in Part 1. The reason for considering this theme is that most respondents talked about the necessity of having some internal capabilities to make the implementation of the model a success. These capabilities might include a variety of aspects within the organization. This can be categorized into two major classifications:

1) Human capabilities: This includes training programs, education, awareness, learning, and specialized employees.
2) Management systems: These include policies, procedures, methodologies, and approaches.

Part 3: Interviewees' Feedback

This key theme shows the importance of investment in human resources and having the appropriate systems to implement the model in an effective and efficient way. The respondents who most often directly stated words related to this theme are R8, R6, R4, R5, R12, R9, and R3 in order of most mentions. However, most of the respondents mentioned that the capability-building theme is a very important key success factor for the model.

Respondents 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, and 18 directly answered IQ3 and mentioned one of the keywords related to this theme in the IQ. Some respondents focused more on building human capabilities, and others on internal systems capabilities. Respondent 2 emphasized building the capabilities of the employees by giving them training on excellence itself, saying, 'when they are assigned to any excellence requirement, some of them don't understand the terminology and what's the content.' Most comments suggest that building the capabilities of the employees is crucial in government organizations.

'I mean the management system. Plus, the leadership program.' (R3)

'For the resources, it is important to give enough training for different levels, and to managers, you have to define what I need to give the managers as training about excellence, what training I need to give for staff or employees about excellence, or the top management. So, it is important to develop their knowledge and skills about the excellence model.' (R18)

'If you go inside the organization, we need training, awareness, and qualified staff to do the work, which causes some challenges,' saying as well, 'You also have to have financial resources for hiring qualified people.' (R4)

'As I said, for the employees in the normal level are less than the section manager and below; maybe good training can help them to implement the model. The excellence is not only related to the excellence, but the excellence is related to the scope of the work whatever the scope was whether it was contracting or customs or whatever is related to the scope of the work. You have to get specialist employees in the excellence model because this will help to extend the culture of the excellence in the organization, and at the same time, it will help to conduct training and awareness Internally to increase the culture of the excellence for the employees.' (R6)

'The second one is about the language itself, especially for the individual awards. They encouraged more training and education for the employees inside the organization and asked for extra technical support from the award custodian in the implementation process, saying, I need technical support, and I also need from them to make this award program continuous, so it's not only an award and ceremony. I need that for the whole year, so the people can be active, and maybe that's what we need from them.' (R9)

'Number one is awareness. To understand the awareness of the model, the criteria, the government in all of the levels starting from the top to bottom, so awareness is very important.' They added to the same interview question, 'Number three, we need teamwork. No division, sector, and section can collect all of the results and make it ready in the proper way, so cross-functional teams are important. So, teamwork is important inside the organizations, and it's one of the main key success factors.' (R12)

'I also encourage the awarding bodies for the presentation and that the awareness should be given to all entities, to deliver the same language and same culture. These experts and ambassadors of the awarding bodies, they have to be certified in a proper way and there should be a refreshment and workshop from time to time. I believe it is difficult, and here we come to the external. It's difficult to train thousands of people, where are you need to train two or three to convey your message.' (R8)

'You have to train your employees, making awareness sessions, and follow up with the teams.' (R13)

Respondent 7 encourages collaboration between entities to improve internal capabilities: 'If we have a system or a development system by one entity and it's recognized as an excellent or pioneering practice or system, why wouldn't take the system and make it an idea for this entity and enforce the other governmental entities to use it.' Respondent 7's opinion aligned with that of Respondent 6; both agreed to the need for a variety of people to join the organization to help it implement the new model, with Respondent 7 saying:

> 'First of all, a specialized workforce because now it focuses more on the core business where they should have a more specialized workforce to specialize in the core business, where they can impact and bring more capabilities to the core business which represents more than 60% of the model itself,' adding, 'There should be a good technological infrastructure that will help to make the people life easy.'

4.6.2 Key Themes for IQ4

In this section, the key themes extracted from the interviewees' answers to IQ4— 'external key success factors'—are listed below.

Theme 10: One government
Theme 11: Award custodian

The data analysis and findings will be discussed below, as explained in section 4.4.3.

Theme 10: One Government

Part 1: Introduction

Looking for the keywords in the interview vs response sheet and the categorization in the theme generation worksheet, respondents offered different definitions for 'one government':

1) Collaboration between government entities
2) Shared project(s)/service(s)
3) Integrated projects
4) Partnership and stakeholders

Part 2: Determining the Theme

The emerging theme extracted from the interviewees' responses was 'one government'. The respondents answered IQ4 via three main sub-themes:

1) The collaboration between government entities to achieve common project goals and enhance shared services
2) The importance of enhancing shared services,
3) Shared information is a key message to all organizations to realize the one government concept
4) Cooperating to develop common projects and sharing best practices

Part 3: Interviewees' Feedback

This key theme shows the importance of collaboration and coordination between all government entities to achieve the strategic plan of the entity itself and the government plan as well. Furthermore, the entity must share all information related to its best practices and pioneering results to ensure the government organizations are working collaboratively to achieve the main objectives of the model and, specifically, making the government of the UAE and the country acquire a competitive advantage and leading global position. The collaboration should be at different levels, such as within the local government entities and within the Emirates' organizations.

Respondent 8 used the terminology 'one government' and answered IQ4 as follows: 'The second issue regarding the external factors is the partnership. As I mentioned in the beginning, the 4G is all about the integrated government and that we aim to be one government, so the 4G is an enabler to enhance the government partnership.' They also brought up a point regarding the collaboration at the UAE level by reporting, 'At the Executive Council level or the PMO, there should be an agreement on what are the major policies that are needed for Dubai or the UAE, and should we come from the top down. These are the main policies that we should focus on for the upcoming years, and there should be a contributor for each policy from different entities, and the contribution should be measured by certain KPIs.'

Most of the comments support the principle of a one-government theme. Below are some quotes from the respondents.

> 'The new excellence model is, focusing on the definition as one government at the end, we are one government, and all of the entities are following the Executive Council, so we have one goal to achieve it. If all of the governmental entities cooperate together, this is a very good success factor.' (R13)

> 'This will make a big difference if they have common projects together. Some of the entities have shared services centres. Where they cannot do any improvements or changes, for example, in the building itself.' (R1)

> 'Now you can do everything by the mobile application, by the call centre, or emails. You can finish it when you're sitting at home, and there is no need to go to other departments.' (R3)

> 'The partnership between entities. The partnership is very important, and I can't achieve some of the goals without the partnership because some of our rules is to work with our partners, and your partnership doesn't allow you to achieve your goals, so it affects our strategy and customer happiness.' (R16)

> 'I think if everyone takes responsibility and collaborates within the federal and local government to implement the 4G, it will give us a great experience', adding, 'We need to develop a new version from the model to be suitable for the private sector,' and, 'we need to bring this model out to introduce it within the society as well, maybe for universities, schools, and civil organizations.' (R4)

> 'If we have a system developed by one entity and it's recognized as an excellent or pioneering practice or system, why wouldn't take the system and make it an idea for this entity and enforce the other governmental entities to use it.' (R7)

'Number two is moving from competitiveness to collaboration between the governmental entities. The government and entities should work together in order to share knowledge and to support each other in achieving the government's vision.' (R12)

'Even for the elite organizations, they don't cooperate in providing the results, which is one of the big problems.' (R14)

'The second part is that if the integration is coming from the Executive Council, then it will help to reduce the cost on entities because there are duplicates in work. Also, to utilize the resources in a better way, not only financially, but human resources and technical resources.' (R15)

Respondent 2 recommended collaboration between all government entities and centralized entities that share information with the award custodian to complete the assessment process. They stated, 'The 4G model takes data from many custodian departments such as the Department of Finance (DoF), Dubai Smart Government, Dubai Model, The Executive Council, and Legal Affairs. A success factor would be as same as the internal, such as the digital software or performance platform to gather all the information and keep it in the system. To allow anyone to access it at any time.' They also declared that the results of some performance indicators, which are measured by third parties, are not shared with their organization: 'when we submit a capability regarding the Legal Affairs or DoF, we can't find the required KPI for that, because this KPI is calculated and directed to award office and we don't have any information regarding that.' They suggested, 'I think it could be overcome by more cooperation between TEC and third-party entities.'

Respondent 5 talked about four important aspects related to the theme. First, the importance of sharing information between government entities: 'Another important factor is the information that influences the organization. Today how do I know what am I from the economy, where we are as an organization from the overall community and sustainability, and how do I know what the environmental requirements are? I need to understand the regulations as well because, at the end, I cannot regulate because there are owners for the different perceptions of the aspects of the community as a business', adding: 'The second factor from an experience that we had is the availability of the information and history of the information. Sometimes the government goes into an improvement from time to time, and sometimes restructuring of the government merges and splits between organizations data, which goes with that change. From an experience with these certain issues, sometimes after separating from the parent department, we had lost the historical data, and we didn't have data.' Second, they focused on the collaboration between stakeholders: 'The second factor is the external stakeholders. Again, we cannot be a successful organization without having an external support from the stakeholders, and the government also had emphasized on that in terms of defining our strategic stakeholders, dealing with them, participating with them to achieve your own projects that feeds the national agenda for the Emirates and so on.' They gave an example of this: 'in Abu Dhabi, we have an award called best-shared service. Shared means what we can share with other stakeholders, so we need to define where they add value to our services that goes to the customers, which is very important.' Third, they expressed concern over the speed of completing integration projects: 'Of course, we have cooperation as well as a digital connection between the different stakeholders; sometimes it's based on our customers' journeys, and sometimes if we have a contribution from the stakeholder we finish the digital connection between our platforms, so the customers' journey becomes shorter faster.'

Fourth, their main priority was achieving the overall strategy for their entity and the government: 'Another important factor is the information that influences the organization. Today how do I know what am I from the economy, where we are as an organization from the overall community and sustainability, and how do I know what the environmental requirements are.' Respondent 17 suggested that the award office should play a key role in this theme, with a link to the pioneering theme, by saying: 'So, there are a lot of shared services that are working together in order to achieve one competitiveness indicator.'

Theme 11: Award Custodian

Part 1: Introduction

Looking for the keywords in the interview vs response sheet and the categorization in the theme generation worksheet, respondents mentioned this theme in many parts of the interview and discussed several points related to the theme. Appendix 12-10 shows the data analysis for the eleventh theme, 'award custodian', and the number of times this theme and related words were mentioned in the interviews.

Part 2: Determining the Theme

This theme was directly mentioned 106 times by the interviewees and 62 times by the interviewer. It was directly extracted from the interviews by using major keywords, such as 'award custodian(s)'/ 'office(s)' or 'DGEP', 'PMO', or 'the Executive Council'.

This emerging theme was found because all the respondents discussed the major requirements and roles of the award custodians in the UAE. The respondents' answers are generally divided into the following groups:

1) Excellence model enhancement
2) Effective training for the assessors
3) Assessment feedback report improvement
4) Training to government entities
5) Frequently changed model

Part 3: Interviewees' Feedback

- **Excellence model enhancement**

Most of the comments suggest enhancing the model criteria. Below are some quotes from the respondents.

> 'For me, the last criteria were clearer than the new model. It's a new criteria [*sic*] and a new approach.' (R6)

> 'In the new model, the leadership parts aren't clear here because, in the other models, they have leadership commitment in each criteria of the model, but here there's no clear leadership definition or role in here, and there are no sub-criteria in this model.' (R1)

> 'My sixth point is about the innovation criteria because it's not clear; then, the governance criteria, which is criteria number nine, is not solid because it's a concept of a culture. It isn't clear from the perspective of how to manage it. They

had some recommendations for merging criterion; my point of view is to combine innovation criterion with the smart government itself, which is a part of the innovation itself. Also, I think some of the criteria in the model, like criteria number three, is related to seven-star services. Criteria number four is related to smart government. Criteria number six which focuses on the innovation management itself. They have the same output and impact of any government entity.' (R2)

'The criteria itself will require you to create a lot of KPIs, adding that some guidance points are not clear and gave an example, there is a contradiction between the criteria requirements direction and a lot of internal rules or systems or regulations. The budget of the innovation should be 1% of the total entity's annual budget. none of the entities could provide this 1%.' (R7)

'Today, we are not clear about the weightage for the sub-criteria under the enablers, for an example. So, we know that the enabler's pillar scores 30% out of an overall, but when you go down, you see that we have six criterias [*sic*], and we don't know how much these criteria's weight [*sic*]. This government model, it's a bit confusing because sometimes it's between a framework and sometimes it's between a checklist.' (R5)

'Award custodians need some expertise that goes to the organizations and work with them hand on hand on certain important requirements. I think that the structure should be changed a little bit. There are certain requirements that totally needs to be added, such as vision, the mission, and values. The innovation itself needs to be deployed within the requirements. There should be a segmentation between the processes and the services. Innovation governance needs to be incorporated in the criteria of either achieving vision or the general requirements that should be covered by the organization as a frame of the model.' (R14)

'The most important thing that we normally face as governmental entities is that when they introduce any change in the model, they bring us to workshops and give us a feedback, but the way that we see it is that they don't take it seriously. They have done it already, completed it, and they want to launch it.' (R15)

They also commented on the last update in 2019, specifically in Dubai, when the award custodian made a few changes to the model by introducing the elite concept and dividing the government entities into three levels. For the elite level, they asked that the government entities be assessed based on the results and not on capabilities. Respondent 1 commented, 'The elite's assessment will be based on the result itself. No one knows how to be prepared for this, and they won't give you any information on how the assessment will be.'

Respondent 4 discussed model enhancement: 'I will give you some examples of what could be improved in the criteria itself. First, when you check the criteria, you will find that there is many measures. It's a huge number of measurements.' They provided an example: 'If you go to the criteria of the smart government, do you know how many measures they have there? It's [*sic*] is more than fifty measurements.' In addition, they suggested improvements for some criteria: 'We have two new criteria's that are very challenging, regarding the future shaping, and creativity and innovation. Actually, these two issues currently are still under-researched', adding: 'Previously in the old model, we had special criteria for the partnership, but now it disappeared in the new model, and it got scattered', and for other criteria as well: 'The same is for knowledge management, which had the same issue.'

Respondent 8 agreed with Respondent 7: 'I do advise that the core business KPIs is the crucial one in the

model and it should have a higher weight than other KPIs', adding: 'The best practices for big organizations are from 10–25 maximum KPIs, and not to have around 300 or 700 KIPs.' In addition, they commented on the clarity of the model itself: 'Sometimes, we have to understand what's the meaning of each criterion in Arabic and in English. For an example, future-shaping in English is different than Arabic.'

Respondent 9 required some explanation about certain criteria: 'The second thing is that we didn't get enough technical support about the new criteria, which was introduced for the first time.' They gave two examples: 'Future foresight where most of the people don't know what future foresight means, and they start looking for a consultant, and to be honest with you, we couldn't say that this is the reality of the future foresight' and 'even innovation because when we talk about innovation, most people believe that it's a scheme, which isn't the case.' They also agreed with Respondents 1 and 5: 'In the new model, I can say that the leadership as the main criterion is not there.'

Respondent 12 commented that some parts of the model are clear, while others are not, 'The organization enablers are very clear because it's shared with the EFQM model, so there is nothing new there. The first one, which is about achieving the government vision most of it is clear because it is talking about the main functions, services, digitalization, and smart services. To me, the issue is in the second one, which is the innovation. It's a new practice and concept, especially in the local government, and I'm not talking about the federal government.' They also commented, 'The competitiveness, for an example, is not well focused. The social responsibility is a little bit overlooked.'

- **Effective training for the assessors**

Some respondents mused that the award custodian should give more training to the assessors on how to assess the organizations. Sometimes, they asked for general awareness as well to understand the major requirements of the government in the UAE and the culture of the organizations. Most comments suggest conducting more training and awareness sessions for assessors.

Respondent 1 reported this as a challenge and recommended 'training the assessors'. Respondent 2 said, 'The second obstacle point is that the assessors came from different cultures, so the award custodian should give them more awareness.' Respondent 5 reported, 'Other challenges we found, and we need to improve them honestly speaking, is the background, the culture, the education, and the experience of the SME assessors. From my point of view as an assessor, they don't know how to assess sometimes, and maybe they need further training and further elaboration.' Respondent 6 explained how their entity debated with the assessor on certain aspects related to the differences in the culture between the assessor and the organizations: 'For an example, in our organization, some assessor came in the last cycle, and we mentioned that we built houses for our Emirati customers. When he went to the site visit, and he saw the houses, he said that it is not a house. That kind of a house has two houses: grand or longhouse, and the site that he visited was the grand houses. When he visited, he didn't believe that this is a grand house.' Respondent 9 asked for more training and awareness for the SMEs on the assessment tool itself: 'because usually, they

have selected subject matter experts who are experts in our core business, but to be honest with you, they are lacking the assessment skills', adding: 'First of all, you need to prepare the assessors in a better way and you need to give them more time.' Finally, Respondent 12 said, 'The first point that comes to my mind is about the assessors because, as you know, in the new model, there is something that's called subject matter experts. They are experienced people that come from outside to assess the participant companies and decide to give value, but I think that there something that needs to be done here because there is a missing link in the chain. Most of the experts are coming without any proper knowledge of the assessment and process.'

- **Assessment feedback report improvement**

Some respondents commented on the role of the award custodian in checking the feedback/assessment reports before sending them to the organizations.

'Regarding the feedback report, I think that they need to be improved by giving more time to that assessors to write their feedback report. The way that the EFQM has been following and providing the report with strengths and weaknesses was more structured and more explanatory for the organization.' (R14)

'I think that one of the obstacles that all feedback reports are not taken care of within the organization itself, PMO, or the Executive Council. There is no accountability against the report.' (R17)

'We didn't get any benefits because this is related to the time being given to the assessors, which wasn't enough for them to prepare a good submission report. So, within the time given, they have to do the assessment, the scoring, the reporting, and from what I heard is that they also have to sit with the jury to receive the feedback, which for them wasn't healthy to be able to do all of that, especially that they are doing the assessment for the first time.' (R9)

'I believe that the feedback report is a challenge of how to write it because you need criteria's [*sic*] and specific qualities like excellence assessment, Radar approach, or the PDCA, just to give it to the assessors so they can build around this methodology.' (R8)

'First of all, they should teach the SMEs that they will bring how to write a report and to see an example from their feedback. They will have enough time to teach them how to write reports, how to write clear sentences and to explain what are their findings in the reports.' (R1)

'Yes, even in the assessment report, some points are not clear enough to understand, such as if there are any areas of improvement or recommendations to take it from the experts. They were focusing on the strength and comments, but they didn't write much about areas of improvements.' (R2)

'Some of the comments that were mentioned in the report itself had contradicted itself with other comments in the same report. Sometimes, they consider this point as a positive point, but in other areas, they consider it as a negative point.' (R13)

'The reporting itself is an issue of the assessment skills, and they lack the assessment skills which was very unprofessional and not useful, which was a challenge', adding, 'The report was full of recommendations, which is not the right way to do the report.' (R4)

'When you receive the reports, they are scrambled sometimes, and it's upside down. It is a mixture between the strength, the good practice, recommendations, and areas for improvement. Some of them are biased towards writing about the capabilities more than the results.' (R5)

'We saw it in the report itself that we didn't have anything related to that criteria.' (R7)

'Most of the feedback reports aren't actionable, or it provides advice or consultants. There is something that should be done here and to bring back the balance between the SMEs and the assessors.' (R12)

'Actually, when we look into the criteria, the capabilities, and results, we expect to see the feedback report with improvement areas, not generic but to be more specific.' (R15)

- **Training for government entities**

Some respondents advised that more training courses and awareness programs are needed in different areas of the excellence model for employees who are working in government entities. This section focusses on the role of the award custodian in training the employees of the government entities because training and development, as part of the government organizations' responsibilities, were discussed in the capability-building theme.

Respondent 1 discussed a specialized training course: 'Certified courses in the model'. They mentioned, 'the number of the employees that award custodian will train will be limited. If the DGEP wants to provide it, they will have limited seats, or even the frequency of it will be every year or two years.' They said these courses were costlier than those of other specialized training institutes. Respondent 2 recommended, 'a success factor from an external view, I think, is that every employee, even the ones that newly joined the government, should take a course in the excellence award itself. Before starting the work in any government entity, they should understand the requirement of the excellence model.' Respondent 3 advised the award custodian (PMO) to have a 'training college, training centre, or training department in order to train all the employees on the excellence model', and these courses should be 'in both Arabic and English, in order to focus on all levels.' They also wanted specialized training or certified assessor training like the previous model or the EFQM had: 'Yes, I want to be assessor certified from the government, from the PMO, but now they don't have it in Arabic and English.' They also discussed certified training courses in English in 'happiness and customer service'. Finally, they said, 'They do have a diploma in excellence expert, which I already have from the PMO.'

Respondent 4 reported, 'They-award custodians are doing training and making awareness which is good, but it isn't enough.' Respondent 6 reported, 'The Executive Council is the owner of the program itself, so training and awareness session from their side is needed, and if they have any brochures that are related to how do you implement excellence model.' Respondent 9 called all the aspects needed from the award custodian 'technical support', which includes training and development. They reported, 'I need also the Executive Council or the award office to give technical support about these criterias [*sic*] and to tell the entities what do they expect from them, and we couldn't find that.'

Respondent 12 raised a new point: R&D as a tool to develop the model itself: 'I think that the training and collaboration is OK because they are supportive of everything that we need, but you mentioned valid point, which is the research and development. We don't have a solid or proper research and development activities within the custodian entities, so it's still not developed, and we need a proper, structured, and solid research for the capabilities.'

Respondent 8 summarized the solution for all government entities: 'The criteria itself during the first cycle wasn't that clear, but when you have a link with one of the operating bodies like the DGEP or the federal level, you will understand everything and the notion behind it, and how you should map out your core business. This is a mission that's difficult to give awareness and training for everybody in all entities, so there should be ambassadors, and I'm one of them, to convey the message to the entities of what's the new notion behind it when you take the proper training by the DGEP or the awards custodians', adding: 'It's difficult to train thousands of people, where are you need to train two or three to convey your message.'

- **Frequently changed model**

Most of the comments suggest that the model gets changed frequently, and the approach is not structured:

> 'If you want to implement new things, you have to give entities enough time to understand the model, and you have to give them time to train them in the model, not suddenly before a couple of months you want to implement new things.' (R2)

> 'Sometimes there are changes on the criterias [*sic*], and the time that's given is sometimes limited for the organization to quickly adapt and understand the nature of changes, as well as preparing a revised submission management document that represents the organization. Considering that preparing the data and measuring the KPIs is always an issue because the enablers and the capability size is much easier to prepare more than the results area. If we have a new KPIs or goals and we need to prepare data for that, which is where the challenge is. So, when the criteria is upgraded or changed in terms of requirements and KPIs, again we have to start the criterias [*sic*] from scratches because we have to realign our documents to the requirement.' (R5)

> 'For the model itself, the comments that I have are regarding the fast-changing of the criteria itself. Sometimes we agree on it, but for an example, the first generation had been held for two cycles, which is four years, and now the third cycle. They think that it is only a minor change, but no, there is a shift and direction thinking and the philosophy of the model itself. Sometimes following up with this will be challenging especially, and what happened always is that the updates on the criteria itself comes way beyond and in a very close time to the assessment itself.' (R7)

> 'The model is completely new, and the model has new criteria which has been introduced for the first time. So, in my opinion, at least I will get the entities twelve to eighteen months' time to be prepared for this new model, which wasn't there in our case.' (R9)

Respondent 8 suggested making changes at least every five years, 'I do advice to make a major change in the model very frequently, and just make it stable for five or ten years, and then you review what you do every three cycles to see if you can do it again in the proper way based on the market needs.' Respondent 12 agreed with all previous respondents and reported, 'I think that entities should have more time to prepare

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themselves, especially when there are new entities that have no experience about the submissions.'

4.7 Data Analysis and Findings: Third Research Question

The third RQ is about the main barriers/obstacles and the challenges of the GEM. This RQ was divided into two main IQs:

Interview question 5 (IQ5): What are the main barriers/obstacles to the GEM implementation in the UAE? Why? Are there differences from any other framework implementation? What are the differences?

Interview question 6 (IQ6): What are the most significant challenges of implementing the GEM? Please mention at least two disadvantages. Explain why and how you overcome them.

4.7.1 Key themes for IQ5

In this section, the key themes extracted from the interviewees' answers to question five— 'barriers/obstacles of the GEM'—are listed below.

Theme 12: Assessment process
Theme 13: Size and work nature of the organization

The data analysis and findings will be discussed below, as explained in section 4.4.3.

Theme 12: Assessment Process

Part 1: Introduction

Looking for the keywords in the interview vs response sheet and the categorization in the theme generation worksheet, respondents mentioned this theme in many parts of the interview, and they discussed several aspects related to it:

1) Skillsets of assessors
2) Submission process
3) Frequency and duration of assessment
4) Assessment tool
5) Assessment feedback report

Part 2: Determining the Theme

This emerging theme was determined based on the different sub-themes mentioned in the previous part. The respondents discussed many aspects related to this theme, summarized below.

1) Skills of the assessors: How this will affect the overall assessment and other aspects, like the feedback report and overall score of the model. Is the knowledge and experience of the assessors suitable for conducting the assessment in this model?

2) Submission process: How much information is needed to make the assessment process a success? What is the required information needed for the assessors to complete the assessment process? What is the complexity of the process?

3) Duration of assessment: Is the duration suitable for the size and nature of the organization? Are the assessors covering the main mandates of the organization?

4) Assessment tool: Do the assessors apply the assessment tool in the assessment feedback report? Is the tool easy or complicated for the assessors to use? Are all the assessors aware of this tool? Is this tool effective?

5) Assessment feedback report: What are the benefits of the feedback report? How is it written? Does the content reflect the assessment?

The emerging theme that fits all the above points raised by the respondents is the 'assessment process'. Note that the assessment feedback report sub-theme was discussed in theme 12, 'award custodian', as respondents felt it was the responsibility of both assessors and the award custodian.

Part 3: Interviewees' Feedback

- **Skillsets of Assessors**

Most of the comments suggest that the skillsets of assessors are the main barriers/obstacles to the model. Below are a few quotes from the respondents.

> 'In the first cycle of the assessment, the SMEs were able to cover just 30% of the scope of his organization.' (R1)

> 'The assessor in the first cycle doesn't know about the model and the assessment method itself. They are subject matter experts, but they do not know about the methodology, effectiveness, efficiency, and learning development for the result itself. No harmony between the assessors as they came from different backgrounds and different schools of thoughts, and the assessors have different viewpoints in the area of assessment.' (R2)

> 'From my point of view as an assessor, they don't know how to assess sometimes, and maybe they need further training and further elaboration. The subject matter experts, we appreciate their backgrounds and their experience to add value to our industry, but they have never been assessors, and all of a sudden, they were put in these shoes to assess, score, and write feedback reports for the organizations.' (R5)

> 'The knowledge of assessors is important, and knowing the scope of the organization is another important point', adding, 'Sometimes that assessor doesn't understand what's your scope, and they only understand 30% of our scope.' (R6)

> 'Our entity is a regulatory body, and the assessors who came to us were from operations background, and they can't do the assessment because of our scope is different from their experience', and, 'I have comments on the quality of the assessors, we are a regulatory body, and when we have one of the assessors' backgrounds it shows that they are from operations, so they cannot assess what they don't have experience on.' (R7)

> 'Most of the experts are coming without any proper knowledge of the assessment and process, so that's why we don't see the consistency in the feedback reports.' (R12)

> 'There must be two types of assessors. One should be subject matter experts in the

core business, and the second assessor should be experienced in excellence.' (R13)

'The subject matter experts, in one of the cycles, they did not have people who are specialized in the excellence' requirement itself.' (R19)

'The practitioners themselves said that they agreed that it helped the organization to focus on the core business, but at the same time, some of them were reluctant because they said that they came from other countries and they don't know about the direction of the government.' (R14)

Respondent 4 affirmed that there is a need to look more into the background, education, and experience of the SMEs. They clearly mentioned that more training should be given to the assessors and, 'for the subject matter experts, we appreciate their background and their experience to add value to our industry, but they have never been assessors, and all of the sudden there put in these shoes to assess, score, and write feedback reports for the organizations.' They talked about how the number of assessors is not enough for assessing the organizations, and the assessors came from different backgrounds and had different thoughts – they provided an example that happened during the assessment, 'The same goes for future shaping. There is a school in the UAE, a school in the United Kingdom, another school in the USA, another school in Japan. We will build the American school, but the assessors came from the United Kingdom school, so there won't be an agreement.'

- **Submission Process**

Some of the respondents commented on the submission process itself. Below are some of these quotes.

'The submission itself will be different than before because now you have to give them an introduction about the entity. I don't think it's enough for the assessor to understand the business or the mandates of the entity and to understand the business of the entity itself.' (R1)

'Not all of the capabilities are linked with KPIs. Some of the capabilities are more operational to link it by any KPI, so we are facing that in the submission document itself.' (R2 and Partially R7)

'We can consider this point as an obstacle. In this version, the submission is online, and it gives you access to the system, and you will fill your information in a limited time, and sometimes after this, I have many new things, so why you cannot open it to me at all? What is the problem if you keep it open for all of the year? Every time I have a new decision, capability, methodologies, progress, procedures, why do you open in just for a limited time and you have to fill all of the information in this time? You should keep it open all of the time because there's no problem with that.' (R6)

'I believe that whatever you do and whatever you minimize, you must submit at least minimize 200 KPIs because this is too much for an organization.' (R8)

'Now, talking about the submission itself, in Abu Dhabi, we had electronic submission, and to be honest with you, this software and platform was done very quickly, and we faced some challenges about this platform, which makes our submission process a little complicated.' (R9)

Respondent 4 stated, 'The submission requires a lot of information because you can't write any single word

without having a support behind it, and you are responsible.' They added, 'Submission should be in both languages, Arabic and English, and this will require from the entity to translate it.' They also reported, 'Although the excellence model has a statement that assures that the submission document is not required to make the entity's journey easy and straightforward, but this wasn't proven.' Finally, they said, 'Each capability can be associated with fifteen KPIs, so you talk about more than 15,000 words in that submission. Despite the fact that it was mentioned in the guidelines itself, it is no submission. So, we have to prepare a submission, and we have to write; otherwise, no assessment will take a place.'

Respondent 12 complemented the submission process of his local government: 'I think that the submission process is a strength. I do not know about the other Emirates, but in Abu Dhabi, we have this newly launched platform, and we have limited number of words that needs to be written. This is good because we will shed the focus on the companies from citing the submission documents to providing better information.' Respondent 17 agreed with Respondent 12 by saying, 'If you are only talking about the assessment process, the submission is okay, and the way of assessing and using the international expert is also.'

- **Frequency and Duration of Assessment**

Respondent 1 commented that the size of the organization plays an important role in determining the duration of the assessment. For example, when the entity's scope is wide, the assessment duration should be longer than other entities to ensure the assessors cover the entire scope of the assessment. Respondent 1 provided some examples illustrating the importance of the duration, citing the criterion that the assessors did not have time to assess and check: 'the financial criterion and governance were not covered in the assessment although our strength is the financial aspects.' In addition, 'They have different teams, same timing, working in a parallel way, which means that it's not healthy to have this number of teams.' Respondent 2 determined the percentage of the scope covered by the assessors, which could be considered an assessment skill, and the duration of the assessment sub-themes: 'They didn't cover it because they're specialized in only 50% of our scope.' This is the same issue raised by Respondent 4, who also expressed concern about the considerable number of key performance indicators in the submission itself, which means that the assessment requires a significant amount of time to perform, thereby losing its focus. Respondent 6 expressed that the assessors might need a lot of time to understand the work nature of the organizations: 'Sometimes you need time to explain to the assessor of how you work and what's the nature of the scope of your work.' Respondent 9 discussed how the assessors did not complete the assessment within the assigned days: 'If we are talking about our last experience, it wasn't clear at all. The assessors did not have a clear agenda, even that assessment was four days, and they completed everything in a few days, and then the fourth day, they said that they are done, and they do not need to do anything. We are not expecting that during any assessment process because if we are being assessed for four days, then we need to have an agenda for four days.' Respondent 13 suggested, 'I think that the assessors should take more time in understanding the nature of the entity before coming to the assessment. During the last day of the assessment, when we finished, the assessors asked us that we finished but we still have time that maybe you have something that you want to talk about. To be honest, we gave everything that we could've during

the assessment or in the submission report.'

Respondent 8 suggested a periodical assessment throughout the year to solve this issue: 'Maybe, or make it an accumulative one, for an example, the quarter one will be the enabler's, the second the quarter will be vision achievement. This approach is applicable, and I used to be in the army before, and they used to have this approach. The entity or the organization should be ready around over the hour, and there is a general that will come to assess all of that in a periodic way or a sudden way.'

- **Assessment Tool**

Respondent 1 doubted that the assessor knows the assessment tool that is used to assess the organization: 'Some of them don't know about the tool itself, but at the end of the day, if I am an expert or an SME, I will ask questions, and I will link them to this tool. Some of them don't know the truth about the assessment tool itself.' They suggested that the award custodian must train the assessors on how to use the assessment tool professionally and write the feedback based on the results and scoring. Respondent 4 discussed the role of the jury in checking if the assessment tool was used effectively: 'One of the jury's main objectives is to assure that the given degrees and the scoring is compatible with the report.'

Respondent 5 confirmed the point raised by Respondent 1 about needing further clarification and training for both the applicants, as well as for the assessors. They also discussed the technicality of the assessment tool: 'I agree with some of it such as comprehensive results, effectiveness, and efficiency of the capabilities, but these have no solid and consistent definitions across the assessors.' They also suggested having more assessors to fairly assess the organizations and give a fair score by using the assessment tool, 'All business excellence models are full of subjective mechanisms for the assessment, and it's not 100% objective, and that's why the assessment teams have to be composed of several assessors with different backgrounds because one or two people will not be fair and will not be accurate.' Respondent 7 agreed that writing the submission is not easy: 'If we need to express how the efficiency and effectiveness for each capability in terms of key performance indicators, this will lead to huge number of the information and indicators.' They affirmed, 'The problem is that when you separate the capability from the result, sometimes it's misleading.' Respondent 19 said, 'Actually, the report wasn't clear, and they didn't use the assessment tool.'

Respondent 12 compared the two assessment tools from this model and the previous model and reported, 'I don't think that it is scientific, and I don't think that it is structured in comparison to the RADAR methodology. I think that it needs more improvement, more work to be done, to be more robust and more structured because it's vague and not clear to all applicants.' Respondent 14 agreed with Respondent 13 and stated, 'I liked the radar because radar gives more benefits to the organization because having one criterias [sic] for the efficiency and effectiveness is a part of the criteria.'

Respondent 13 stated, 'That assessment tool is there, but it will bring me back to the point that I mentioned earlier, which is the capability of the assessors to follow this tool.'

Theme 13: Size and Work Nature of the Organization

Part 1: Introduction

Looking for the keywords in the interview vs response sheet and the categorization in the theme generation worksheet, respondents mentioned this theme in many parts of the interview, and they discussed many aspects related to the size and work nature of the organization.

Part 2: Determining the Theme

The first part of this emerging theme is the size of the organization. Respondents used different keywords to express this theme: 'size as a direct word', 'small', 'medium', 'big', 'scope', and 'different businesses of the organization'. The emerging theme was the 'size of the organization', as expressed by the holistic meaning of these keywords. The second part of this emerging theme was the work nature of the organization. Respondents used different keywords, such as 'mandate', 'work nature', and 'different government entities'. The emerging theme was the work nature of the organization, as it expressed the holistic meaning of these keywords. The reason for merging these themes is that the respondents always tried to link these two aspects in their answers to the question 'size and work nature'. Moreover, the mandates usually determine both the size and nature of organizations.

Part 3: Interviewees' Feedback

Respondents reported two main concerns regarding the size of the organization and the requirements of the GEM: (1) The assessors cannot cover the overall scope of the organization and (2) whether the model works for all kinds of organizations irrespective of size and nature. Below are a few quotes from the respondents.

> 'It can be a part of a future study that's related to implementing the excellence model in small or medium, or large organizations. There are so many barriers, such as the number of employees, and the priority of the budget might also be another challenge for the medium or small or large organizations.' (R14)

> 'They still need to improve and take into consideration the size of the organization.' (R17)

> 'As we said before, there are different entities, different size of entities (each entity has a different size than the other). Some of the entities have one business to do with their mandate from the government, but others have a lot of things, such as my entity has different things. When they brought the SMEs, they will be in one field of this mandate. So, the thing is, the other parts of the business or the mandates will not be enough and fairly covered.' 'The SMEs covered 30% of my entity's mandate/scope.' (R1)

> 'Responsible for a lot of the scopes that are wide, such as the registration business, licensing business, consumer rights, export, import, and foreign direct investment. The assessor that came is specialized in one scope of entity only.' (R2)

> 'Because the criteria are still under development, so, in comparison to the EFQM model, it takes years to reach this kind of maturity. These challenges are higher in the small or a medium organization than the bigger organizations.' They also added that the challenges of small organizations in this model are higher than the other sizes, 'The challenge is for small organizations regarding the financial resources,

human resources, and technical resources.' (R4)

'There are differences in the implementation levels. We cannot forget that when we talk about the governmental sector, that it is a huge portfolio. It's not only one or two or three organizations, but we are talking about fifty to sixty organizations, and the maturity level between these organizations have been always in different scales.' (R5)

Respondent 6 recommended dividing the entities based on the size of the organization or the number of employees; this will be helpful for all participants. Specifically, they noted that the 'size of the organization will affect the implementation', and this agrees with the previous respondents. Respondent 7 outlined that each entity has a different budget, number of employees, and work nature, commenting that the size of the organization should be studied to ensure that the government entity will implement the model in an efficient way. Respondent 9 agreed with Respondent 7: 'The size of the organization will affect. The bigger the organization, the more resources and time you need to implement.' However, they reported that the criteria might not be suitable for small- and medium-sized organizations, and they gave an example of one criterion in the model: 'Do you think for an entity that has only around thirty or twenty employees, we have to tell them that you have to have future foresight, or telling them where you will be in the next few years? For an entity that has only twenty or thirty employees, I cannot force them to look for after ten years or thirty years, which will be that they are putting efforts in areas that they don't really need, which isn't visible for them.'

Respondent 14 claimed that all the award-winning entities are large, as they score high in the model, and the small- and medium-sized organizations consistently score lower than the large organizations. This might be a point to discuss in the future.

Respondents 8, 12, and 13 disagree with this sub-theme. Respondent 8 reported, 'It shouldn't, because you are implementing approaches in the system, and it doesn't matter', adding: 'It always depends on the culture and not a function issue. These are the arguments that people discuss regarding the size. The nature of the business in the model itself, if we compare the EFQM, we can see that all of the entities are the same regarding the core business, and this might be unfair, but the 4G is much better because it emphasizes on the core business and they bring specialized people to assess.' Meanwhile, Respondent 12 reported, 'In the EFQM model, the challenge was bigger, but in the government model, they claimed that they consider the size of the company and they try to understand the nature of the business. Therefore, they can change the weightage for the criteria based on the size of the company, and that is what they did in Abu Dhabi. Each criterion has a different weight if you compare between the governmental entities. To me, this overcomes the challenge, and I look at it as an improvement.' Respondent 13 stated clearly, 'The criteria can be applicable to all of the entities despite the size of the entities.'

4.7.2 Key Themes for IQ7

In this section, the key themes extracted from the interviewees' answers to question five— 'significant challenges of the GEM'—are listed below.

Theme 14: Benchmarking

Theme 15: Award custodian

Theme 15, 'award custodian', was discussed in IQ4, as it is considered more related to the external factors that affect the implementation process.

Theme 14: Benchmarking

Part 1: Introduction

Looking for the keywords in the interview vs response sheet and the categorization in the theme generation worksheet, respondents mentioned this theme in many parts of the interview, and they discussed many aspects related to benchmarking or comparison with the best-in-class organizations.

Part 2: Determining the Theme

The word 'benchmarking', as an emerging theme, is mentioned many times. Some respondents considered it a key success factor that must be done to make the model a success; some considered it an obstacle to overcome, while others considered it a challenge. Respondents used different keywords to express this theme: 'comparison with others', 'world-class practices', and 'normal words/phrases', like 'to learn from others and what others do'.

Part 3: Interviewees' Feedback

Benchmarking is considered to be at the heart of the model. This theme is one of the most important factors in the model, as it is vital for achieving one of the main objectives of the model: 'Acquiring a competitive advantage and leading position.' The first important factor in achieving a leading position is to benchmark to determine where the country stands in some competitiveness indices, in general, and in some key results and practices, in specific.

Respondent 13 articulated a challenge to all organizations in the government by stating: 'For the benchmarking, the entire idea of the excellence model is based on the leadership or the pioneering of organizations worldwide. I mentioned before that we are facing challenges of having certain official ranks for the best practices as numbers amongst statistical departments and organizations, which is a challenge by itself.'

Respondent 14 talked more about the benchmarking by saying: 'It's one of the barriers. Anyway, I want to highlight that having the 10% for the leading position is very good to distinguish the GEM model. The 10% of the leading position requirement have urged organizations to look for competitiveness, international practices, and benchmarking while trying to achieve it as a part of a target.' They added, 'One of the barriers is also the benchmark and the leading position as well. If we are talking about benchmarking, we have specific indicators. As you know, that we need to answer to benchmark? While other international organizations would not really measure it. So, sometimes we have indicators that cannot be benchmarked.'

Respondent 3 considered adopting best practices and benchmarking an internal success factor and recommended making site visits to some countries to study how they became pioneers. They reported, 'It's the best to focus on benchmarking. The good thing in our government now they benchmark and visit every country to check. For an example, to check the happiness in the core business, for power sector, we move all the way to Korea or Singapore, and for economy, we go to China. So, it's better to see what the best practice in each country is, and to bring it and to go ahead with it and implement it.'

Respondent 4 discussed the difficulties in benchmarking and considered it a challenge. They commented regarding the feedback report that included some recommendations: 'I cannot say whether they are right or wrong, but this is the case, in the media field now there is a big challenge regarding that digital media. The field expert assessors agreed that there is a challenge in the media regarding the world moving to the digital media.' They also considered benchmarking a barrier: 'There is a barrier of sharing a good practice.'

Respondent 5 reported, 'all the government entities must benchmark with international practices, because at the end, this model teaches us how to become a leader in your industry, which is something that's very important as a baseline to become an excellent organization.' They also encouraged entities to benchmark among each other concerning the excellence model itself: 'They're very matured organizations as well as new organizations, and today we are learning from each other, and we try to benchmark against these pioneering organizations. How did you do it? How did you score high in your customer service? How did you score high on your digital government and smart government parts?' This is also reported in the interview with Respondent 6: 'To implement the model in the right way, you have to look and see what others have in their work.' They also considered benchmarking as a major motivation for the model.

Respondent 7 reported, 'This model moves the mentality of the leadership of the government entities to compare and make research with the best and benchmark with the best.'

Respondents 12 and 16 clearly stated that benchmarking is not an issue in the government. Respondent 12 explained in detail the concept of benchmarking. First, he stated, 'Unfortunately, most of the governmental entities misunderstood the benchmarking concepts.' Second, he explained the types of benchmarking and the challenges: 'If you want to get a critical or confidential data and you try to benchmark, then it is challenging, and this is everywhere. If you go to Europe or the US and you try to get industry data, it is very difficult, and they call it trade secrets.' Third, he reported the difficulties: 'So, some of the results are not accessible, getting some data is difficult.' Fourth, he suggested a salutation and reported, 'This is not the only way, and they have different options. The fourth generation they do not focus much on benchmarking, but they leave it to the applicant or the company to prove where they are in comparison to the international competitors. Therefore, they do not claim it as benchmarking, but you have to prove that you are number one or two or three. So, the companies can prove how they are number one or two or three and how to learn because benchmarking is also about learning and improving.'

Respondent 16 stated, 'I don't think that this should be a problem in the entities for benchmarking because the budget is available and each department is being provided with the budget, and they can go outside and benchmark.' Respondent 19 partially agreed with Respondent 16 by mentioning that 'sometimes it's not always right to benchmark ourselves with other countries, it is important. However, it needs to be an appropriate benchmarking if it is right.'

4.8 Conclusion

This chapter was mainly concerned with reporting the findings of the interviews and showing how the key themes were developed. First, data analysis was done intensively using the IQs and the responses. Second, sub-categories were created for each IQ. Third, the emerging themes were proposed based on the sub-categories. Fourth, each theme was listed with the response and feedback from the interviewee. Fifth, keywords were used to find where other respondents discussed this theme throughout the interview. Finally, the responses were reported in each IQ with respect to the theme.

Nineteen interviews were conducted to achieve the saturation concept discussed by many researchers, as explained in sections 3.5.1 and 3.5.2.

More analysis was done to show the frequency of each theme. Sub-themes and sub-categories were mentioned, and all were counted. The purpose of this is to support the findings and the generated themes.

In the next chapter (Discussion), each theme will be discussed by using the following structure:

Part 1: List of the key themes for each RQ
Part 2: For each theme, what are the overall key issue(s) found in the data analysis and findings chapter
Part 2: Key themes versus excellence model
Part 3: Comparison between the key themes and the literature
Part 4: Explanation of the key themes

Chapter 6 (Conclusions and Recommendations) will discuss the overall and detailed conclusion of this study and what could be done to improve the implementation of the model by the government entities, as well as what recommendations can be provided to all stakeholders of the model: award custodians/offices, government entities, model assessors and SMEs, excellence directors/managers/experts/specialists, and the leadership of the government entities.

Chapter 5: Thesis Discussion

5.1 Introduction

Chapter 4 presented detailed data analysis and findings for the three RQs examined during this study. This current chapter contains an in-depth analysis and discussion of the study's findings to achieve the specific objectives raised in Section 1.7. The three RQs are related directly to the first three objectives of the study, and the fourth objective is concerned with proposing changes and amendments to the implementation process of the GEM in the public sector.

This study has attempted to discover the benefits, motivations, CSFs, barriers, and obstacles to implementing the excellence model in the UAE. This chapter seeks to determine the benefits and motivations that emerged from this study and can adequately be defined, along with recommendations for organizations to enable them to achieve those benefits, as well as the overall objectives of the model. Moreover, if the barriers and obstacles identified in this study can be overcome, organizations will become global role models while simultaneously acquiring competitive advantages for the UAE. Finally, if the CSFs can be discovered, organizations can adopt them to promote society's welfare.

The analysis of the 19 semi-structured interviews conducted with the key experts/managers/consultants in the three levels of the government organizations in Dubai, Abu Dhabi, and the federal government revealed 14 major themes. This chapter aims to discuss these key findings in the context of relevant scholarly literature. The structure of this chapter is as follows: a discussion of each theme, along with a proposed model by the researcher based on the key drawbacks and questions for each theme that the respondents raised.

5.2 Research Question 1: Benefits and Motivations Theme – Discussion

Five main themes were extracted from the analysis of RQ1. Four of them—pioneering, happiness, core business-oriented model, and national agenda/government plan(s)—are considered new to the literature; that is, they were not discussed in other studies in the context of the excellence model. The last theme, recognition, is discussed in the literature but in an alternative way: as image and reputation for the organizations that adopt the excellence models.

These benefits and motivations are broadly aligned with the main objectives of the excellence model and the purpose of developing this model in the UAE. Furthermore, this study concluded that comparisons with other excellence models would not be useful at this stage, as the overall purpose of the motivations and benefits of the GEM are very different from what other excellence models propose. The success of the UAE government will be attained by developing this model to direct the government entities to align their strategies and directions with the national agenda and the government plan to become pioneers by focusing on their core businesses to achieve the happiness of the stakeholders, which will result in the recognition at organizational and government levels. The organizations must consider and link all the benefits together to

achieve the overall objectives of the GEM. However, the benefits and motivations discussed in RQ1 do not include actions important to the excellence model, such as improving innovation and services, improving internal organization, increasing productivity, optimizing necessary resources, and reducing costs.

The in-depth analysis and findings in Chapter 4 and the following model (Figure 5.1) explain the interactions among all the benefits and motivations to achieve the objectives of the excellence model. The figure below shows that the benefits and motivations for using the model are divided into two categories: internal and external.
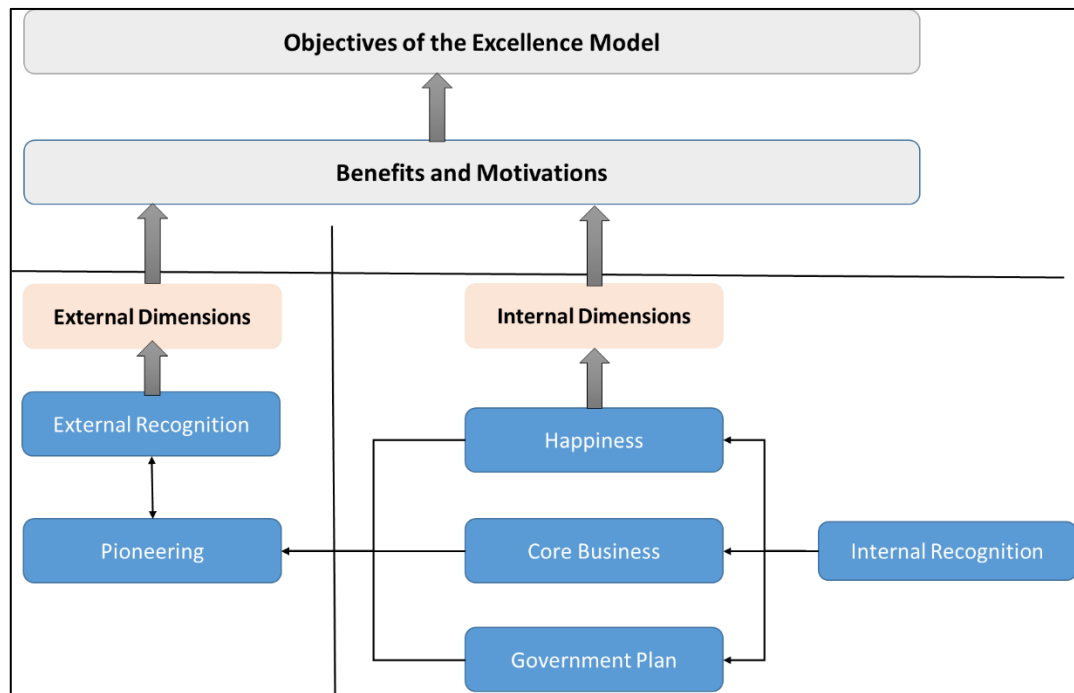
Figure 5.1: Benefits/Motivations to Achieve the Objectives of GEM (Source: The Researcher)

5.2.1 Pioneering

The first benefit of the model is that it enables organizations to become pioneering, which is supported by four perspectives in the literature: national competitiveness (Boys et al., 2005; Lee et al., 2003, 2006; Saunders and Mann, 2005; Saunders et al., 2007; Talwar, 2006), competitive advantages/positions (Bolboli and Reiche, 2013; El-Kahlout, 2010; Gomez et al., 2016; Pesic and Dahlgaard, 2013; Santos-Vijande and Alvarez-Gonzalez, 2007a, 2007b), benchmarking and best practices (Lasrado, 2017; Rodney et al., 2013; Saunders et al., 2008), and world-class (Cortis, 2006, Saunders et al., 2008). The literature has not discussed how an excellence model can achieve the four components of pioneering in one model. The findings of this study presented a new trend of being pioneering, which includes all the previous four components; that is, the government entities should compete not only at the national level but also at the international level by adopting best practices and doing continuous benchmarking with world-class organizations to become pioneers. However, the drawbacks of this benefit are as follows.

1) Not all government entities can contribute to all competitiveness indices.

2)   The proof of being pioneering at the worldwide level is difficult to present to many government entities.

The suggestion to overcome these drawbacks and obtain the benefits of being pioneering is illustrated in the following framework (Figure 5.2):
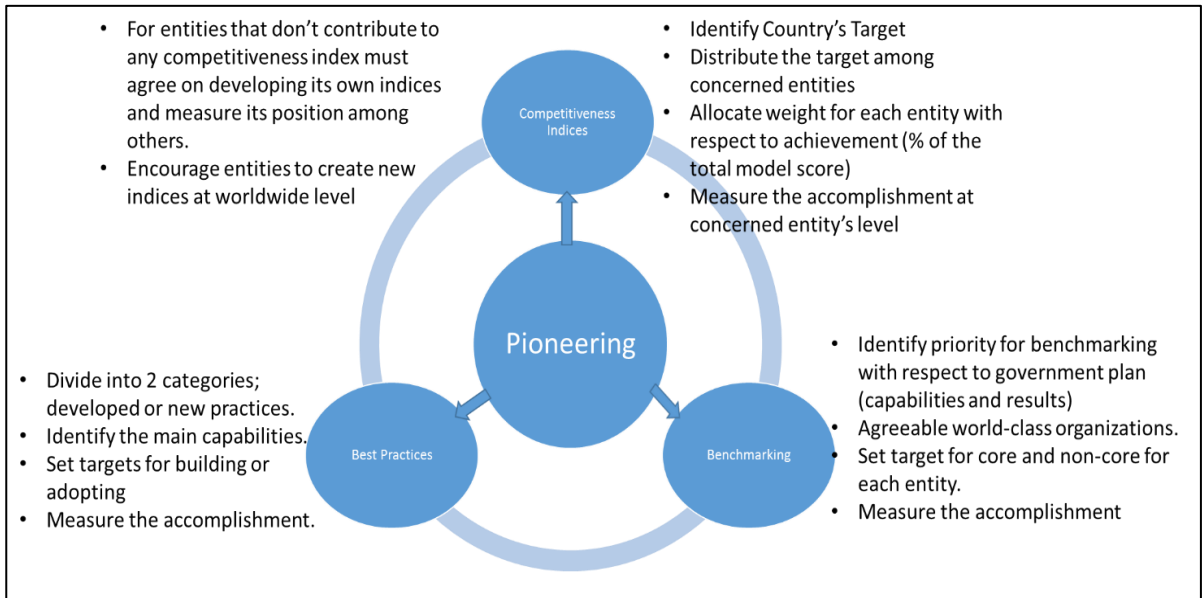
Figure 5.2: Proposed Model to be Pioneering (Source: The Researcher)

The above framework helps organizations, the government, and the award custodian to measure pioneering. Pioneering can be divided into three main components, as explained in the framework. Pioneering could be measured by calculating the accomplishments of these three components; it is recommended to allocate weights for them based on the mandate of each entity, size of the organization, and complexity of the business.

5.2.2 Happiness

The second benefit of the model is achieving happiness, considered new to the literature, as it has not been discussed in the context of the excellence models. However, most of the researchers proposed 'satisfaction' as a key benefit of excellence models. These researchers focused on two types of satisfaction: employee (Cortis, 2006; Gopal and Patricia, 2007; Suáreza et al., 2017; Tutuncu and Kucukusta, 2011) and customer (Abbas et al., 2012; El-Kahlout, 2010; Gopal and Patricia, 2007); other stakeholders are rarely mentioned in the literature (Shaker and Paul, 2016). Furthermore, the feedback from respondents shows that customer happiness/satisfaction is the top priority, then employee happiness/satisfaction. A few respondents commented that other stakeholder satisfaction/happiness is also a key benefit of the model. The main reason for this focus might be that the UAE government started measuring two important indices related to customer and employee satisfaction. However, the drawbacks of this benefit are as follows:

1)   Customers and employees are the only important factors in the organization.

2) Unclear if all government entities have the same level of importance for all stakeholders' happiness/satisfaction.

The organizations must measure the overall satisfaction of all stakeholders as one index as expressed in the following framework (Figure 5.3):
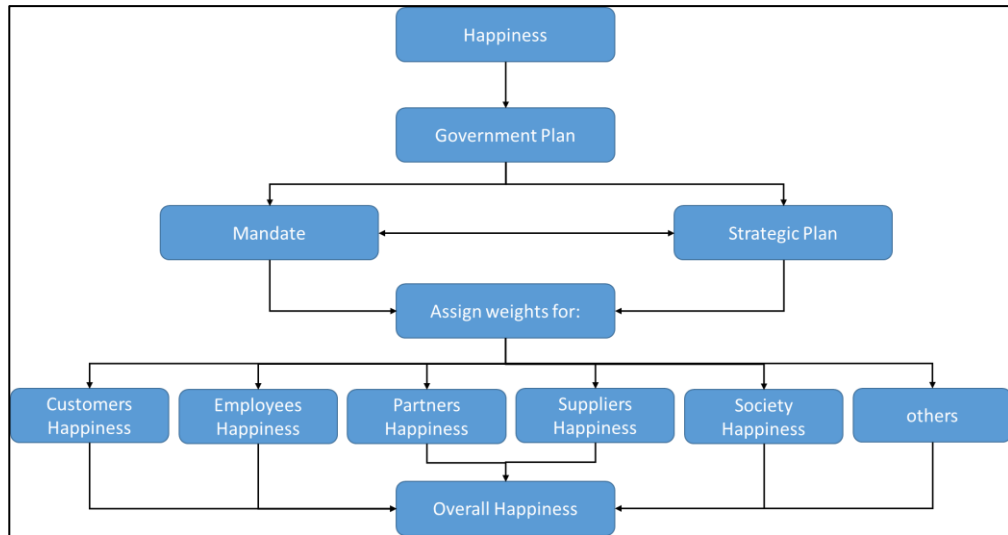
Figure 5.3: Overall Happiness Proposed Model (Source: The Researcher)

The purpose of the above framework is to help organizations in three ways: (1) cater to the preference of all entities that prefer to measure the overall satisfaction of all stakeholders and express them in one figure, (2) assign weights for each stakeholder's category based on its mandate, and the directions in the strategic plan that are aligned with the government plan, and (3) encourage the government entities to measure satisfaction at different times over the year, not at the same time every year; this will achieve a more concise result.

5.2.3 Core Business-Oriented Model

This theme is considered new in the literature, as it has not been discussed in the context of the excellence models. Furthermore, the assessment is done by SMEs in the organization field, considering the mandate and roles and responsibilities of the organization itself in the assessment and focusing on the core services and processes, more so than the previous model. It incorporates new concepts, such as achieving the vision of Dubai/UAE, 'seven stars,' innovation management and future shaping, project management, and sustainability. This benefit is not mentioned in the literature because the GEM is the first model globally to be designed for the government sector and focuses on the core business (activities) for the assessment. Zairi (2019), Bowe (2019), and Al Zaabi (2019) mentioned the uniqueness of this model for the government of the UAE. All the other excellence models globally do not involve SMEs in the assessment process. However, many researchers studied the excellence model in different sectors, such as healthcare (Mesgari et al., 2017; Nabitzet al., 2000), the textile industry (Pop and Pelau, 2017), the public sector (Raharjo et al.,

2015), the banking sector (Al-Marri et al., 2007), government (Peng and Prybutok, 2012), the service industry (Al-Refaie et al., 2012), the automotive industry (Curkovic et al., 2000), the educational field (Calvo-Mora et al., 2005; Farrar, 2000), and the financial sector (Beikzad et al., 2012). Although this theme was considered a key benefit for the model, the data analysis shows that many points should be considered and checked to retain this as a benefit for all government entities:

1) The assessors do not adequately cover the core business of organizations.
2) The assessors' knowledge of the local government plan and the alignment with the organization's strategy.

To tackle these points, three teams are proposed to assess the organizations, as shown in the following frameworks (Figure 5.4):
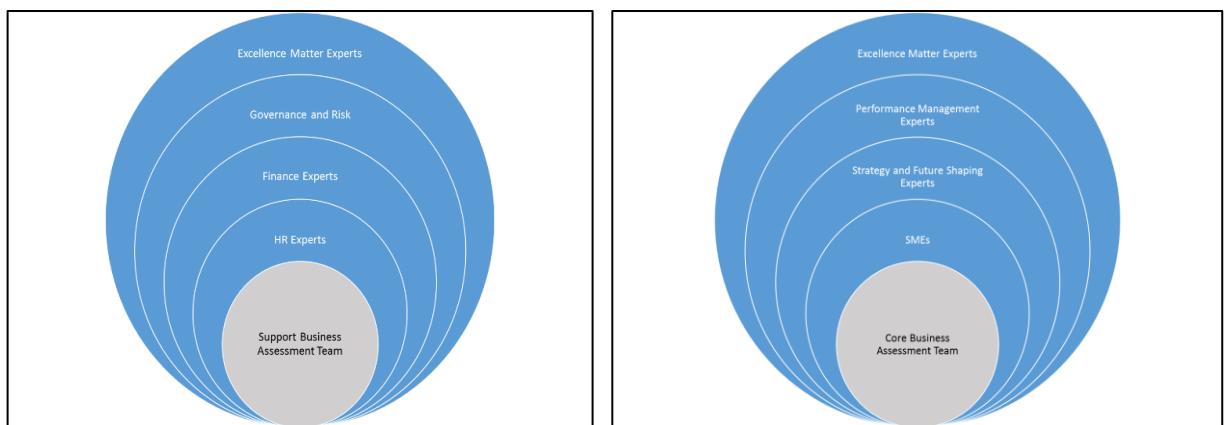
Figure 5.4: Proposed Teams to Assess GEM (Source: The Researcher)

The purpose of the above frameworks is to make the assessment easy and rigorous. The change is suggested to solve the current issues in the model assessment process. The objective of having 'excellence matter experts' in both teams is to help them efficiently complete the assessment process, for example, by writing the feedback reports, setting the scores, guaranteeing the connections with all criteria, and simplifying the assessment process. Finally, the excellence matter expert in both teams should be the same person.

5.2.4 National Agenda/Government Plan

One of the ten principles of the UAE GEM is 'total alignment.' The benefit of implementing the excellence model in the UAE is aligning organizations' strategic plans with the government plan/national agenda; this helps the organizations link their initiatives/projects with the overall government plan. This theme is considered new in the literature, as it has not been discussed in the context of the excellence models. However, Flynn and Saladin (2006) recommended countries develop their own excellence models and awards and align them with their government directions and environment. Furthermore, some articles focused on the strategy criterion in other models but with different perspectives, such as Escrig and de Menezes (2016), Abdullah et al. (2012), Husain et al. (2001), and Abdullah, Husain, and Nik Hassan (2008). The structure of all the previous models did not consider the country's overall directions or the national agenda for the country itself. This theme was viewed as a key benefit for the model, but the data analysis

of this theme shows that many points need to be considered and checked to maintain it as a benefit for all government entities:

1) The alignment with the national agenda/government plan is not clear for all entities.
2) The contributions of all entities to the national agenda/government plan are debatable.

Figure 5.5: Strategic Directions Proposed Model (Source: The Researcher)

The proposed solution is to merge four criteria (government plan/national agenda, future-shaping, the entity's strategic plan, and project management) into one criterion, strategic directions, which should be assessed by SMEs and experts in strategy and performance (Figure 5.5).

5.2.5 Recognition

The government entities implementing this model attain many types of recognition, such as winning the award; financial rewards for employees within the organizations; and non-financial rewards, such as an enhanced reputation and image locally and internationally. Furthermore, studies differ regarding whether winning the award should be a target for entities (Dubby, 2016; Ghobadian and Hong, 1996). The UAE leadership largely recognizes the importance of the excellence model. Government leaders are incentivized to implement the excellence model and strive to improve the performance of entities because they are desirous of winning the award, as it brings great prestige to themselves and their organizations. Many researchers, such as Saraiva (2019), and Bow (2019), supported this.

The literature emphasized recognition as one of the benefits of the excellence models. Recognition will be highly beneficial to the winning organization from different angles, such as improving the reputation and image of the entity (Escrig-Tena et al., 2019; Gomez et al., 2016; Heras et al., 2006; La Rotta and Rave, 2017). Although this theme was considered a key motivation for the model, the data analysis of this theme shows that many points should be considered and checked to make it a motivation for all government entities:

1) The culture of winning is more pronounced than the culture of improvement.

2) The importance of internal recognition and different perceptions of recognition among the levels of employees within the organization (leaders, directors, managers, team leaders, and employees).

A new proposed model (see Figure 5.6) for recognition is recommended to all government entities, as follows: the new scheme of recognition should be based on two factors: (1) the overall target, which is determined based on the contribution of the entity in the government plan, and (2) the results of the last two cycles and the targets for each criterion, which are determined based on the importance of the criterion aligned with the government directions and the results of the previous two cycles. The reason for proposing this new scheme is to encourage a culture of improvement and recognition, at the same time, and increase the recognition of small- and medium-sized organizations, which appears to be excluded from the recognition concept in most of the previous cycles.
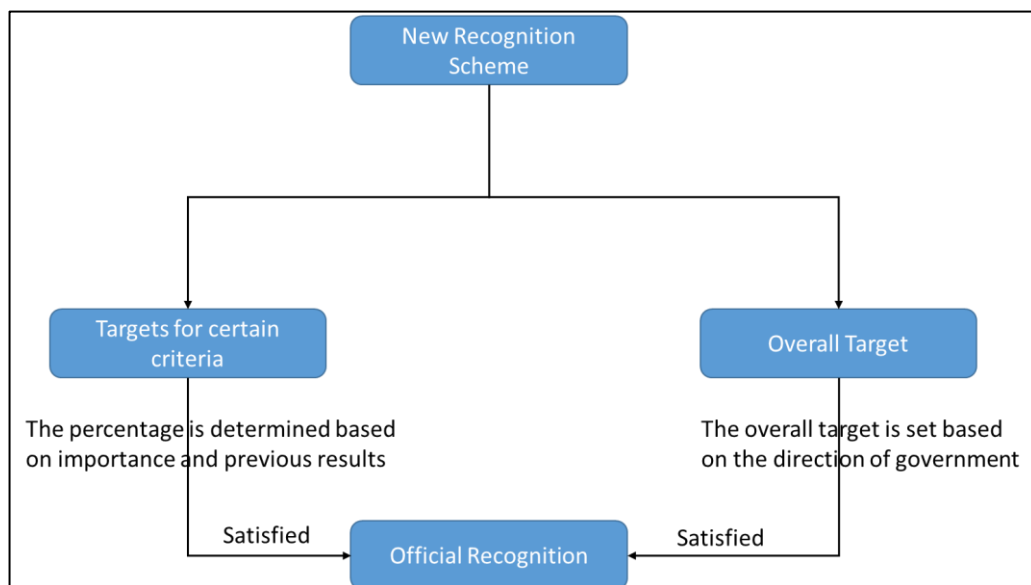
Figure 5.6: New Recognition Scheme for GEM (Source: The Researcher)

5.3 Research Question 2: Critical Success Factors – Discussion

Although different CSFs were presented by several researchers in this field, it is suggested that each organization must know its CSFs to benefit from the excellence model and adapt it to sustain overall performance. Some researchers suggest that different factors might affect the CSFs that each organization must determine to achieve a successful experience in using the model. This suggests that CSFs could be different across many organizations depending on certain factors, such as organizational type, size, stakeholder relationship, working environment, and the complexity of the organization. The question that needs to be addressed regarding this new model is: What CSFs might be suitable for government entities that implement a unique model of excellence?
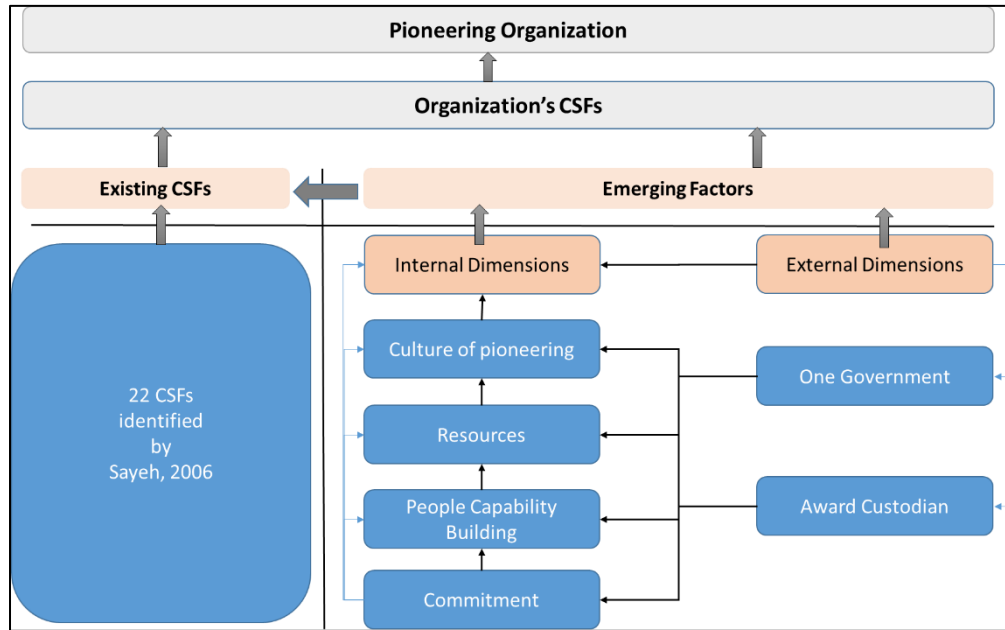
Figure 5.7: Existing and Emerging CSFs (Source: The Researcher)

Under this RQ, three themes were considered completely new: a culture of pioneering, one government, and an award custodian. The other three themes (resources, people capability building, and commitment) were discussed in the literature. The illustration of the internal and external dimensions is shown in the following section. However, many CSFs that were discussed in the literature were not mentioned by the respondents, and therefore, common CSFs that were extracted from the literature were added to the previous model see (Figure 5.7) to allow all government entities to prioritize the important ones as per their requirements. The data analysis does not show which of the CSFs is more important than the others; this needs more elaboration and study by the entity and the award custodian. The model also shows a new direction not present in the literature: sharing responsibilities between the government, award custodian, and the government entity in enforcing these CSFs within the organizations.

The CSFs that were discussed might include other important aspects, such as information and data, stakeholder expectations, services and products, new technology trends, continuous improvement, sustainability, performance management system, self-assessment, and the role of excellence/quality units. This is why the previous sub-framework was developed, considering that each entity should identify its CSFs based on their excellence maturity; it proposed existing CSFs developed by Sayeh (2006), which would be beneficial for the government entity to start with.

5.3.1 Culture of Pioneering

Respondents differed regarding whether this theme is considered a CSF, challenge, or even an obstacle. However, all the responses were focused on how to build a CoE and pioneering to achieve the objectives of the model. The components of this theme are a CoE, corporate culture, and employee culture. This theme helps the government entities to build a CoE, or enhance it, as the main factor in effectively implementing

the excellence model or the way the government of the UAE wants it to be implemented. NQAs are the basic tool for improving organizational performance and promoting a quality and excellent culture. Regarding the excellence models, most practitioners advise organizations to build a CoE if they want to achieve the highest benefits from the implementation of excellence.

The theme is new to the literature, as it was not mentioned directly in other studies. However, few articles discussed the CoE with a correlation to the excellence models. Rezaei et al. (2018) searched the term 'culture of excellence' and found that it is a new concept. Moreover, they searched for the term in the Web of Science and Scopus databases and found only limited conceptual and empirical works on CoE. This was also shown by other researchers, such as Trivellas and Dargenidou (2009), Durst and Edvardsson (2012), and Antony and Bhattacharyya (2010). Moreover, the literature has different definitions for CoE (Arasli, 2012; Bin Abdul Rahman, Voon, and Abdullah, 2014; Mega, 2003; Mintrom, 2014; Wardell, 2010). Espín et al. (2022) claimed that no empirical studies were found in the literature to determine what type of culture is the best to adopt for implementing the excellence model in organizations. However, the most recent article that discussed the CoE, Provance et al. (2021), concluded that different obstacles exist when building an excellence model in-house, such as financial, top management, and the workforce. They suggested that the 'people side' in entities is the most vital element in building a CoE. Indeed, Urick et al. (2018) proposed that social challenges related to how people interact are crucial too.

In the last 22 years, the UAE government sector invested a lot in building a CoE within entities; however, the new model requires more investment to build a culture of pioneering. Pioneering is the key element of the model, with all entities striving to be pioneers globally, as the UAE decided to be a leading country in the region in various sectors, such as business, banking, economics, and services. This theme was considered a key success factor for the model; however, from the data analysis, the following points should be considered and checked to overcome any issues related to this theme within government entities:

1) The importance of measuring the culture of pioneering and excellence within the organizations to implement the GEM effectively.
2) The role of the award custodian in assisting the organizations in building a CoE.
3) What are the major categories that a culture of pioneering should consist of?

'TQM and EFQM model require different organizational cultures for their successful application' (Espín et al. 2022, p. 20). Based on this, the following model (Figure 5.8) illustrates the categories that should be adopted to build a culture of pioneering in the public sector:
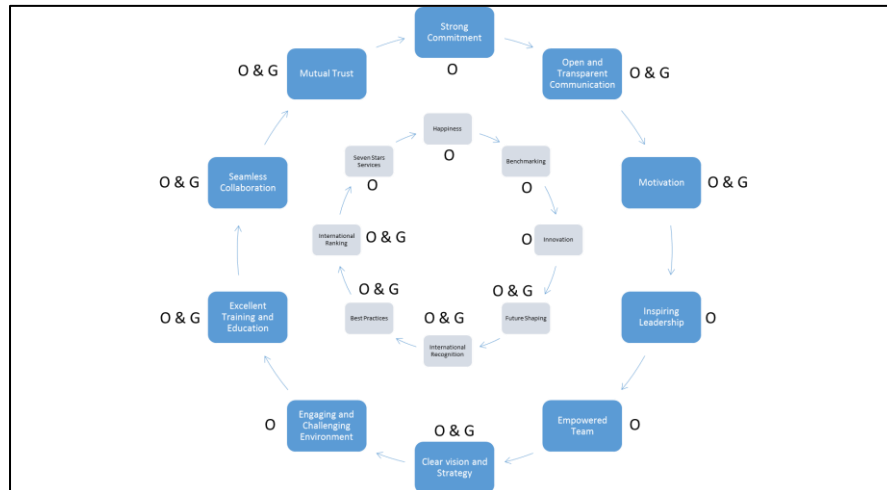
Figure 5.8: How to Build a Culture of Pioneering (Source: The Researcher)

The outside ten categories are based on Rezaei et al. (2015), and the inside eight categories were added to suit the requirement of the new excellence model, which will help organizations to become pioneers. The modified framework (Figure 18) also assigns responsibilities for each category, which is either solely by the organization (O) or by both the organization and the government (O&G).

5.3.2 Commitment

Commitment is considered a vital internal key success factor to make the model a success. Most respondents asserted that commitment would be key in effectively implementing the GEM. The commitment theme extracted from the interviews was from different organizational layers, including a commitment from top management, department directors and managers, section managers, and employees. Some of the respondents confirmed that the main key players for the effective implementation of the excellence model in the UAE are the section/unit managers because this staff level is normally responsible for implementing the requirements of the model.

This theme was considered a CSF in the implementation of the excellence model by many researchers. The GEM is designed as a unique model with the commitment from leadership to the importance of achieving/sustaining the required results to be pioneering globally (Zairi, 2019). Many researchers mentioned the commitment or support from different levels of the organizations (e.g., Angell and Corbett, 2013; Brown, 2013; Ismail, 2009; Lasrado, 2017; Suáreza et al., 2017; Tari, 2010). In brief, Para-González et al. (2021) summarized the findings when they studied the excellence model, concluding that the positive impact of leadership and strategy on human resources enhances the overall performance of organizations.

Commitment is vital in this model, as the implementation requirements are different from other excellence models. Based on the findings of this research, the model requires a change in the way the organization functions. The data analysis of this theme shows that many points should be considered and checked to overcome the issues related to this theme within all government entities:

1) How should one get commitment from different levels in the organizations?
2) Who are the most important employees that need to be committed to the model to implement the model effectively?

Although commitment is important from all levels of employees within any organization, this study found that organizations must determine which level of employees is more important than others to ensure the effective implementation of the model that leads to the desired results. The framework shows that section/unit managers/heads represent the staff level, which is most important to implement the model effectively. The following models (Figure 5.9) show the different kinds of commitment important to any organization.
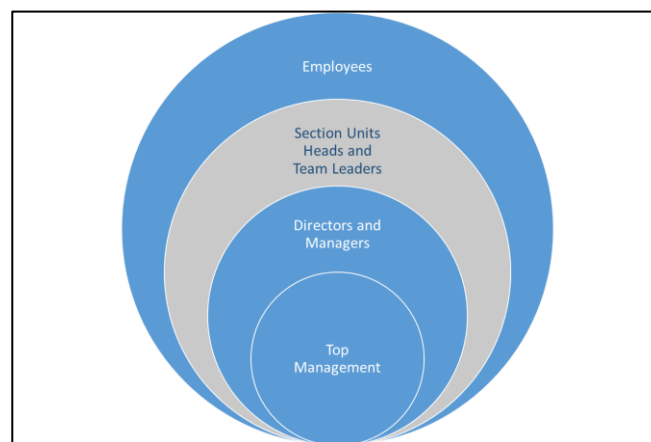
Figure 5.9: Types of Required Commitments (Source: The Researcher)

5.3.3 Resources

The focus was on three aspects of resources to express their importance in making this model a success in government organizations: technology, human, and financial resources. The focus on human resources was mainly in the excellence field; respondents raised this issue as large organizations might have more specialized excellence staff than other entities. Thus, these entities are doing much better regarding the implementation of the new model. The second resource is financial; the respondents agreed that this should cover the incentives for not only the employees but also the projects that make the organization a pioneer globally, which leads the government to be a leader globally. The third resource is technology; this would support the implementation of the GEM in the organizations. The technology should support the managerial tasks that are important to the government, such as performance management systems, assessment processes, benchmarking, and strategic planning. One of the main reasons for implementing the model is to optimize resources. Some researchers in the literature focused on resources as having a vital role that could affect the implementation of the excellence model (Ahire et al., 1996; Angell and Corbett, 2013; Cortis U., 2006; Jacob et al., 2004; Soltani et al., 2005). In addition, some researchers pointed out the importance of resources and classified them, such as financial resources (Gomez et al., 2017; Shaker and

Paul, 2016) and human resources (Al-Marri et al., 2007).

The data analysis of this theme shows that many facets should be considered and checked to overcome the issues related to this theme within all government entities:

1) What is the relation between the size of organizations and the resources needed to implement the model?
2) What is the effect of 'limited resources' in achieving the objectives of the excellence model?

The following framework (Figure 5.10) illustrates what organizations must do to check if resources affect the implementation of the excellence model:
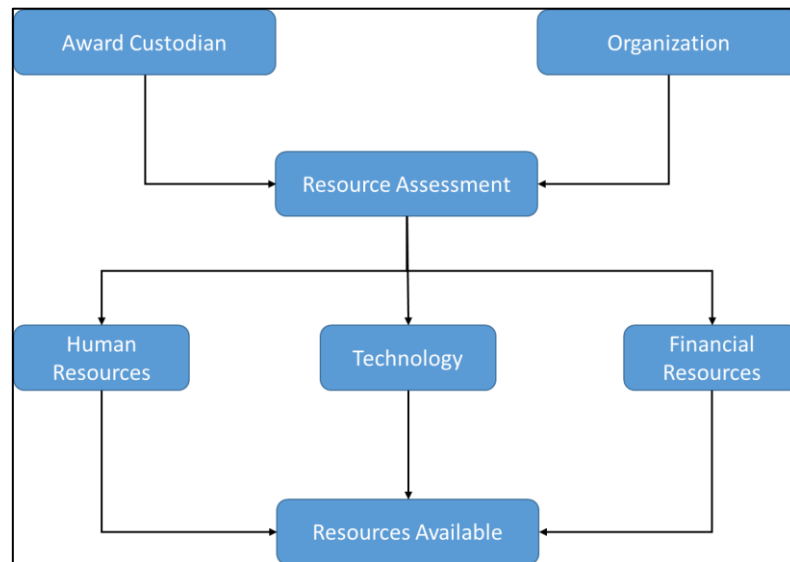
Figure 5.10: Effect of Resources on GEM Implementation (Source: The Researcher)

5.3.4 Building People Capability

Most comments suggest that building people's capabilities is key to effectively implementing the excellence model. The investment in the employees is considered key in the implementation process of the excellence model: training programs, education, awareness, and having specialized employees in certain areas.

This theme is mainly focused on how to build people's capability within government entities to implement the new excellence model. The discussion was focused on the new directions of the model, such as innovation, future-shaping, benchmarking techniques, smart government, seven-star services, and happiness. Each of these is discussed in the literature separately, with no direct link to the excellence models. Many researchers focused on human capability building as the main reason for the effective implementation of the excellence model (Abdallah et al., 2013; Matthies-Baraibar et al., 2014; Para-González et al., 2015; Terouhid and Ries, 2016; Zapata-Cantu et al., 2016). Although Gómez-López et al. (2019) stated that few articles studied how the excellence models build people's capabilities, they listed

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two articles that mentioned this model would help to improve the training for staff: George et al. (2003) and Heras–Saizarbitoria et al. (2011). This is compatible with the findings from a PhD dissertation by Fontes (2016), who found that the excellence training and development programs for employees in organizations will make them interested in the deployment of excellence model activities.

The data analysis of this theme shows that the following points should be considered and checked to overcome the issues related to this theme within all government entities:

1) New programs must be continuously developed to understand the major requirements of the model: innovation, future-shaping, governance, pioneering, smart cities, and leadership.
2) The role of the award custodian in assisting the entities in understanding new trends globally.

The following model (Figure 5.11) will help organizations to implement the excellence model effectively.
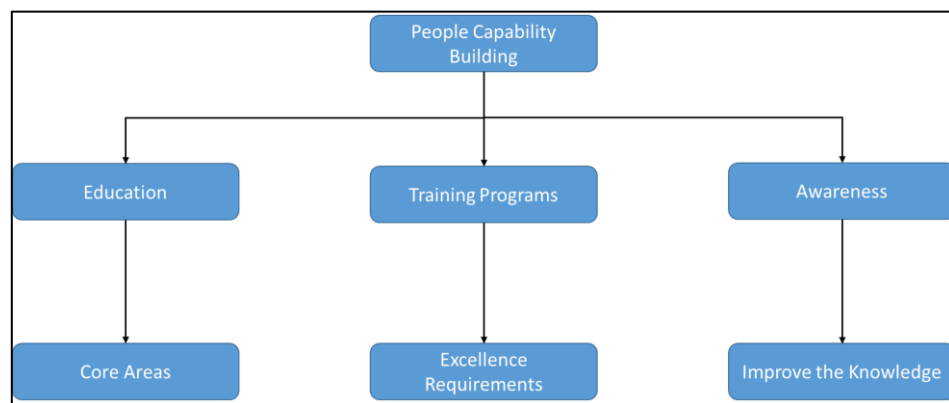
Figure 5.11: How to Build the Capability of People Inside the Organizations (Source: The Researcher)

5.3.5 One Government

This theme focused on different levels of collaboration and coordination among all government entities in the UAE to achieve the country's national agenda. These include: sharing best practices, resources, benchmarking, enhancing shares services, achieving the competitiveness index targets, joint projects and initiatives, and training and development programs. The importance of this theme comes from the way the model was designed and developed. Although this theme was considered a key success factor for the model, the data analysis of shows that many of the following points should be considered and checked to overcome the issues related to this theme within all government entities:

1) What does 'one government' mean to all entities? In addition, how should one implement it?
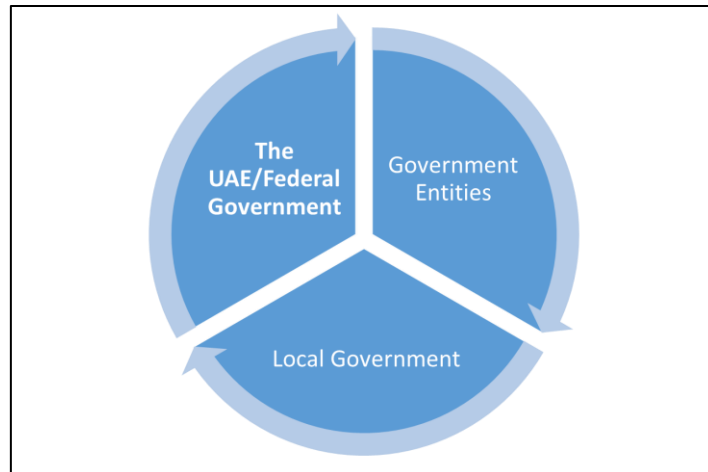
Figure 5.12: One Government Model (Source: The Researcher)

This theme should be elaborated on in three levels, as per the above model (Figure 5.12):

Level 1: Government Entities
This means that collaboration and coordination between the entities in the government is important and considered a reason for making this model a success. The government entities should focus on the following:

1) Increasing the level of partnership among them to achieve the government plan, in general, and each entity's plan, in particular.

2) Sharing of knowledge and best practices.

Level 2: Local Government

1) Many assessments have been conducted over the years for different programs in the local government; it seems harmony and collaboration are aspects that need to be studied.

2) Respondents stated that the entity should know exactly what its contribution is to the government strategic plan; collaboration with other entities in achieving certain strategic objectives in the government plan should be improved.

Level 3: The UAE/Federal Government
The respondents discussed two main aspects at this level:

1) As discussed in RQ1, one of the benefits of this model is being a pioneer, and another major theme, the 'culture of pioneering', is discussed in RQ2. A few comments suggest that the focus of government entities in the UAE should be on achieving competitiveness index targets, which requires collaboration between all entities in the UAE. Moreover, the roles of entities in all indexes are important to be determined.

2) Although the model was designed and developed by the federal government and then implemented in other local governments, the local award custodians started making changes to their models without collaboration with one other; this resulted in differing models, which goes against the main purpose of the model.

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5.3.6 Award Custodian

There was a discussion regarding the role of the award custodian in the development and implementation of the excellence model in the UAE. The following model (Figure 5.13) explains the roles of award custodians that affect the implementation of the excellence model in government entities.
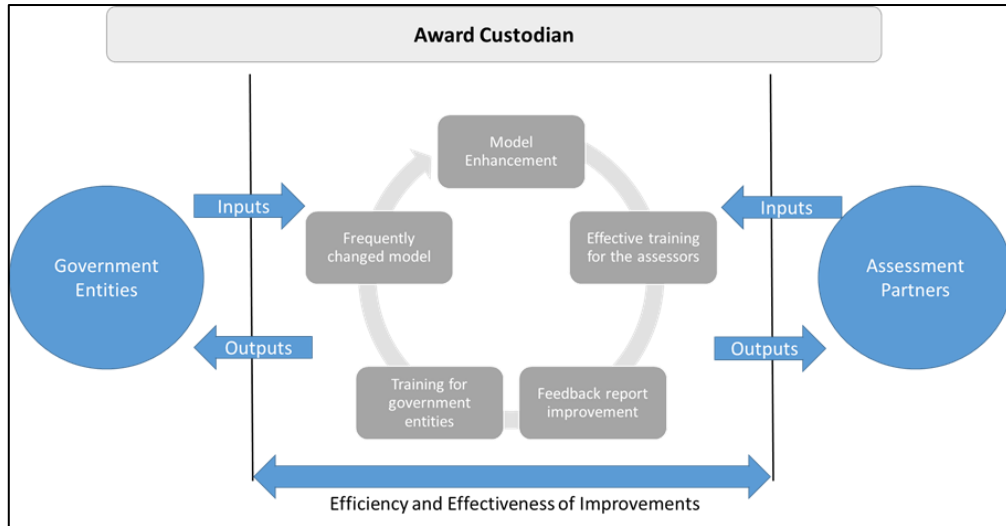
Figure 5.13: Role of Award Custodian (Source: The Researcher)

The purpose of the model is to identify how and where the award custodian's roles lie in the implementation of the excellence model. The five main responsibilities should always start with collecting feedback from government entities and the assessment partners (assessors, the government, and the organizations who are considered as part of the assessment, such as the smart government, department/ministry of finance, and legal affairs). The award custodian would also assess the output in collaboration with all concerned entities to check its effectiveness and efficiency. This theme is new to the literature, as no researchers have investigated it in-depth. A few points addressed recently by Hammad et al. (2020) were the role of award custodians in reviewing the weight of the criteria, the use of a dynamic approach to assign variable weights where applicable, and the design criteria based on the new trends of issues and concepts related to the job nature of government organizations and that align with their strategic directions. Ghafoor et al. (2021) recommended an approach for award custodians to review the excellence models: the stakeholders' involvement, the scope of the review, the frequency of the review, and the process of review. The next chapter will elaborate more on this area and award custodians' exact role in improving the excellence framework's overall management.

5.3.7 Overarching Comparison and Contrast of the Outcomes of RQ2 with previous related CSFs

Table 5.1 summarizes the comparison and contrast of three main pieces of research: Al Ghulfi (2012), Al Zawati et al. (2020), and the current study referred to as 'Abu Laban' with respect to five parameters.

Table 5.1 Summarizes the Comparison and Contrast of the Three Main Research Pieces

Parameter	Al Ghulfi	Al Zawati et al.	Abu Laban
Scope	Government sector	Government sector	Government sector (The UAE)
Limited scope	Abu Dhabi Police	Not clearly mentioned in the research but mainly in Dubai	Covered the implementation of GEM in three areas Dubai, Abu Dhabi, and the federal government
Model	BEM (EFQM)	GEM	GEM
Research method	A mixed-methods approach	ISM and Fuzzy MICMAC methodology	Qualitative method
Sample size	Questionnaire survey of 300 employees and 25 interviews with top managers and BEM implementation team members	A panel of 10 experts	19 senior experts/consultants, managers/specialists
Findings	18 factors affecting the implementation of excellence models in the public sector.	28 CSFs selected to be researched for the new excellence model.	6 groups of key themes covering a variety of CSFs, three of them considered new to the literature.

The following lists the main similarities and differences between the three pieces of research.

1. Scope, model, and limited scope

   The scope of the study for the three pieces of research is similar, as they covered what CSFs are needed to ensure the effective implementation of the excellence models in the government sector. Ghulfi (2012) focused mainly on the previous model of excellence, as the new model launched three years after his study was published and was based mainly on the old EFQM model, only taking on one government entity in the UAE, in Abu Dhabi. Al Zawati et al. (2020) is a more recent study that investigated 27 CSFs in the literature, and one new factor was added to suit the public sector of Dubai (a total of 28 CSFs) regarding the adoption of a new excellence model (GEM) after one complete cycle of implementation in the UAE. They focused mainly on Dubai for the study. Abu Laban (2022) focused on implementing the GEM in three government levels (Dubai, Abu Dhabi, and the federal entities), with a wider scope than the other two studies. Abu Laban's research covered two full cycles of implementation of the new excellence model; this is an advantage, as the interviewees had more experience adopting the GEM.

2. Research method and sample size

   The three studies used different research methods to close the gaps in the literature. Ghulfi (2012) used a mixed-method approach (qualitative and quantitative) to identify the CSFs in the public sector. He surveyed around 300 employees in Abu Dhabi Police, along with 25 managers and excellence model team members. Al Zawati et al. (2020) used ISM and Fuzzy MICMAC methodology and a panel of 12 experts to identify, arrange, and prioritise the composite relationships among different variables in a system. Abu Laban (2022) used a qualitative method and interviewed 19 managers/experts/consultants

working in Dubai, Abu Dhabi, and the federal authorities.

3. Findings and conclusions

Ghulfi (2012) developed a conceptual roadmap for implementing the excellence model. The 18 CSFs were categorized into three stages: commitment, implementation, and measurement and sustainability. Each factor plays an important role in the implementation process. Ghulfi suggested that gaining top management commitment and support is important to implement the excellence model. Al Zawati et al. (2020) strongly agreed with Ghulfi (2012) that the first main driver out of the 28 CSFs in their research is leadership commitment. They built an ISM-based model for CSFs and observed that the second driving variable is the organization's culture. Abu Laban (2022) grouped the most important CSFs with respect to the GEM and extracted them directly from the excellent experts/specialists/consultants working within the organizations implementing the GEM. These groups are divided into two dimensions, internal and external, which is considered a new concept. Resources, people capabilities, and commitment align with the other two studies. However, the main differences are that this study introduced three new themes to the literature: one government, award custodian, and culture of pioneering. The model is new to the public sector with different requirements, so it should have new CSFs and not just depend on the literature. Section 5.3 illustrates in detail all CSFs found in this study and how to implement them in the public sector. Each main theme (CSFs) consists of many sub-factors that are also important to implementing GEM.

In summary, the three studies have some similarities and achieved strong findings and conclusions that are new to the literature and help implement the GEM. However, the current study (Abu Laban, 2022) found new themes important for the implementation of the new and unique model in the UAE and, at the same time, found CSFs similar to the ones found by the other two research studies. This study did not simply blindly incorporate previous CSFs in the literature with respect to old excellence models but instead studied their importance, interrelationships among them, and the impact of the excellence model. In addition, this study searched for new CSFs that did not previously exist in the literature and are useful to the success of the adoption of the GEM in the three different government levels (Dubai, Abu Dhabi, and the federal authorities).

5.4 Research Question 3: Obstacles, Barriers, and Challenges – Discussion

The findings of this RQ were grouped into three emerging themes: assessment process, benchmarking, and size and work nature of the organization. 'Assessment process' is considered new to the literature, and the other two were discussed in the literature but in different contexts. The findings show that the four stakeholders in the excellence model (government, assessors, award custodians, and government entities) should work together to overcome the barriers in the new model and the challenges that already exist in the model.

However, the obstacles/barriers and challenges discussed do not include aspects like 'the best way to implement the model', organizational changes, and 'how to improve a small- and medium-sized organization' in relation to the implementation of the excellence model.

5.4.1 Assessment Process

The following framework (Figure 5.14) shows the issues the government entities faced while implementing the excellence model.

Figure 5.14: Issues of the Assessment Process (Source: The Researcher)

The main question is: 'What needs to be improved in the assessment process? Who is responsible for that?' The award custodian must ensure the availability of the following to ensure the model will be a success and solve the issues related to the assessment process:

1) Assessors' skills in the excellence model
2) Assessors' knowledge of the excellence model
3) The implementation of the assessment tool
4) The maturity of the feedback report
5) The suitability of the assessment tool

The government entities and the assessors must provide regular feedback on three aspects:

1) The duration of the assessment
2) The submission process
3) The effectiveness of the assessment tool

The assessors (the four teams of the assessment) must plan for the assessment in advance and agree with the award custodian and the government entity on the scope of the assessment within the specified duration of the assessment. This will solve the issue raised by some respondents that the assessors do not cover all areas of the organizations. They should provide the organization with structured reports containing the best practices to be implemented based on the assessment tool in the model.

This theme is new to the literature, as no researchers have investigated it. Suárez et al. (2017), La Rotta and Rave (2017), Doelemana et al. (2014), and Kim et al. (2010) studied all types of research conducted on the excellence models, investigated the excellence models in the literature, and summarized all the research articles in the literature related to the excellence models (see Chapter 2: Literature Review). By analysing the results and findings from the four articles, this theme does not seem to have been researched in the journey of the excellence model implementation. However, Mann et al. (2011) recommended some future work for the award custodian or award administrator to focus on. These recommendations are related to the award process, such as feedback report(s); the publicity surrounding the award; guidelines for submitting the award applications; assessor training; and opportunities for both assessors and applicants to suggest an improvement. Al Zawati et al. (2018) also emphasized the need for more research on understanding the effect of the qualifications, expertise, and training of the assessors on the outcomes of the assessment. They concluded that the research in this area is lacking, as they clearly stated, 'Our findings also call for research on the relationship between the assessment tools, assessors training, and feedback quality, in addition to the impact of assessors, training on assessment outcomes.' (Al Zawati et al., 2018, p. 176).

5.4.2 Size and Work Nature of the Organization

The literature contains a long debate regarding this for the other excellence models. The same point was raised for the new model in the UAE for two reasons: (1) the assessors cannot cover the whole scope of organizations during the assessment, and (2) whether the model works for all kinds of organizations, irrespective of size and nature. The award custodian considers the work nature of the organization when they distribute the weights in Pillar 1 (vision achievement). Furthermore, the weight for the second criterion (main task) is also distributed among the sub-criteria but based on the mandate and the work nature of the organization. This is usually done owing to an agreement between the award custodian and the entity itself. Regarding the size of organizations, and as discussed in the duration and frequency of the assessment theme, the number of assessors and duration of assessments are discussed with the organizations before the assessment; however, this is debatable based on the findings.

The founder or creator of all the excellence models/awards claims that the model can be implemented at any type of organization irrespective of its size and location. The impacts of size on the implementation of excellence models are not researched sufficiently in the literature (Escrig and de Menezes, 2016), Wilkes and Dale (1998) found that small- and medium-sized enterprises are aware of excellence models, but the benefits and fruits of implementation are not fully recognized. Machado et al. (2020) concluded that small- and medium-sized enterprises need to work hard to implement the excellence models in correct, effective, and efficient ways to obtain the benefits of the model.

The level of adoption of excellence models by small- and medium-sized enterprises might interest researchers. Wei and JuanLi (2013), Dahlgaard, Chen, Jang, Dahlgaard-Park, and Banegas (2013), and Calvo-Mora et al. (2015) indicated that the size and work nature of the organizations are important factors in the implementation of the model; however, these studies do not explain the relationship between the application of excellence models and the size of the entities. In addition, Escrig and de Menezes (2016) found that the excellence model criteria seem to be generally implemented in any type of organization irrespective of the size but, at the same time, the size of the entity may affect the other criteria adoption in the model; this is clear when it comes to the results caused by the enablers. The work nature of the organization, as explained by Theme 3 (core business) in Part 2, raised some points about the benefits of the model and the type of organization in each sector that should be further elaborated. The question that stems from this analysis is how one should balance the organization's size and the business's work nature in adopting the excellence model in the UAE.

The award custodian might have different requirements in the same model that are suitable for different sizes and work natures of organizations, as shown in the following model (Figure 5.15):
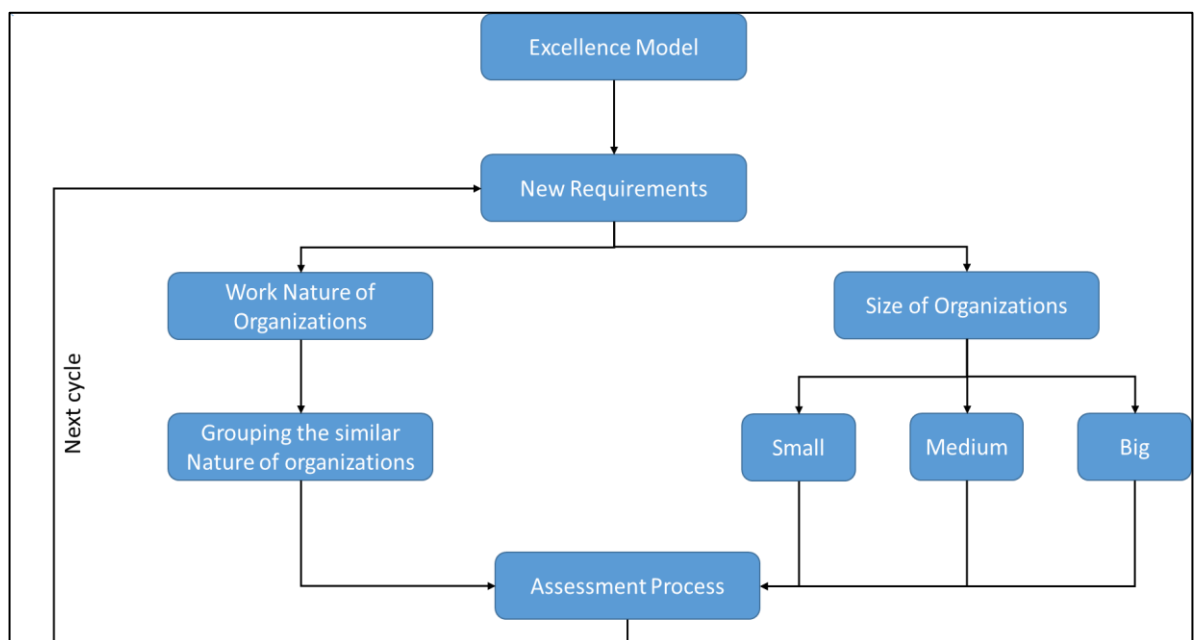
Figure 5.15: GEM and Size and Work Nature of Organizations (Source: The Researcher)

The above model recommends that the award custodian (1) have new requirements in the model each cycle

for different sizes and work natures of organizations and (2) set targets for each organization every cycle. The new requirements should depend on the new global trends in the organization's field in the context of core and support businesses.

5.4.3 Benchmarking

Benchmarking is considered to be at the heart of the model. This theme is one of the most important factors in the model, as it is vital for achieving one of the main objectives of the model: 'Acquiring a competitive advantage and leading position'. The first important task to achieve a leading position is to do a benchmark to ascertain where the country stands regarding some competitiveness indices, in general, and regarding some key results and practices, in particular. Most comments suggest that this theme is important to achieve the objectives of being a pioneer.

The GEM is the standard and benchmark for the performance of government agencies in the country. A few articles were published about the GEM in the context of the UAE, such as Saraiva (2019), Bowe (2019), and Al Zaabi (2019). They focused on the importance of benchmarking in the model, as the main objective is to achieve and sustain the country's pioneering position at a global level. The GEM is based on comparisons with world-class organizations and raises the UAE's ranking position in global competitiveness indexes.

This theme is prevalent throughout, with some respondents saying it is a key success factor that must be implemented to make this model a success. Some considered it an obstacle to overcome, and others considered it a challenge. The same finding was in the literature itself. Al-Marri et al. (2007), Saunders et al. (2008), and Ismail (2009) reported it as a success factor and the main reason for adopting BE. Some studies, such as Rajashekhar (2009), considered it a barrier or obstacle. Other researchers, like Rodney et al. (2013), considered it a benefit. A recent article that discussed benchmarking as a key challenge was written regarding Jordan by Shaker and Paul (2016).

The main questions are: how should one address issues, like benchmarking, in the government? What are the roles of all stakeholders? What are the difficulties? And finally, what is the priority of benchmarking? Figure 5.16 illustrates how benchmarking can be managed in the model.
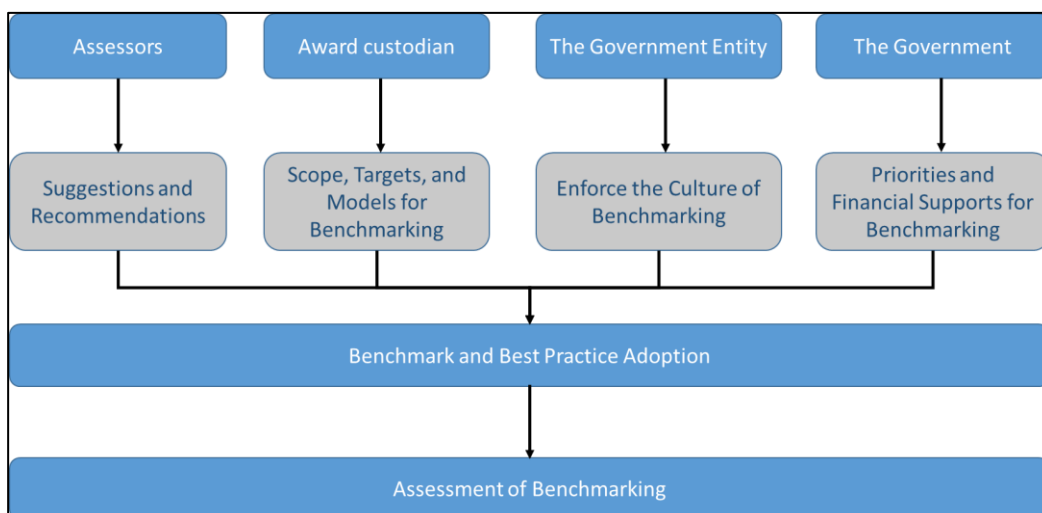
Figure 5.16: Benchmarking in the GEM (Source: The Researcher)

Figure 5.16 explains the roles of all parties in making benchmarking a success. It identifies the new assessment trends, like setting targets for each entity on what and how to benchmark to align with the government's priorities in achieving the competitiveness index targets. This requires a strong assessment process; the assessors should also provide feedback and recommendations for doing this continuous exercise.

This chapter is structured in such a way that each theme is presented and explored in a systematic and structured approach that followed six key steps:

1) List the key themes for each RQ
2) Introduce each theme
3) Present key theme vs literature themes
4) Explain the key theme in the context of the UAE excellence model
5) Present a summary for each theme
6) Propose and discuss the framework for each theme to tackle the drawbacks of the themes considering the viewpoints of the respondents

In summary, the model depends on four stakeholders to succeed: the government, the government entity/organization, the award custodian(s), and the assessors. The excellence model should reflect a focus on becoming a pioneer worldwide, and more attention should be given by the organization/entity to concentrate on this during the implementation of the model. 'Pioneering' cannot be achieved if the four stakeholders do not collaborate effectively. The government is doing well in focusing on the main two happiness categories (customers and employees), but more effort should be put into measuring the overall happiness in the same organization, which reflects the overall performance of the government. The assessment should be done to cover the main/most important mandate for each organization/entity to reach the pioneering level that the government desires, which requires changing the assessment process, team, and approach. The contribution of government entities/organizations to the national agenda/local

government strategic plan should be the priority for the government to unify all the efforts from all the entities, whether at the local or federal level. The recognition of pioneering entities deserves a different approach to ensure that collaboration and cooperation are present and the integration of resources is achieved among the entities applying the model. The government should invest more in evolving how government entities work by focusing on 'pioneering' and excellence at equal levels. The organizations should address the best level that supports the implementation of the excellence model and build the capabilities of people within the organization to ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of the model implementation. Resources are always considered a key success factor for implementing the excellence model, but more in-depth studies should be commissioned by the government and award custodians to share resources to achieve the concept of 'one government'. The award custodian should take more roles and responsibilities in helping the organizations in the benchmarking and strategic alignment processes by considering the organization size and work nature, then modify the model accordingly to achieve 'pioneering' at the country level.

Chapter 6 will present the conclusion and recommendations of the thesis. It will also focus on the structure of the thesis. The contributions of the current study will be discussed, and the link with the gaps in the literature will be presented. The limitations of this study and recommendations/directions for future research will be presented.

5.5 Objective Four: Discussion

The focus of this study, as mentioned in the previous chapters, was on the effective implementation of the new GEM in the UAE government sector, specifically in the government entities in Dubai, Abu Dhabi, and the federal government. This section shows how objective number four in Chapter 1, Section 1.7, is achieved.

5.5.1 Overall Innovative Excellence Model

To achieve the ambitious goal of the UAE to be among the top countries globally in several areas, the first stage was to design and implement an excellence model innovatively; therefore, the following framework (Figure 5.17) would help achieve this:

Figure 5.17: Overall Innovative Excellence Model (Source: The Researcher)

To explain the above framework simply: The country will determine the targeted competitiveness indices and the global ranking it considers 'pioneering'. The government will then develop the country's strategic plan based on these targets, and the government entities will align their strategic plans with it. The government will enforce the concept of 'one government', which means that cooperation and collaboration between all entities in the UAE are important and plays a vital role in making the country pioneering. Then, the award custodian (1) improves the excellence model criteria to align with the overall directions (pioneering objectives), (2) works together with the government entities in building a culture of pioneering and strengthening government employees' capabilities, (3) ensures the commitment from different staff levels, and (4) provides resources to achieve the objectives. The assessors would guarantee that the organizations (1) conduct regular benchmarking to learn from practices, (2) compare the results and capabilities with world-class organizations, and (3) provide feedback to both the award custodian and government entities to assess the position of the entity, in particular, and the countries, in general. The model enhancement would be based on the core business, size, and work nature of the organizations. The award custodian would work with the assessors in building capabilities and skills to help assess the model. The overall framework cannot be implemented without collaboration between the four main stakeholders, as shown in Figure 5.18.

Figure 5.18: Three Vertices of the Pioneering Organization Triangle (Source: The Researcher)

This is an integrated framework in which each party should focus on its roles to achieve the overall objective of the model. The following section illustrates these roles as extracted from the data analysis and findings and the discussion. The rationale of this framework came through an analysis of the themes with the four main stakeholders, as presented in Tables 5.1–5.14.

Table 5.2: Pioneering- Breakdown of Roles and Responsibility in the Excellence Model

Theme 1: Pioneering	
Award Custodian	• Enhance the model to suit the plan of the government to become pioneering in all areas. • Measure the effectiveness of the model in achieving this theme. • Include the actual competitiveness indexes for each government entity during the assessment with cooperation from the Government.
The Government Entities	• Build a culture of pioneering inside the entities. • Include the competitiveness of indexes in the strategic plans of the entity. • Benchmarking with leading organizations to achieve pioneering positions.
Model Assessors	• Check and assess the pioneering positions for government entities with respect to capabilities and results. • Advise on the best practices and benchmarking. • Present recommendations for pioneering positions.
The Government	• Define the roles of each entity in achieving the competitiveness indices. • Determine the contribution level of each entity. • Guarantee collaboration among all entities at the country's level. • Determine the priorities of being a pioneer at the country's level. • Share information among government departments. • Develop plans on how to become a pioneer and how to periodically do the follow-up.

Table 5.3: National Agenda/Government Plan- Breakdown of Roles and Responsibility in the Excellence Model

Theme 2: National Agenda/Government plan	
Award Custodian	• Measure the impact of the model on the national agenda/the government plan. • Enhance the model to show the alignment with all country's strategies.
The Government Entities	• Assure the alignment between their strategic plan on one side and with the national agenda on the other side. • Assure the alignment inside the entities with employees' objectives. • Build a culture of future shaping and strategic planning. • Propose shared/integrated projects and services.
Model Assessors	• Check and assess the two levels of alignment, that is, the local government and the country's level.
The Government	• Reduce the ad hoc projects/initiatives outside the government plan. • Invest in training and development in government entities. • Develop policies or assure integration among entities. • Ensure harmony and budget utilization.

Table 5.4: Happiness Breakdown of Roles and Responsibility in the Excellence Model

Theme 3: Happiness	
Award Custodian	• Measure the impact of the model on society's happiness. • Awareness of the government entities of the difference between happiness and satisfaction. • Share best practices among entities with respect to happiness. • Advise best-in-class models/frameworks for measuring happiness. • Increase the investment in training of happiness.
The Government Entities	• Implement the research and development concept for studying and measuring happiness and satisfaction. • Learn from best practices on how to enhance the happiness of all stakeholders. • Fostering collaboration with other involved entities that affect the happiness of all stakeholders.
Model Assessors	• Advise on best practices for stakeholder happiness.
The Government	• Measure the effectiveness of happiness results on the overall national agenda and the government plan. • Advise on best practices for a happiness journey for all stakeholders such as best practices on how to become seven-star service organizations with collaboration among entities.

Table 5.5: Core Business Oriented Model- Breakdown of Roles and Responsibility in the Excellence Model

Theme 4: Core Business-Oriented Model	
Award Custodian	• Re-arrange the model criteria to clarify the core business-oriented criteria. • Communicate with subject matter experts and government entities to overcome the differences in the core businesses and mandates in the UAE government entities and other countries in the world. • Help the assessors and entities to prioritize the assessment of core business criteria.
The Government Entities	• Review the mandate of the entity and make sure all the roles and responsibilities are valid. • Facilitate the assessment of the core business. • Show how the core businesses are linked with the mandate. • Show the best practices and benchmarks for the core business.
Model Assessors	• Provide the entities with best practices in the core business. • Communicate with entities before the assessment and put a mutual agenda for the assessment. • Review the mandates and prioritize the assessment of the core business to make sure to cover the main things.
The Government	• Revisit the mandates of the organizations. • Align the core business requirement in the model with the government plan.

Table 5.6: Recognition- Breakdown of Roles and Responsibility in the Excellence Model

Theme 5: Recognition	
Award Custodian	• Develop policies for recognition inside the organizations. • Measure the impact of recognition on the overall performance of the organizations. • Assist the organizations to strengthen the internal awards.
The Government Entities	• Implement internal awards inside the organization. • Encourage the employees on implementing the model in an effective way. • Measure the participation in the award on the overall performance of the organization.
Model Assessors	• Assess the level of recognition linked with performance.
The Government	• Develop a system for rewarding the entities that contribute to achieving the objectives of the country. • Provide the entities with suitable and reasonable financial and non-financial rewards.

Table 5.7: Culture of Pioneering- Breakdown of Roles and Responsibility in the Excellence Model

Theme 6: Culture of Pioneering	
Award Custodian	• Foster the culture of excellence and pioneering inside government organizations. • Provide training and development programs to change the culture among the government to focus on pioneering and competitive advantage of organizations.
The Government Entities	• Measure the culture of pioneering and excellence inside the entity. • Measure the effect of a culture of pioneering and excellence on the overall performance of the organization.
Model Assessors	• Assess the maturity level of pioneering and excellence. • Provide suggestions to the organization about the level of culture of pioneering inside the organization.
The Government	• Measure the effect of the culture of pioneering in achieving the government plan.

Table 5.8: Commitment- Breakdown of Roles and Responsibility in the Excellence Model

Theme 7: Commitment	
Award Custodian	• Focus on measuring the commitment level in the top and middle-level management. • Provide continuous encouragement for all levels of employees in the organizations to the benefits of the model in achieving the vision of the country. • Determine the percentage of commitment effect on the overall score of each organization.
The Government Entities	• Build a culture of pioneering inside the organizations at all levels of employees. • Measure the commitment level inside the organization. • Determine the level of an employee whose commitment is highly important.
Model Assessors	• Assess the commitment level.
The Government	• Discuss the requirements with leaders of government entities to achieve the government plan.

Table 5.9: Resources- Breakdown of Roles and Responsibility in the Excellence Model

Theme 8: Resources	
Award Custodian	• Study the relationship between the size of the organization and the required resources to implement the excellence model. • Provide technical experience for small and medium-sized organizations. • Strengthen the twining programs between government entities to improve collaboration and overcome resource limitations.
The Government Entities	• The focus of what the required resources to achieve the overall performance are. • Make partnership agreements with other entities to utilize the limitation in resources.
Model Assessors	• Assess if the resources affect the overall objectives of the model.
The Government	• Share the best practices/successful capabilities among entities.

Table 5.10: People Capability Building- Breakdown of Roles and Responsibility in the Excellence Model

Theme 9: People Capability Building	
Award Custodian	• Provide continuous awareness and training on all subjects related to the model (Innovation, Future Shaping, Technology, etc.). • Focus more on assessment courses. • More development programs and awareness sessions.
The Government Entities	• Invest in employees in the core business area. • Training and development. • Certified assessors and excellence programs.
Model Assessors	• Provide feedback on the level of maturity and employee capability on the new trends and concepts in the model.
The Government	• Provide leadership programs. • Provide education programs. • Budget for building employees' capabilities.

Table 5.11: One Government- Breakdown of Roles and Responsibility in the Excellence Model

Theme 10: One Government	
Award Custodian	• Build a culture of cooperation. • Measure the collaboration level among entities. • Encourage the exchanging of information related to the implementation of the excellence model in government entities. • Maximize the utilization of excellence experts in the government to spread the culture of pioneering and provide training to government entities. • Enhance the model to include collaboration in the model with respect to excellence.
The Government Entities	• Have the ability to share capabilities and results with government entities. • Have the ability to share the employees among government entities. • Suggest initiatives to enhance collaboration among departments.
Model Assessors	• Measure the effectiveness of collaboration in each entity. • Assess the roles of each entity in leading the efforts of collaboration with other entities.
The Government	• Foster a culture of cooperation and collaboration among entities. • Distribute the roles and responsibilities in achieving the government plan. • Study the way of sharing the resources among the entities. • Study the collaboration at the local and federal levels.

Table 5.12: Award Custodian- Breakdown of Roles and Responsibility in the Excellence Model

Theme 11: Award Custodian	
Award Custodian	• Enhance the model by collecting feedback from assessors, government entities, consultants, and the government by using a structured approach and R&D principle. • Design assessor training courses suitable for the government sector. • Review the assessment feedback reports. • Train the assessors on the model criteria itself and the assessment tool. • Standardize the concept of assessment among assessors. • Plan for the assessment in advance with the assessors. • Suggest the school of knowledge to follow by the government entities to implement the model.
The Government Entities	• Provide feedback to enhance the model on regular basis. • Measure the effectiveness of the model inside the entity. • Measure the benefits of each criterion. • Collaborate with award custodians to build internal capabilities.
Model Assessors	• Provide feedback on how to improve the model and assessment process. • Improve the feedback report with the coordination of the award custodian.
The Government	• Give the assessors which area to be focused on. • Explain the strategic directions for the government.

Table 5.13: Pioneering- Breakdown of Roles and Responsibility in the Excellence Model

Theme 12: Assessment Process	
Award Custodian	• Improve the skillsets of the assessors. • Study the duration of the assessment to make sure the criteria are covered by the assessors. • Explain the assessment tool for both applicants and assessors. • Select the assessors based on the mandate and nature of the organization. • Revamp the submission process from the assessors' point of view.
The Government Entities	• Facilitate the assessment process. • Collaborate with award custodians in selecting the assessors suitable for the entity.
Model Assessors	• Provide feedback for the assessment process. • Learn how to use the assessment tool for conducting the assessment and writing the feedback report. • Manage the assessment time in a proper way. • Read all the submission documents before the assessment.
The Government	• Provide the entities with the data and information that are needed before the assessment.

Table 5.14: Size and Work Nature of the organization- Breakdown of Roles and Responsibility in the Excellence Model

Theme 13: Size and Work Nature of the organization	
Award Custodian	• Check if this model is applicable to all kinds of organizations irrespective of their size the nature. • Check if size matters in winning the award. • Enhance the model to suit the size and nature of the organization. • Check the number of assessors that are required for each type of organization.
The Government Entities	• Facilitate the assessment process based on the size and nature of the organization.
Model Assessors	• Check how to cover the main mandate of the organization before the assessment. • Check for best practices that are suitable for each type of organization.
The Government	• Check for resources that are needed based on the size and work nature.

Table 5.15: Benchmarking- Breakdown of Roles and Responsibility in the Excellence Model

Theme 14: Benchmarking	
Award Custodian	• Enhance the model based on the R&D concept. • Help the organizations in learning about the best practices to implement the criterion.
The Government Entities	• Use benchmarking as a tool to compare the results and capabilities with best-in-class organizations. • Build a culture of benchmarking inside the organization. • Train the employees on how to do the benchmarking.
Model Assessors	• Make a benchmarking exercise before the assessment. • Propose the best world-class organization/countries do the benchmarking.
The Government	• Build a culture of benchmarking inside the entities. • Invest in benchmarking and learning from best practices. • Continuous feeding the government entities with the positions of the country with respect to the competitiveness indexes and determining the roles of each one.

5.5.2. Pioneering Organization

The results from the analysis of the feedback from all respondents on how to become a pioneering organization indicate that a change is required regarding how the model is implemented. This section discusses the two frameworks necessary for becoming a pioneering organization based on the discussion of the data analysis section and the effective implementation of the excellence model. These two frameworks achieved the main aim of this research.

Part 1: Possible Guiding Model Framework for Pioneering

A pioneering organization starts with motivating the employees regarding the benefits of implementing the model and encouraging all staff levels within the organization to implement the excellence model by establishing a reward system that will be supported by management—whose role is also to build a CoE and culture of 'pioneering'. Thereafter, the model should be continuously implemented by adopting best practices and benchmarking concepts for building internal capabilities to achieve the government vision and become pioneers. This is a continuous journey in which the organization measures the effectiveness of implementation and improves its performance. Figure 5.19 shows how an organization can become pioneering.
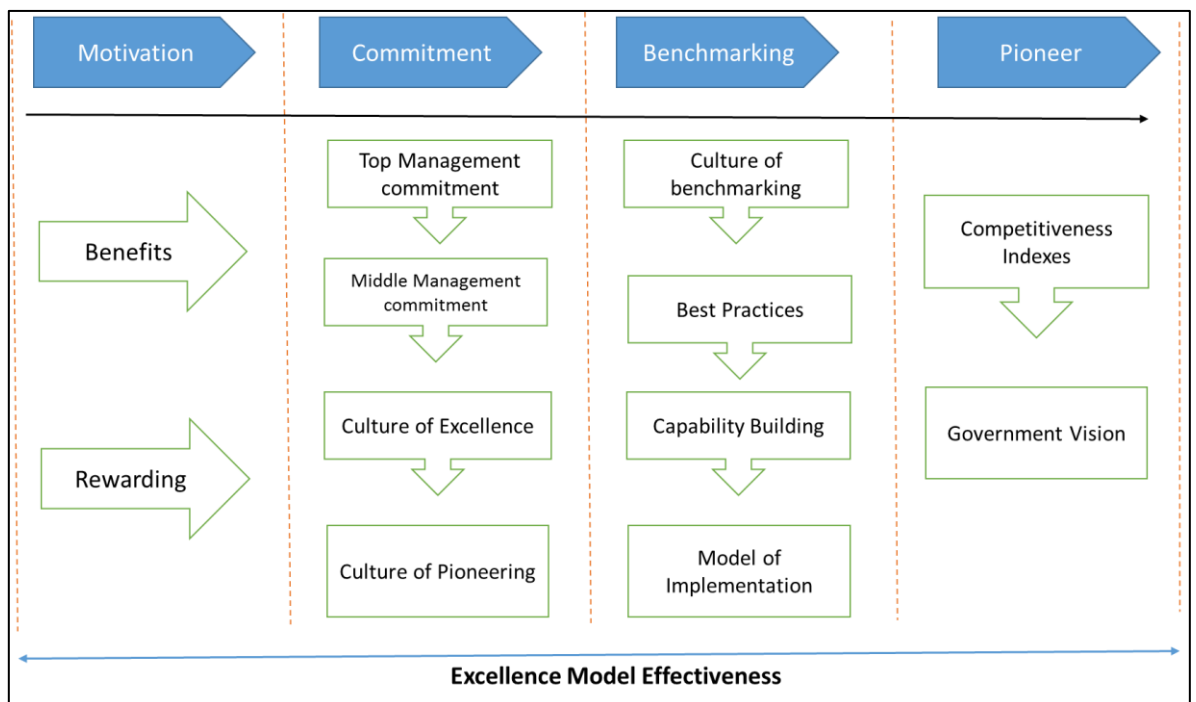
Figure 5.19: Pioneering Organization Model (Source: The Researcher)

Part 2: Possible Guiding Model Framework for Self-assessment

A key point extracted from the respondents is that the model is not considered a self-assessing framework; that is, it is not easy for all entities to bring assessors and perform their own assessment before the actual

government assessment. This section presents a possible guiding framework to solve this issue. Below is the proposed framework (Figure 5.20) for having the self-assessment conducted internally before the assessment by SMEs and other assessment teams.
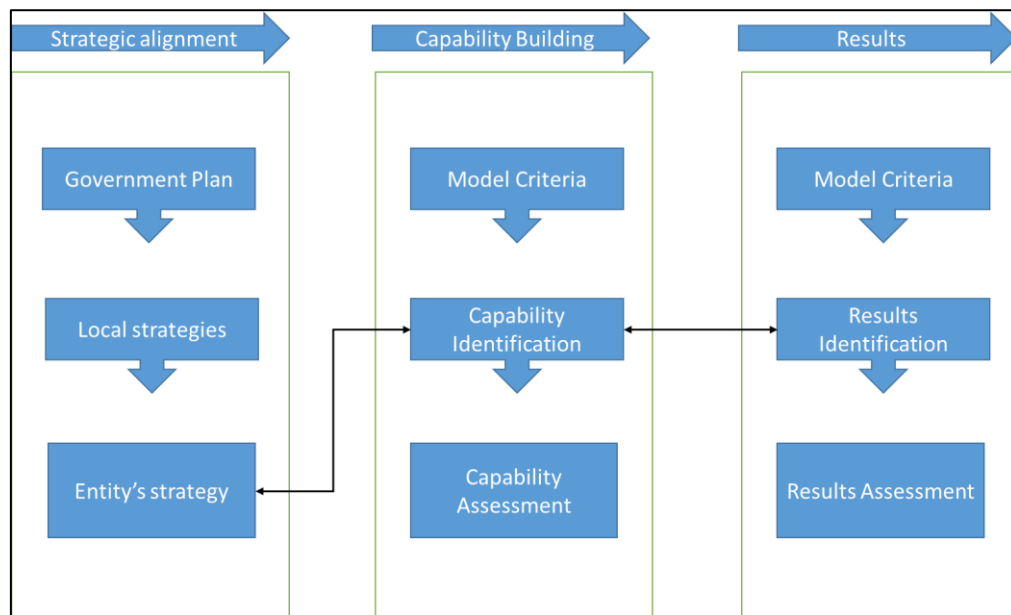
Figure 5.20: Framework for GEM Self-Assessment (Source: The Researcher)

The above framework explains how to do the self-assessment by considering that the identification of capabilities and results should be aligned with the strategy. The following explains the steps for doing a self-assessment in the excellence model.

Step 1: Understand the alignment between the entity's and government's strategies.

In this stage, all concerned departments need to understand the strategic plan for the entity and its alignment with the government. Furthermore, the strategic objectives and projects/initiatives should also be aligned.

Step 2: Model criteria

Each criterion is divided into two parts, capability and results. The pioneering organization must understand all the guidance points in each criterion and link the criterion with results and capabilities.

Step 3: Capabilities identification

In this phase, capabilities are determined for all criteria. Moreover, further analysis is done to determine the importance of each capability in achieving the strategic objective. Finally, all the capabilities are prioritized based on the effect on the strategic plan.

Step 4: Capability assessment

In this phase, each capability is assessed based on the capability assessment tool. This stage aims to know the level of each capability in the organization and which criterion has weak capabilities. This stage will allow for the scoring of each capability to measure effectiveness, efficiency, and learning and development.

Step 5: Results assessment

All the results should be linked with the capabilities. The results will be assessed as per the results assessment tool. In this phase, the results will be checked against the 'leading position', which is required to be the best globally. The score will be given to the results section to check the level of 'pioneering' for the entity.

Step 6: Self-assessment results

In this last phase, the results of the assessment indicate where the organization stands in terms of 'pioneering'. The overall score will indicate which areas need to be improved and which need to be strengthened.

Chapter 6: Conclusions and Recommendations

6.1 Introduction

Chapter 5 presented a detailed discussion of the findings. In this chapter, the structure of the thesis will be reviewed, and the overall conclusions regarding the RQs and research objectives will be made. The overview of the research will be highlighted, and the contributions of the current study will be discussed. Finally, this study's limitations and future research directions will be presented.

6.2 Structure of the Thesis

The current thesis contains six chapters and is organized as follows:

Chapter 1 presented the history of excellence models globally, in general, and in the UAE, in particular. It discussed the overview of the GEM in the context of the UAE, followed by the statement of the problem and the main objectives and aim of this research. Next, the significance and rationale of the study were discussed. Finally, the research gaps, RQs, and nature of the study were discussed.

Chapter 2 presented the literature review. First, the excellence models in the public or government sectors were presented. Second, the excellence models in the literature were presented in detail. Third, the UAE excellence models in the literature were discussed as the researchers studied the UAE GEM. Fourth, the three perspectives that formed the RQs were shown in detail. Finally, the gaps in the literature were discussed for each perspective.

Chapter 3 focused on the methodology of the qualitative approach. First, research philosophies, research approaches, and justifications were discussed. Second, the research strategy was discussed in detail, followed by the reasons and justifications for the use of qualitative methodology to gather data. Third, the method for data collection and processing to achieve the objectives of this study was discussed. A detailed description was presented to discuss the ethics, sampling, interview protocol, and IQs.

Chapter 4 presented a detailed analysis of the data provided by the participants from the government sectors in Dubai, Abu Dhabi, and the federal government. Qualitative data analysis approaches were discussed, and the justification for using a thematic approach was presented, followed by a data analysis process and structure designed to present the findings. Finally, how the key themes were formulated and presented was discussed, and each key theme was presented with detailed quotations from the participants.

Chapter 5 presented the discussion of this thesis. The discussion followed a structured approach (including a list of the key themes for each RQ), with the following parts: an introduction for each theme, key theme vs literature themes, and finally, an explanation of the key theme in the context of the UAE excellence model. This chapter also discussed how to achieve all the specific objectives stated earlier in this study. Chapter 6 focuses on the overall conclusions of the thesis. The chapter also presents the structure of the

thesis. The contributions of the current study are discussed, and the link with the gaps in the literature is presented. The limitations of this study and recommendations/directions for future research are presented.

6.3 Overview of the Research

This study attempts to discover the benefits, motivations, CSFs, barriers, and obstacles to implementing the new version of the excellence model. The results will help the government of the UAE to become a pioneer globally and among the top-ranking countries in achieving the competitiveness index targets.

Generally, the excellence models globally, such as Malcolm Baldrige and the EFQM, are almost similar in structure and content. The UAE government model is unique in that it is designed for government entities only. Therefore, some studies in the context of the excellence model in the literature might not help to improve this model. The government of the UAE decided to implement this new model in 2015, replacing the previous model based on the EFQM.

There is rich literature concerning excellence models globally, as many countries have developed national awards/models. The most researched excellence model is the EFQM, as many countries have adopted it since its inception. Nonetheless, gaps exist in the literature regarding the excellence models in the UAE context.

The key challenge was to study the gaps in the literature for the previous well-known excellence models and try to fill the gaps in the context of the UAE excellence model. The other important point was presenting the first study of the excellence model in the UAE that discusses the implementation process of this model. The value of this study is that it illuminates to all researchers in the UAE, in particular, and the world, in general, the aspects that need researching to achieve the main objectives of the model.

The reasons for choosing the RQs were discussed in Chapters 1 and 2. The researcher designed the RQs based on the gaps in the literature, as well as to make a base for research and development for local researchers in the UAE. The study focused on three areas, namely: benefits and motivations, key success factors, and barriers/obstacles and challenges. To answer these questions, a sample of participants was interviewed. They were experts specializing in the implementation of the new GEM and had experience with the previous model. Participants were chosen through a logical and scientific approach, and the focus was on experts/managers/consultants who are well-educated and well-trained to obtain the best information for each IQ.

In the current chapter, the conclusions are presented in a different style than in the literature, as they are based on actual information collected for the first time in the UAE. The conclusions and recommendations will be beneficial for many stakeholders, such as award custodians, government entities in the UAE, and other supportive entities in the assessment. Specifically, the conclusions would be beneficial to the stakeholders below.

1) Decision-makers in the award custodians
2) Assessors and SMEs
3) Top management in the government entities
4) Employees
5) Middle-level management
6) Small and medium-sized organizations
7) Organizational units/departments within the entity

Chapter 4 presented the data analysis and findings for all interviews. Furthermore, Chapter 5 presented a discussion of the findings and what the major concerns were for all interviewees. The current chapter will present an overall conclusion to show the big picture of the data analysis, findings, and discussion.

6.4 Theoretical Contributions

The current study is the first globally, based on the assumptions and thesis discussion section, to examine the new excellence model in the UAE, covering the three levels of implementation (Abu Dhabi, Dubai, and the federal level) with respect to the following:

1) Benefits and motivations for the excellence model
2) Key success factors for the model
3) Obstacles/barriers and challenges for the model

This study has important theoretical contributions because of the following reasons:

1) It filled in the literature gaps by investigating the implementation of the new GEM in the government sector in the UAE. Specifically, this is the first study in the region that concentrates on a system designed for the government of the UAE.
2) It contributed to the literature by comparing the key themes extracted from this study and the themes in the literature. Furthermore, this study compared these themes between the excellence model in the UAE and other excellence models globally.
3) As discussed in Chapter 5 (Thesis Discussion), the outcomes of this study show that 10 out of the 14 key themes are considered totally new in the literature:
   - Pioneering
   - Happiness
   - Core business-oriented model
   - National Agenda/government plan
   - Culture of pioneering
   - One government
   - Award custodian
   - Assessment process

- Size and work nature of the organization
- Benchmarking

The above new themes represent the baseline for the four stakeholders to utilize the model successfully and achieve the vision of the government. These were discussed in detail in Section 6.3.

4) This is the first study to conclude that for this model to succeed, four perspectives must work together on all themes found in this study. These are as follows:
   - The award custodian: To enhance the model based on the discussion found in the previous chapter for each theme.
   - The entity: The themes help the organizations effectively implement the model and achieve the required objectives.
   - The government. Assist the organizations in resource allocation and achieving the vision of the country.
   - The assessors: To improve the assessment method and provide the entities with all benefits and improvements.

6.5 Empirical Contributions

This is the first study that surveyed excellence managers/specialists/experts across three levels of the government: Dubai, Abu Dhabi, and the federal government. The study utilised their experiences and knowledge to evaluate the implementation of the new excellence model. The following shows some of the empirical contributions of the study where the experiences and opinions of participants are emphasized:

1) The excellence model focuses on happiness, the national agenda/government plan, and the core business of the organization.
2) Commitment, resources, people-building capability, and recognition are success factors for the model, which are researched and proven in other studies in the literature.
3) The debate on the size of the organization and the nature of the business must be further researched for the model.

Although the other four key themes (recognition, commitment, resources, and people-building capability) are mentioned in the literature when researched in the context of the other excellence models, this study represents the first time they have been considered in the context of the UAE GEM. The findings in terms of these four key themes supported the findings of previous studies.

6.6 Practical Contributions

First, the literature shows that the research in the context of the excellence model in Arab countries, specifically in the UAE, is less than in other countries, like Europe, the USA, and Asia. Thus, this study has filled the contextual gap and is considered the first to study the implementation of the model in the government sector.

Second, this study presented a new way of thinking in the context of the excellence model by identifying what each stakeholder is responsible for, as stated in Chapter 5 (Thesis Discussion). Section 5.4 presented some practical contributions of the model, as it identified what is required from each of the stakeholders (government, award custodian, assessors, and government entity) from the participants' and researcher's points of view. Moreover, it provides a way of implementing the excellence model and discusses how to become a pioneer.

Third, the study introduced a new way of thinking about implementing the excellence model in the government sector:

1) A new emerging theme, 'culture of pioneering', was presented, which will be crucial for achieving 'pioneering' globally in the government field.

2) The concept of 'one government' was introduced, which allows organizations to be pioneers by sharing employees, knowledge, patents, resources, capabilities, etc., and to achieve success for the government.

3) A new appreciation of the importance of the award custodian in developing the model and improving the entities.

4) Presented benchmarking as a key challenge to all organizations seeking to be pioneering.

5) The importance of building people's capabilities to become the best government globally, in general, and world-class organizations, in particular.

6) The way to build assessors' skills and how to add value to the assessment.

7) The model criteria and where to focus from the organizations' point of view.

8) The criterion that needs to be improved.

9) The effect of the organization's size is debatable.

Fourth, some themes were also presented that were proven to affect the implementation of the excellence model and must be considered, like the size and work nature of the organization.

6.7 Managerial Contributions

First, the study focused on commitment and support from the top and middle management in the implementation of the excellence model. These are key success factors that all organizations must invest in to achieve the objectives of implementing the excellence model. Middle management should lead the implementation of the excellence model under the supervision of top management and be responsible for building their teams' capabilities in the areas necessary to implement the model effectively.

Second, the participants' consensus emphasizes that middle-level management is the key player in implementing the model. This means that directors and managers must lead the implementation process for the excellence model.

Third, a new concept was introduced (a culture of pioneering), which is a very important factor that both

the award custodian and the entity itself must work together to change the culture of all organizations to direct them on how to achieve competitiveness index targets.

Fourth, a change in the model is required to suit the direction of the government in becoming a pioneer worldwide.

Fifth, a change in the structure of the teams responsible for assessing the entities/organizations to cover the core business and support is also required.

Sixth, a change in the assessment tool is required at this stage to reflect the priorities of the government.

6.8 Government Contributions

First, all the entities must work under the umbrella of 'one government'. Collaboration is necessary to achieve the national agenda of the UAE government and the local government plans.

Second, the collaboration among all award custodians must be systematic to enhance the model based on research and development and participation from all stakeholders involved in the development of the model: the government entities, assessors, government, and award custodians.

Third, the sharing of information among the entities must facilitate the implementation of the excellence model and utilize the resources among the entities. The entities can also share employees who specialize in the excellence field to build and spread the pioneering culture.

Fourth, the study encourages benchmarking among entities to utilize the resources and enhance all the entities to reach excellent and pioneering levels.

6.9 Limitations and Recommendations

This study has some limitations:

1) The study focused on one group of participants working in government sectors, that is, the employees who are excellence specialists/experts/directors/managers. The recommendations are to expand the scope of the study to include other groups, like the assessors of the model itself, top management, middle management, and core business employees.
2) The study did not consider the opinions and experiences of the award custodians/offices. The study recommends that further research include them.
3) The study did not include the directions of other government parties, such as the government departments who are part of the assessment, such as departments responsible for smart government and digitalization, legal affairs, and finance departments/ministries.

4) Although the study was the first to research the excellence model in the government, further research is recommended to answer the questions and fill in the gaps on how the size and work nature of the government entities are affecting the implementation of the model.

5) The generalization is limited, as the study was focused on the UAE government sector because the model is designed for the UAE government and different from other well-known models, like Malcolm Baldrige in the USA and the EFQM in Europe and other parts of the world. The major recommendations in this context are to include other countries that adopted this model, such as Jordan and Egypt, which recently signed an agreement with the UAE government to implement the model.

6) Finally, the study might be expanded to include employees at all levels of the organization to get their perspectives and feedback on the new model.

6. 10 Future Research

This study reached robust recommendations that the current directions of implementing the excellence model in the government sector must be aligned with the vision of the country to be pioneering worldwide. This study encourages researchers to concentrate on the many issues to enhance the model and achieve this objective.

First, future studies may measure the CoE in all government entities and propose a solution on how to expand its presence in this culture and measure the outcomes of the benefits at the country level.

Second, future studies may measure the effectiveness of the GEM at two levels: the government and the entities.

Third, a critical evaluation between capabilities and result parts may be done to all criteria.

Fourth, the improvements of each criterion may be researched between the assessment cycles of the assessment by the entities and the award custodian.

Fifth, future studies may research the way each organization implements the model and the results of its overall score.

Sixth, the effect of the assessors' experience and background on the overall performance of the assessed organizations may be researched.

Seventh, future studies may research the effect of merging all the national excellence programs on the overall performance of the government.

Eighth, future studies may research the effect of merging the national excellence models with other similar programs, like seven stars, on the overall performance of the government and entities.

Ninth, the size of organizations and the winning of the award may be researched.

Tenth, future studies may develop different excellence model requirements suitable for organizations that are not reaching the suitable excellence scores in many assessment cycles.

Eleventh, the model may be redesigned to evaluate the readiness of government organizations for any future unplanned events, like pandemics and natural disasters.

Twelfth, a quantitative study may be done based on the outcomes of this study to measure the effectiveness of the actions recommended in the findings section. Another quantitative study may measure the overall opinion of the government entities in implementing the new GEM.

Thirteenth, future studies may conduct the same study in other countries that implement the same model and compare the results to improve the excellence model from an academic point of view.

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Appendices

Appendix 1:

UOWD IRMA-Ethics Approval- UOW Human Research Ethics Committee

Appendix 2: Interview Questions

Name of participant	
Date of interview	
Organization	
Emirate/Federal	
Position title	
Number of years of experience	
Number of years of experience in the new excellence model	
Level of education	
Role in implementing the excellence model	

Part I- Motivation/Benefits for the use of the excellence model

1. What are the benefits of implementing the government excellence model? Please mention as many as possible. Explain why and how these are the most important ones.

2. Explain your motivations for using the government excellence model and why you think so. Can you point out the benefits that you have achieved through the government excellence model? And what factors led to achieving these benefits?

3. What other comments do you have about improving the government excellence model? From your experience could it be further improved or how can we get the most benefit from the government excellence model? How could the implementation be improved?

Part II- Key Success Factors of the Excellence Model

What are the critical success factors you think are needed to make the new model (the government excellence model) a success?

4. In your opinion, what are the main internal reasons for implementing the government excellence model? Explain why you think these are the most important internal reasons.

5. In your opinion, what are the main external reasons for implementing the government excellence model? Explain why you think these are the most important external reasons.

Part III: Main barriers/obstacles of the government excellence model

6. What are the main barriers/obstacles to the government excellence model implementation in the UAE? Why? Are there differences from any other framework implementation? What is the difference

7. What are the most significant challenges of implementing the government excellence model? Please mention at least two disadvantages. Explain why and how you overcome them.

Thank you so much for your time and consideration in this research.

Appendix 3: Consent Form

Consent Form for (Name   )

RESEARCH TITLE: 'Excellence Awards in the UAE Government Sector- An Evaluative Framework for the Government Excellence Model Implementation'

Researcher: Rami Ahmad Abu Laban

I have been given information about Excellence Awards in the UAE Government Sector- An Evaluative framework for 4G implementation and had an opportunity to ask Mr. Rami Ahmad Abu Laban any questions I may have about the research and my participation.

If I have any inquiries about the research, I can contact:

Researcher:

1. Mr. Rami Ahmad Abu Laban, Faculty of Business, University of Wollongong, +971508749683, ral908@uowmail.edu.au.

Supervisors:

1. Dr Flevy Lasrado, Discipline Leader - Quality Management, Faculty of Business, P +971 4 278 1949. flevylasrado@uowdubai.ac.ae

2. Dr Barry O`Mahony- BarryOMahony@uowdubai.ac.ae

I understand:

*   I can withdraw at any time or refuse to answer any question without any consequences of any kind.
*   I understand that I can withdraw permission to use data from my interview within two weeks after the interview, in which case the material will be deleted.
*   I have had the purpose and nature of the study explained to me in writing and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study.
*   I understand that I will not benefit directly from participating in this research.
*   I agree to my interview being audio-recorded.
*   I understand that all information I provide for this study will be treated confidentially.
*   I understand that in any report on the results of this research my identity will remain anonymous. This will be done by changing my name and disguising any details of my interview which may reveal my identity or the identity of the people I speak about.
*   I understand that disguised extracts from my interview may be quoted.
*   That participation involves no risks.
*   That the data collected from my participation will be used for a purpose (e.g. thesis, journal publication, placed in a databank to be used, and I consent for it to be used in that manner).

- I understand that signed consent forms and original audio recordings will be retained in UOWD as per its regulations and rules.
- That if I have any concerns or complaints regarding the way the research is or has been conducted, I can contact the University of Wollongong Ethics & Integrity Manager.

By signing below, I am indicating my consent to this research.

Signature of research participant

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Signature of participant   Date

Signature of researcher

I believe the participant is giving informed consent to participate in this study

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Signature of researcher   Date

Appendix 4: Participant Information Sheet

'Excellence Awards in the UAE Government Sector- An Evaluative Framework for the Government Excellence Model'

Purpose of the research

This is an invitation for you to participate in a research project being conducted by a student (Rami Ahmad Abu Laban) at the University of Wollongong. The purpose of the research is to have a critical evaluation of the new government excellence model, discover the benefits, considerations, and disadvantages of implementing the new government excellence model and study the difficulties facing the government organization sector during the implementation process. The first stage in the research involves conducting interviews with managers and directors who have solid experience in the field of excellence and quality and participated in the first assessment cycle in the federal agencies of the UAE and local government entities in Abu Dhabi, and Dubai excellence models to be part of a research project designed to address the relevance of the government excellence model.

Researchers

Mr. Rami Ahmad Abu Laban, Faculty of Business, University of Wollongong, +971508749683, ral908@uowmail.edu.au.

Mentors and Supervisors:

1. Dr Barry O`Mahony- BarryOMahony@uowdubai.ac.ae
2. Dr Flevy Lasrado, Discipline Leader - Quality Management, Faculty of Business, P +971 4 278 1949. flevylasrado@uowdubai.ac.ae

Method and demands on participants

If you agree to be involved, you will be asked to participate in an interview conducted at your place of work or an agreed-upon location which is likely to last around two hours and be audio recorded with your permission. You will be asked questions relating to the objectives of the excellence model, advantages/disadvantages of the government excellence model, key success factors of the excellence model, main barriers of the excellence model, and motivation for the use of the excellence model.

Possible risks, inconveniences, and discomforts

Apart from the two hours of your time for the interview, we do not foresee any risks for you. Your involvement in the study is voluntary and you may withdraw at any time and withdraw any data you have provided by contacting the researcher up to six weeks after the interview. Declining this invitation to participate will not adversely affect your relationship with your employer or the University of Wollongong.

Participation in this study will not affect your employer as all the information will be dealt with confidentially and your name, name of your organization, position title, role in the organization, etc. will be anonymous i.e. it will be labelled as subject 1, subject 2, etc. The information that will be drawn from participants will be analyzed without showing the participants' information.

Finding and benefits of the research

Findings will be of immediate practical benefit to all government organizations implementing the government excellence model. Moreover, this research will add significantly to the body of knowledge.

Results will be used to improve the new excellence model and may also be published in journal articles or presented at conferences. Results will only be reported in ways that ensure the identity of participants remains confidential.

Consent Form

Informed consent is a tool for ensuring that participants understand what it means to participate in this research to decide if they want to participate. This form is necessary for all qualitative research methods. The form will be evidence that the participants were informed about the purpose/objective of the research, what is expected of a research participant, the time of the interview, the fact that participation is voluntary, and that one can withdraw at any time with no negative repercussions, how confidentiality will be protected, the research questions/problem statement, and information confidentiality.

The participants will receive a written form that describes the research and then sign that form to document his or her consent to participate.

Ethics review and complaints

This study has been reviewed by the Social Sciences Human Research Ethics Committee at the University of Wollongong (Reference: 20XX/XXX). If you have any concerns or complaints about the way this research is conducted you can contact the Ethics Manager at (02) 4221 4457 or email rso-ethics@uow.edu.au.

If you would like to participate please contact Rami Abu Laban using the contact details above to arrange an interview time.

Thank you for your interest in this study.

Appendix 5: Participation Letter

Appendix 6: Approval Letter- UAE-Prime Minister's Officer

Approval Letter- United Arab Emirates
Prime Minister's Office- PMO

Dear Mr. Rami Abu Laban

As per your emails in regards to using the Government Excellence Model for your thesis as part of the dissertation requirements to graduate with a DBA from the University of Wollongong in Dubai-UOWD, please be informed that <u>you can conduct the study</u> about the model based on the published information in SKGEP website and related manuals and by fulfilling the below requirements:

- Adherence to the scientific integrity when citing information related to the Government Excellence Model as published in SKGEP website and manuals.
- Clear referencing to the source of information and as per the academic requirements which to be included in the references list of the thesis.
- Use the term "Government Excellence Model" instead of the "4th Generation Excellence Model" in the thesis.
- Provide a copy of the final dissertation to the Prime Minister's Office - Sheikh Khalifa Government Excellence Program.

For any further inquiries please don't hesitate to contact.

Regards,

Naeema Abdulla
Senior Project Manager
Sheikh Khalifa Government Excellence Programme Department
Performance and Government Excellence Sector

نعيمة عبدالله
مدير مشاريع أول
برنامج الشيخ خليفة للتميز الحكومي
قطاع الأداء والتميز الحكومي

From: Rami Abu Laban
Sent: Thursday, November 7, 2019 11:16 AM
To: Naeema Abdulla
Cc: Marwan AlZaabi
Subject: RE: PMO- Approval Letter.docx

Dear Naeema,
First, I would like to thank you for your email.
1) As we discussed over the phone, I am going to use the model itself in my thesis which means I will mention most of the criterion in my research. Moreover, and as per my research questions, the participants might discuss some benefits for some criteria and overall benefits for the whole model. I am not going to write about each criterion in my thesis since this is not the main purpose of my research.
2) The targeted participants will have one of these position titles:
·   Excellence directors
·   Excellence managers
·   Excellence experts and specialists
·   Excellence consultants
3) Formal communication with all participants using the UOWD regulations and the consent letter/form will be sent along with the participant information sheet to all participants before the interview. The participants will have enough time to decide to participate in this research or not. The interviews will be held mainly in the university and we might send the interview questions to the participant before the interviews.
4) The method to be used in this study is the in-depth interview because the objective of the current qualitative study is to identify motivations, CSFs, barriers/obstacles for the fourth generation of the government excellence system in the UAE. 24 excellence directors/managers will be chosen from all government entities/ministries that participated in the first cycle.
5) The research will be published in journal articles or presented at conferences.
Thank you again for your help and support.
I wish all the best to PMO team.
Regards,

Appendix 7: Personal Profiles of Interview Participants

Participants	Gender	Level of Education	Position Title	Emirates	Number of years' Experience
Respondent 1	Male	M.Sc. Master in Quality Management (MQM)	Chief Specialist	Dubai	17
Respondent 2	Male	Bachelor of Science	Senior Specialist-Org strategy and Performance Management	Dubai	9
Respondent 3	Male	University Degree	Head of Excellence & Quality	Federal	18
Respondent 4	Male	BSc	Corporate Excellence Specialist	Dubai	20
Respondent 5	Male	MBA	Specialist-Corporate Excellence & Performance	Abu-Dhabi	20
Respondent 6	Male	B.Sc. Industrial Engineering	Senior Specialist-Quality and Excellence	Dubai	11
Respondent 7	Male	BSc	Excellence Expert	Federal	12
Respondent 8	Male	PhD	Senior Manager-Corporate Excellence	Dubai	27
Respondent 9	Male	MBA and BSc in Industrial Engineering	Quality Specialist	Abu-Dhabi	20
Respondent 10	Male	PhD	Advisor Director	Federal	15
Respondent 11	Male	DBA	Strategy and Innovation	Abu-Dhabi	27
Respondent 12	Male	PhD	Advisor	Abu-Dhabi	22
Respondent 13	Male	University Degree	Corporate Performance Management Specialist	Dubai	10
Respondent 14	Male	Ph.D. Candidate	Corporate Excellence Expert	Dubai	22
Respondent 15	Male	MBA	Manager for the excellence program	Dubai	16
Respondent 16	Male	Ph.D. and two Masters	Excellence Development	Dubai	19
Respondent 17	Male	Ph.D. Candidate	Senior Advisor	Abu-Dhabi	17
Respondent 18	Male	University Degree	4Th generation and Excellence Specialist	Abu-Dhabi	16
Respondent 19	Male	MSc	Expert- Excellence	Federal	13

Appendix 8: Questions and Responses

Screenshot for IQ1

Screenshot for IQ2

Screenshot for IQ3

P3: The leadership commitment. The leadership adoption in these criteria and in their work

...ess? In your opinion, what are the main internal reasons for implementing the government excellence model? Explain why you think these are the most important internal reasons?

R7	R8	R9	R10	R11	R12	R13	R14	R15	R16
specialized workforce	excellence should be a culture	enough preparation time for entities to observe this model	focuses on the roles and responsibilities	system of KPIs the KPIs as their biggest priority	awareness	The main thing is the commitment. Commitment is related to all of the entity, departments, and the employees	The twenty-eight factors included the top management commitment	Internally, I would go for centralizing activities and practices within the organization	The leade... The leade... these crit... work
capabilities	should be only one track, the business as usual	language	for affective pioneering positions	The other thing is, the system itself (smart system)	commitment	leadership support	The management commitment. The leadership style. The HR management. Employees focused organizations. Employee commitment and attitude. Employees and customer satisfaction. The ability to take risk. Change management. Benchmarking. Process development. Service improvement. Teamwork.	The commitment of the leadership and presence. without the support of the management and leadership commitment you will not get anything	The mana... departme... aligned v... criteria
culture	proper training and awareness	assessment process	role for strategy and excellence department	training and qualifications	leadership commitment	the culture, based on the excellence	The maturity of the organization	Benchmarking	The time comes, a... the mana...
technology, or a state of art practices	hance your business, results, and performance	internal award	initiatives, projects, roles and responsibilities	the support from leadership	teamwork	to have a systematic follow up with the departments	system thinking of excellence	awareness and knowledge	salary

Sheets: IQ1 IQ2 IQ3 IQ4 IQ5 IQ6 IQ7

Screenshot for IQ7

M6: to bring the subject matter experts that's related to the business.

Seventh Interview Question: What other comments do you have about improving the government excellence model? From your experience could it be further improved or how can we get the most benefit from the government excellence model? How could the implementation be improved?

R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	R7	R8	R9	R10	R11	R12	R13
So the number of the customers, the number of centers is different and should be taken inot consideration when implementing the criteria itself	The good point is that the fourth generation simplifies the assessment of the results from gathering information from other custodians entities	When we talk about the training course, they need to focus on the training course for all levels, like the employee and leadership in both Arabic and English.	what could be improved in the criteria itself. First of all, when you check the criteria you'll find that there's a lot of measures	it's a very good model and the nature and in the purposes and so on. But on the other side, it's not easy to implement, because it's comprehensive	To separate the entities based on the size of the organization, or the number of the employees that worked and will be helpful for the participants	the fast-changing of the criteria itself	follow the model by the book, people think that we should have results as much as we can in order to fulfill the criteria and to gain a high score,	wasn't enough time for the entities to absorb the model	didn't focus on the roles and the roles of the entities	concentrating on the results	assessors, They are experienced people that come from outside to assess the participant companies and decide to give value. without any proper knowledge of the	submission i...
size of organizations	the problem is that they don't provide the necessary data that they have done for the assessment itself	PMO might have special units like training college, training center, or training department	huge number of measurements to be used (we have a lot of performance indicators)	it has many items that we need to look at and we need to prepare	As a small organization it will not have methodologies and capabilities to implement the excellence model.	Sometimes we agree on it but for an example, the first generation had been held for two cycles which is four years, and now the third cycle there is a	core business KPIs is the crucial one	new criteria, twelve to eighteen months' time to be prepared	focused on the criteria's	achieve sustainability and the continuous development of the capabilities and the results	feedback reports aren't actionable	the assessor... matter experi... business, so... the excellenc...
scope, nture, and number of customers	For our improvement, review, and performance, we can't get the right information at the right time	English manual for the government excellence model	If you go to the criteria of the smart government, do you know how many measures they have there	Of course in terms of improvement maybe the process itself sometimes requires certain improvements in terms of announcement of the award itself	nature of the organization	They think that it's only a minor change, but no there is a shift and direction thinking and the philosophy of the model itself.	Criteria requirements vs submission requirements you must submit at least minimize 200 KPIs, because this is too much for an organization	we didn't get enough technical support about the new criteria	assessors aren't focusing on the criteria	There are some interactions between these criteria's, and maybe it's ambiguous about the detail of each one of them	The assessment matrix is not properly followed	Assessors, th... coming from... background
we don't have to depend on the committees to do the criteria, but we need to be in the DNA of the entity itself.	The second point, I think the custodian government can enhance more of the management audits/assessment	different nationalities in organization should be taken into consideration in the implementation of the GEM	It's is more than fifty measurements for one criteria	if we have a new KPI's or goals and we need to prepare data for that, that's where the challenge is	if you get the assessor that will asses you and your organization based on the clauses of the excellence model, sometimes you need time to explain to the assessor of how you work and what's the nature of your work.	somehow by coincidence you are finding yourself that you're building some capabilities, but maybe it's not as per as the criteria requirement. Sometimes it's covering, sometimes it's covering 80%, sometimes it only covers 20% to 25%.	implementation of the model should be around the year. performance and little complicated capabilities	submission - makes our submission process a	we need to assess the leadership criteria	there is a duplication in the some criteria's	submission process is a strength	to bring the s... experts that'... the business
because each entity has different SMEs. So we don't have a certain person that will see all of	when we started the first-generation model we have a self-assessment, because it's not easy to	training in different subjects like innovation, smart government, and strategic planning	variety or diversity of our business,	Considering that preparing the data and measuring the KPI's is based on his culture always an issue	At the same time this perception from his side is based on his culture assessors' knowledge	have comments on the quality of the assessors. Unfortunately, sometimes I think there should be an	organization should be always ready all over the year		doesn't focus on the innovation as a culture	the digital government. They put the digital government under the vision and not under the	the preparation is not adequate	two types of ... One, should t... matter experi... business, an...

Sheets: IQ1 IQ2 IQ3 IQ4 IQ5 IQ6 IQ7

Appendix 9: Sub Theme Breakdown (Categories)

Screenshot for pioneering theme-sample 1

Screenshot for award custodian theme – sample 2

Appendix 10: Themes Generation

Screenshot for IQ1

Screenshot for IQ2

Screenshot for IQ3

Screenshot for IQ4

Screenshot for IQ5

Screenshot for IQ6

Appendix 11: Themes and Responses

Screenshot for Theme 1: Pioneering
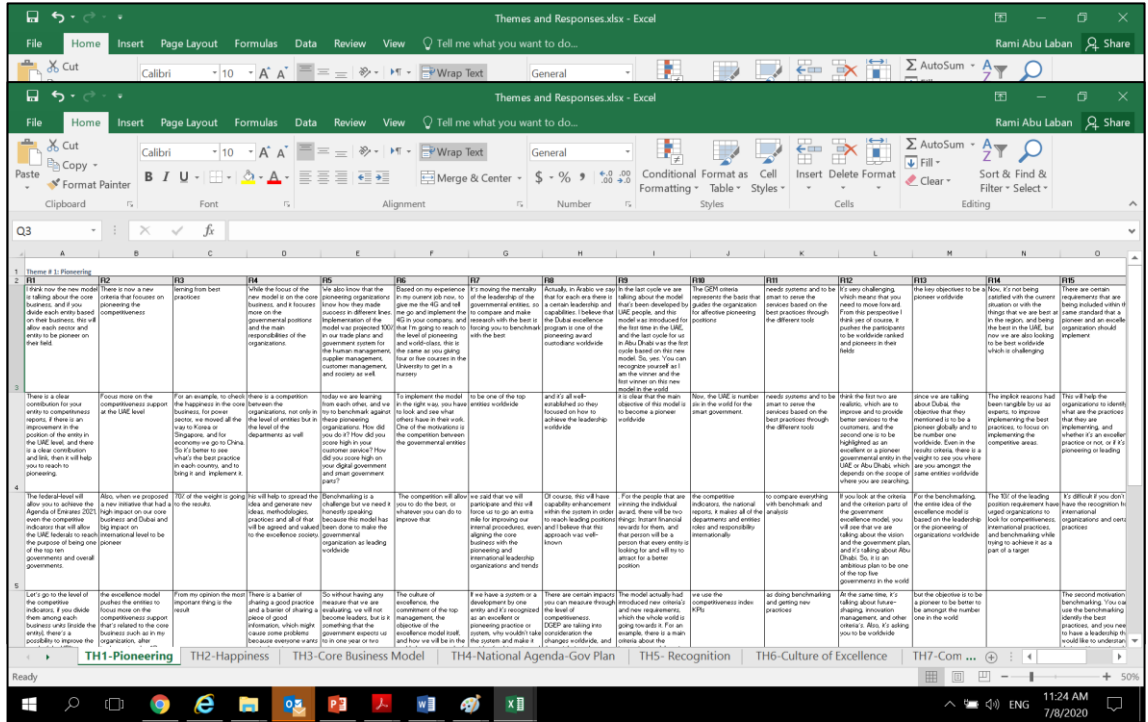
Screenshot for Theme 2: Happiness
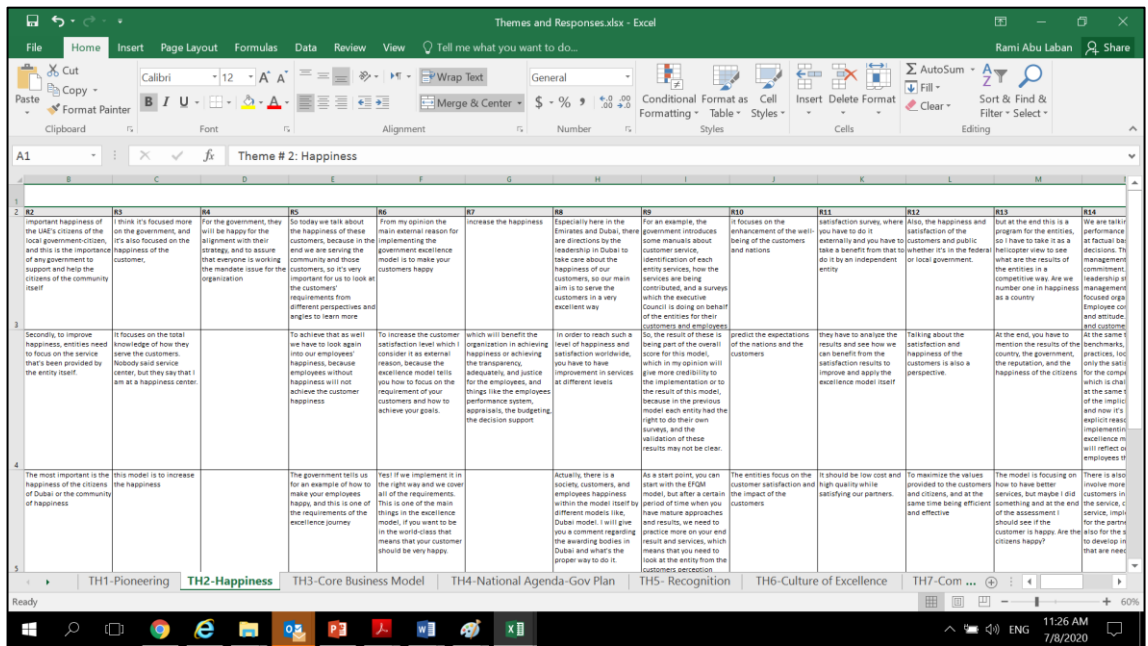
Screenshot for Theme 3: Core Business

A1 = Theme # 3: Core Business Model

Theme # 3: Core Business Model

R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	R7	R8	R9	R10	R11	R12	R13
I think now the new model is talking about the core business	Also, the excellence model pushes the entities to focus more on the competitiveness support that's related to the core business such as in my organization	For an example, to check the happiness in the core business, for power sector we move all the way to Korea or Singapore, and for economy we go to China	While the focus of the new model is on the core business, and it focuses more on the governmental positions and the main responsibilities of the organizations	Yes these people are experts and they know how to give feedback about the core functions of the organization, but when you receive the reports they are scrambled sometimes and it's upside down	the nature of the organization affects affect the core business	If we didn't start looking for accidents in our internal processes or in our core business then we don't deserve to run safly the agency.	The 4G is an excellent practical model because it focuses on the core business for the organization	Well, we are talking about the last model which is the 4G, and I believe that the model is more closer to the core business of each governmental entity	The excellence model uses this process, strategy, HR, finance, and support services, which means that it's all a network that's led by the excellence criteria KPIs and results.	As a service entity, they can provide it in one building and two floors, and they are applying the excellence model more than you, and for that the nature of each business is related to the excellence model implementation.	It is related to the core business, where that the people that are in the core business will find it a bit challenging to implement the criteria	The new mod focusing on t business of t itself, so this benefit of the
I will start with the internal, the first thing is financial wise because the new model is focusing on the core business	after implementing the 4G we focus on the ease of doing business to give it a bigger area to Jump in ranking globally		Yes it involves the core business now , and 60% of structured system, and it takes us across all of the organizational pillars if you want to become a solid and a robust business in terms of the government unit	The model itself is a well implementation will be assessed by the SMEs. They will come and see what you have	Exactly! As you know the implementation will be assessed by the SMEs. They will come and see what you have	Yes, it wasn't mandatory. The first three or four years it's just establishing the internal procedures, develop the internal systems, and building efforts more than starting to work on the core business	Other models they put the support and the core business in the same level.	I believe that from this model they have change the way that they have selected the assessment, because usually they have selected subject matter expert's who are experts in our core business	The new model focuses on the synergy for the entities, where the shared services in the government	In partnership, they have it from their opinion and to discuss how it will affect on them, and will help them in their business	For the core and the admin staff it's easy for them, but for those that are involved in the core business like in the hospitals the doctors, in court the judges, and police officers will find it hard for them to understand the deep concept of the criteria and	Secondly, wh assessors ar It's somethin positive that focusing on t business of t
the core business at different entities	Yes, exactly! Also, one more point as I said before that it focuses on the core business operation of the entity, and it minimizes the number of initiatives like projects that are not related to the entity		First and second is for the organization, but now inside the model has its own owners inside the organization, and this is a business language	The technical language inside the model has its own owners inside the organization, and this is a and assess your level	For an example one of the motivations is when you get a SMEs to assess you and assess your level	Even though that they were running departments in a parallel way, we said that we will participate and this will force us to go an extra mile for improving our internal procedures, even aligning the core business with the pioneering and	The core business here is very important and crucial for the organization	but they are experts in core business	integrated services	Also, for outside it's not easy because we dealt with different entities, and the type of business that you do is not easy to find the same one there.	, I need to translate the criteria to the core business, otherwise it's pointless for them.	We were hap new model b were focusin business, wh mandate of t organization, thing that we consider
Investment in people I mean in the training, education, and the development. It should be in many areas such as the	No, now it focuses on an entity that focuses on its core business, and according to your mandate they should cover all of		The criteria consider the strategy as a core business.	We don't face a challenge even with different versions of the model, at the end it would end up as a business language.	Also, one of the obstacles is the SMEs	For us we were lucky that the 4G is unique, because it aligns the notion behind it to have one integrated government, which means that we	Anything that you want to implement you need to start with the top management and executive directors, and	international reports for the services	It's very difficult to get a direct benchmarking from the outside, because it depends on the nature of your business		The good thi criteria, is th focusing on t business

Sheet tabs: TH1-Pioneering | TH2-Happiness | **TH3-Core Business Model** | TH4-National Agenda-Gov Plan | TH5- Recognition | TH6-Culture of Excellence | TH7-Com …

Screenshot for Theme 4: National Agenda/Government Plan

A1 = Theme # 4: National Agenda-Government Plan

R4	R5	R6	R7	R8	R9	R10	R11	R12	R13	R14	R15	R16
The second thing is not to only have a strategy, but to have a linked strategy with the government strategy	We had to revise our strategies and align ourselves 100% with the government national agenda where previously we were just waiting for instructions of how to move on		There is a set of values beneath their strategic goals, vision, and mission which triggered them to start building in each individual thinking	I believe as I mentioned, that it should be a culture within the organization at the top management level, which is the strategical direction, and at the operational level	one of the main criteria's of the model is the Abu Dhabi plan, which is the main plan for Abu Dhabi Emirates	The Prime Minister office has around twelve strategies such as, the national agenda, the AI, and the accelerators	The main pillar of the new model of excellence is talking about the vision, and how to link entities vision with the Abu Dhabi vision	If you look at the criteria and the criterion parts of the government excellence model, you will see that we are talking about the vision and the government plan, and it's talking about Abu Dhabi	If we talk about the strategic Dubai plan, we don't have a full contribution and we are like a data source that supports other entities, and we are not owners of the KPIs	So, now the strategic plan is focusing on the main mandate, the initiatives, the programs that are focusing on the core business, and the main mandates of the organization, so that they can achieve their strategic objective and vision	The excellence model is sitting a standard for certain practices, which are very important to address within the organization. For an example, if we are talking about the strategy, there's a strategy execution, strategy development, strategy implementation, and cascading of objectives	The benefits connected to development that's neede governmen t work, plans, and everythin
The new model pushes every department to link themselves with their strategy to Dubai's government strategy, which is a very positive attitude	currently we have to design our strategy, our operational plans, our objectives, and everything connected with that to be 100% aligned with the national agenda		At that time if you are assessing for an example the smart government, they go there and they request a different strategy for digital transformation or smart government	It gives clear guidelines for the management to plan strategiclaly in a very excellent way	Abu Dhabi plan, which the entity is achieving and contributing towards the success of this plan, which is something very good	These national initiatives are not implemented in all of the entities	because when these entities are created they are based on one reason which is linked to Abu Dhabi's plan	It is an ambitious plan to be one of the top five governments in the world	We are the data source for 187 KPIs in Dubai strategic plan, but we are not the owners of one single KPI because we are collecting data from the entities. We are giving the executive Council the data and we are the source, but we are not responsible of the results of the KPIs	Everyone is looking for implementing the model as part of the mandate, as well their plans aren't part of their performance evaluation	This was a model that has been introduced in 2016 in Dubai's government, and we didn't know anything about it before. Indeed, we have strategies for five years, but no one thought about these strategies for fifteen or fifty years	If we emphas meaning of th development to achieve yo goals, and KP
We might dream to have a directly linked strategy results for each government entity with the executive Council themselves	Implementation of the model was projected 100% in our trade plans and government system for the human management, supplier management, customer management, and society as well		We had a few people in the IT that were in the smart government, and I didn't think that they could see the linkage between the business and the smart government strategic direction	There are some strategies like SWAT analysis, PESTEL analysis, future-shaping, and other tools to cooperate into the cycle.	Abu Dhabi plan is a plan for the whole Emirates. There are four pillars of this plan, one is the economic development, the other one is infrastructure, and the third one is about education, so they are four pillars	there should be an alignment between the innovation national agenda or national strategy in the entities	because they talked about how to link strategy to the entities. As we know, that we are a government that uses strategy to achieve our goal. They talked about how to link strategy	For an example, if you are talking about the vision like innovation and achieving Abu Dhabi's plan	The criteria can be applicable to all of the entities despite the size of the entities. The only difference is, that the big entities can have more employees that are working on these criteria's, which is a benefit for them, but it doesn't give us an excuse	but in other papers they mentioned it as part of the barriers. For an example, the lack of planning. There are no clear plans for achieving the excellence or implementing the excellence model within the organization, then it can be a big barrier for	So, this model helps them to see how they can contribute in order to start planning for the upcoming twenty or thirty years. Also, another benefit is allowing entities to understand their contribution to the government strategy	For an examp the role of ev Dubai's plan operations, c plans, initiat projects, cust and everythin
The second important	Generally, the employees		How can they review the	How to develop and study	At DEP, we are the main	leadership knows how		Each governmental entity	I can recommend that		However, they might also	In the previous model,	if we go back

Sheet tabs: TH1-Pioneering | TH2-Happiness | TH3-Core Business Model | **TH4-National Agenda-Gov Plan** | TH5- Recognition | TH6-Culture of Excellence | TH7-Com …

Screenshot for Theme 5: Recognition

Screenshot for Theme 6: Culture of Pioneering

Screenshot for Theme 7: Commitment

Screenshot for Theme 8: Resources

Screenshot for Theme 9: People Capability Building

Screenshot for Theme 10: One Government

Screenshot for Theme 11: Assessment Process 1-Skillsets of Assessors

Screenshot for Theme 11: Assessment Process 2-Submission Process

Screenshot for Theme 11: Assessment Process 3-Frequency and Duration of Assessment

Screenshot for Theme 11: Assessment Process 4- Assessment Tool

Screenshot for Theme 11: Assessment Process 5- Assessment Feedback Report

Theme # 11: Assessment Process- Assessment Feedback Report

	R4	R5	R6	R7	R8	R9	R10	R11	R12	R13	R14	R15	R16
	The reporting itself is an issue of the assessment skills, and they lack the assessment skills which was very unprofessional and not useful, which was a challenge and we complained about that	The subject matter experts we appreciate their backgrounds and their experience to add value to our industry, but they have never been assessors and all of a sudden they were put in these shoes to assess, score, and write feedback reports for the organizations.	The new way of reporting now as well as a challenge, before it was a but for huge entities strength point and an improvement point	The timings sometimes it's OK for small entities sometimes it's not, and I think that we have three to five days of assessment, but sometimes the assessment itself for one of the criteria's they didn't even have time to check it, and we saw it in the report itself that we didn't have anything related to	I believe that, the feedback reports is a challenge of how to write it, because you need criteria's and specific qualities like excellence assessment, Radar approach, or the PDCA, just to give it to the assessors so they can build around this methodology	No, we didn't get any benefits because this is related to the time being given to the assessors, which wasn't enough for them to prepare a good submission report	The feedback report came as a high-level without any comments for improvement.	For the feedback report, as we mentioned that if you don't have standards or guidelines directed and clear for the assessors, then you will not get a good direct feedback report, because the feedback report itself should be based on criteria and the criteria itself is something new	Most of the experts are coming without any proper knowledge of the assessment and process, so that's why we don't see the consistency in the feedback reports. Most of the feedback reports aren't actionable, or it provides advice or consultant	Some of the comments that were mentioned in the report itself had contradicted itself with other comments in the same report	Regarding the feedback report, I think that they need to be improved by giving more time to that assessors to write their feedback report	Actually, when we look into the criteria, the capabilities, and results, we expect to see the feedback report with improvement areas, not generic but to be more specific	The feedback very good and which helped develop and organization. some recomm organization. do you only h four KPIs in D
	The report was full of recommendations, which is not the right way to do the report	Yes these people are experts and they know how to give feedback about the core functions of the organization, but when you receive the reports they are scrambled sometimes and it's upside down		If you want me to asses the validity of the report, we can say that sixty is valid forty is not valid	As I mentioned before, this might also have a disadvantage because of the subject matter expert's core business, they may not have the proper capabilities to write the reports and talk in the excellence language, or to map what they have based on excellence terminologies or methodologies.	Plus, they are not experts in the assessment, but they are experts in the core business. From our experience, I believe that these two assessors had visited the UAE for the first time when they came for the assessment, and they have reached 48 hours before the assessment and they left maybe 24 hours after the	They spoke about the strength areas and recommendations for what the entity should do after two or three years. So, it came as a high-level, and it focused on the areas that are excellent, and innovation areas initiatives.	They gave us a feedback report in English and translated in Arabic, and when we go through lines there are differences between Arabic and English	There is something that should be done here, and to bring back the balance between the SMEs and the assessors, so they don't want to break it down.	Sometimes, they consider this point as a positive point, but in other areas they consider it as a negative point	The way that the EFQM has been following and providing the report with strengths and weaknesses was more structured and more explanatory for the organization, by improving the statement that has been used for the EFQM report	It was at high-level, and it was very difficult to deal with. We were expecting to have a detailed report that helps us easily to develop it in action, but it was very difficult to understand	This shouldn included in t because it's to add more executive Cou In Dubai's pl it's the role o executive Cou This won't af entire feedba can ignore th recommenda it isn't applic
	As an assessor you know that we are not allowed to give recommendations, but as a field expert they give recommendations for the assessment and they give recommendations for the report, and I don't know if that's a part of the new model or what	It's a mixture between the strength, the good recommendations, and areas for improvement			They are two different teams that are assessing two different criteria's, and I'm not sure if they do crosschecks to know how the final report is drafted for one entity, but I'm not sure if it's collaborated or not	Sometimes, there was a misunderstanding between the seven stars rating and services, so when they have the feedback they changed and made it clear for all of the entities	So, within the time given they have to do the assessment, the scoring, the reporting, and from what I heard is that they also have to sit with the jury to receive the feedback, which for them wasn't healthy to be able to do all of that especially	It must allow the subject matter experts, to give us the best practices	As I told you that the criteria isn't clear and there are no standards for actionable. you will get the feedback report.	Yes! It's not very well structured and not actionable.	The assessor that visited us came from an academic background, and some of the comments weren't applicable to us, because in theory you can do that but in practice we can't. We also explained so many points in the	For an example, I used to write the reports of the EFQM, and we used to focus on the requirements themselves, but if I want to write the same sentences I will keep in mind that I am writing about the results, focusing on the results	There were some criteria's that weren't clear, and we didn't have a chance to discuss it with the assessors or the people that are managing the program after the assessment.	When the fee comes, we sh what's not. H feedback rep for the organ

Sheet tabs: TH11-Assessment Process (2) | TH11-Assessment Process (3) | TH11-Assessment Process (4) | **TH11-Assessment Process (5)** | TH12-Excellence Criteria

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Screenshot for Theme 12: Excellence Criteria

Theme # 12: Excellence Criteria

	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	R7	R8	R9	R10	R11
	So the number of the customers, the number of centers is different, so these things need to be taken into consideration of implementing in the entity itself	There is a special criteria that focuses on the improvement of the services, and the service center that provides many services by the entity to the customer itself	think it's focused more on the criteria, you see that the focused on the happiness of the customer, and they added innovation	Now when you see the criteria, you see that the enablers and the results are measured required to the results that are expected from this criteria	there's a clear criteria about the sustainability of the national economy, which is very important because the entire country depends on the economy, society's sustainability, as well as the environment	For me the last criteria was a clearer than the new model. It's a new criteria and a new approach,	For the model itself, the comments that I have are regarding the fast-changing of the criteria itself	it gives clear guidelines for the management to plan strategically in a very excellent way	one of the main criteria's of the model is the Abu Dhabi plan, which is the main plan for Abu Dhabi Emirates and one of the criteria as well as Abu Dhabi plan, which will measure how much the entity is achieving and contributing towards the success of this plan, which is something very good.	For an example, the strategic direction. The strategic direction in the old model, tells me what are the KPI's and how we can achieve the strategy	I think the distributio be made for all of the because there are dif and changes between government and the
	So all of that needs to be taken into consideration to be a part of customizing for each entity.	the smart government services, the digitalization of all services to make it much easier and faster to be done. Also, the excellence model pushes the entities to focus more on the competitiveness support that's related to the core business	we have criteria for service in the model itself	The criteria consider the strategy as a core business. So we are linking our main responsibilities with the government strategy with your operation, program, smart services, and applications	workshops with employees and especially for the concerned directors for the departments that are related to the criterias' and pillars and explaining to them the requirements and have a dialogue with them	they were learning new things and get a new experience. The way of implementing the excellence model, will be measured by the radar model. It's the same approach but a different name.	Sometimes following up with this will be challenging especially, and what happened always is that the updates on the criteria itself comes way beyond and in a very close time to the assessment itself	The excellence says, that you should have an effective performance management. What does this mean? That you monitor your performance to you see where the gaps are you do corrective actions in the right way so that the leaders will be happy that they are on the right track	in the previous model each entity had the right to do enablers	they are not focusing on the enablers	There are some inter between these criter maybe it's ambiguous the detail of each one
	The thing is inside the organization, we don't have to depend on the committees to do the criteria, but we need to be in the DNA of the entity itself	So the criteria itself was useful to order, there is now a new criteria that focuses on pioneering the competitiveness, and I think in the pillar number 1	model helps you to increase elements of the core business in the first pillar of the criteria, which helps the organization to focus more on what they are doing	Now we covered the whole	Sometimes there are changes on the criteria's, and the time that's given is sometimes limited for the organization to quickly adapt and understand the nature of changes, as well	As a small organization it will not have methodologies and capabilities to implement the excellence model.	you are finding yourself that you're building some capabilities, but maybe it's not as per as the criteria requirement. Sometimes it's covering, sometimes it's	Some people tend to follow the model by the book and the problem here is, that the model itself is concentrating on the results, and people think that we should have	For an example, the government introduces some service, identification of each entity services, how the services are being	it doesn't focus on the innovation as a culture	For that, somehow th duplication in the som criteria's

Sheet tabs: TH11-Assessment Process (2) | TH11-Assessment Process (3) | TH11-Assessment Process (4) | TH11-Assessment Process (5) | **TH12-Excellence Criteria**

Screenshot for Theme 13: Size and work Nature of the organization

Screenshot for Theme 14: Benchmarking

Screenshot for Theme 15: Award Custodian

Theme 15 #: Award Custodian/Offices

	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	R7	R8	R9	R10	R11	R12	R13
	If there is an approach I wanted to do as a custodian to study the needs and expectation maybe for the entities before I do any changes in the model, it will be beneficial for both sides	They request from us to put this KPI and link to this capability, but we don't have this information and this is a challenge for us also. I think it could be overcome by more cooperation between TEC and third-party entities.	Now in the PMO they have expert diploma training and leaders that they want their employee to be an expert in excellence.	I think there is a huge responsibility for the government excellence program to support small and medium organizations	Sometimes there are changes on the criteria's, and the time that's given is sometimes limited for the organization to quickly adapt and understand the nature of changes, as well as preparing a revised submission management document that represents the organization	I think it's better to explain more to the assessors about the governmental entities	You need to get an assessor that's either from an academic or research background, so a combination that contains academic and regulatory advisement from the regulatory body. Most of the federal government is regulatory body	At the executive Council level or the PMO, there should be an agreement on what are the major policies that are needed for Dubai or the UAE, and should we come from the top down	You need to get more preparation time for the entities to be prepared. I need also the executive Council or the award office, to give technical support about these criteria's and to tell the entities what do they expect from them, and we couldn't find that.	the assessment process in the entities, listening to comments after the assessment meeting, and workshops with the Prime Minister office Sheikh Khalifa program	The external reasons for implementing the excellence model, is the support from the executive Council which is very important	Not all of them. Some of the criteria's aren't applicable for some organizations, and this is normal. I think that the awards custodians offered a flexible weighting scale, so that's why I think they solve this issue	We are giving executive Cou... and we are t... but we are n... responsible... of the KPIs
	So this exercise could be done between the custodian and the entities, I mean the government in this case, just to have a mutual benefits for implementing the model.	One more point about the requirement for the customer satisfaction survey that's held by TEC itself, and also Dubai's smart government have this happiness index.	more courses fromPMO to all of the entities, such as ministries and federal agencies	They are doing training and making awareness which is good, but it isn't enough and needs support from them	agree with you it needs further clarification and further training for both parties for the applicants, as well as the assessors	At the first quarter there will be an assessment for the excellence model. In the second quarter, there will be an assessment for the Dubai model, and it's different than the government excellence model. In the third quarter, there will be an assessment for the seven stars. The government itself organizes programs and implements them, so why don't they make them all as one model and cover all of those	The first perspective is the criteria for the model itself. I think they can be more ahead of time when they do a re-vamp or adding or changing some criteria's. They shouldn't be late in showing those changes	These are the main policies that we should focus on for the upcoming years, and there should be a contributor for each policy from different entities, and the contribution should be measured by certain KPIs and certain weights	That can be part of the technical support that's provided by the executive office or the award office	The government and the Prime Minister office measure how the entities make a partnership to present shared services.	Awareness sessions and training	Some criteria's are applicable for all of the government tell entities. For an example, if you are talking about the vision like innovation and achieving Abu Dhabi's plan. Each governmental entity has their own chair or roadmap to achieve the Emirates plan, so the entities that contribute a little, they have limited responsibilities in this criteria.	At the end, w... government... entities are f... executive Cou... have one goa... it. If all of th... governmenta... cooperate to... a very good s...
	but even though if they wanted to implement new things, they should give people enough time to understand the new model	The 4G model takes data from any custodian departments such as, departments of finance, Dubai smart government, Dubai model, the executive council, and legal affairs. A success factor would be same as	The second thing is, that if they have special units like training college, training center, or training department in the PMO to focus on a yearly plan	They use excellence consultants sometimes for the awareness and helping them to prepare the files and documents for the assessment, which is normal. But at the end of the day, even in the consultants, you will not	What we noticed is that the assessors sometimes don't ask about a combination bundle to show us our capabilities in comparison with the results, but most of them come ready because they saw the results remotely	The Executive Council is the owner of the program itself, so training and awareness session from their side is needed, and if they have any brochures that are related to how do you implement excellence model	The PMO does the revamp, and it's either to show it from the starting subject cycle after directly finishing the cycle. A few months after finishing the cycle there is a government gathering for the excellence	if you do this approach, I do believe that there will be a cooperation and if there is a target missing in a policy or a KPI, all of the players and all of the teams should be questioned on why you did this	The award office needs to sit with the entities and give them feedback, which didn't happen.	I think that the Prime Minister office the Sheikh Khalifa program have many workshops for GEM one and GEM two, and bring excellence ambassadors, and demonstrate many videos for the model for	There are some interactions between these criteria, and maybe it's ambiguous about the detail of each one of them	I think that the training and collaboration is OK, because they are supportive of everything that we need, but you mentioned valid point which is the research and development.	My suggestio... modify the m... to only just m... results or ru... example, tha... number one i... no they have... alternatives...

Tabs: TH11-Assessment Process (5) | TH12-Excellence Criteria | TH13- Size and work Nature | TH14- Benchmarking | **TH15- Award Custodian-Offices**

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Appendix 12: Data Analysis

12-1 Analysis of Pioneering Theme

The table below counts the number of times the theme 'pioneering' and related words were mentioned in the interviews.

Respondents		Pioneering/ competitiveness	Other related categories*	Sub-Total
R1	IE	7	0	7
	IR	8	0	8
R2	IE	5	0	5
	IR	5	0	5
R3	IE	0	5	5
	IR	0	2	2
R4	IE	1	2	3
	IR	0	0	0
R5	IE	11	8	19
	IR	3	2	5
R6	IE	9	3	12
	IR	6	1	7
R7	IE	7	5	12
	IR	3	1	4
R8	IE	8	8	16
	IR	1	0	1
R9	IE	3	1	4
	IR	5	0	5
R10	IE	5	13	18
	IR	2	3	5
R11	IE	1	27	28
	IR	0	6	6
R12	IE	11	13	24
	IR	3	7	10
R13	IE	24	53	77
	IR	8	1	9
R14	IE	4	51	55
	IR	0	1	1
R15	IE	6	27	33
	IR	5	2	7
R16	IE	5	6	11
	IR	4	5	9
R17	IE	2	17	19
	IR	2	2	4
R18	IE	0	28	28
	IR	3	16	19
R19	IE	5	9	14
	IR	2	7	9

Word	Total	
	IE	IR
Pioneering/ competitiveness	107	53
Other related categories*	202	31
Total	309	84
Grand Total	393	

Legends: IE= Interviewee, IR-Interviewer

* Other related categories include benchmarking and best practices.

12-2 Analysis of Happiness Theme

The table below counts the number of times the theme 'happiness' and related words were mentioned in the interviews.

Respondents		Happiness	Satisfaction	Sub-Total
R1	IE	0	0	0
	IR	0	0	0
R2	IE	6	4	10
	IR	1	1	2
R3	IE	11	0	11
	IR	2	0	2
R4	IE	0	0	0
	IR	0	0	0
R5	IE	6	1	7
	IR	0	0	0
R6	IE	0	3	3
	IR	3	0	3
R7	IE	2	0	2
	IR	0	0	0
R8	IE	6	1	7
	IR	0	0	0
R9	IE	0	2	2
	IR	0	0	0
R10	IE	2	7	9
	IR	0	0	0
R11	IE	0	3	3
	IR	0	0	0
R12	IE	2	2	4
	IR	0	0	0
R13	IE	4	0	4
	IR	4	0	4
R14	IE	0	2	2
	IR	0	0	0
R15	IE	1	0	1
	IR	0	0	0
R16	IE	4	0	4
	IR	0	0	0
R17	IE	1	4	5
	IR	2	2	4
R18	IE	0	0	0
	IR	0	0	0
R19	IE	5	1	
	IR	0	0	

Word	Total	
	IE	IR
Happiness	44	6
Satisfaction	25	1
Total	69	7
Grand Total	76	

Legends: IE= Interviewee, IR-Interviewer

12-3 Analysis of Core Business Theme

The table below counts the number of times the theme 'Core Business Theme' and related words were mentioned in the interviews.

Respondents		Core Business	Mandate	Services	SMEs	Sub-Total
R1	IE	4	4	5	14	27
	IR	1	1	1	1	4
R2	IE	10	3	18	3	34
	IR	2	1	3	3	9
R3	IE	1	0	5	0	6
	IR	0	0	2	0	2
R4	IE	8	2	1	14	25
	IR	3	0	0	1	4
R5	IE	1	1	5	7	14
	IR	1	2	0	1	4
R6	IE	0	0	0	12	12
	IR	1	0	0	2	3
R7	IE	13	7	0	13	33
	IR	0	0	0	3	3
R8	IE	23	0	15	5	43
	IR	0	0	0	0	0
R9	IE	5	2	9	7	23
	IR	1	0	0	1	2
R10	IE	0	0	14	13	27
	IR	0	0	1	2	3
R11	IE	0	3	27	20	50
	IR	0	0	1	9	10
R12	IE	5	1	5	8	19
	IR	1	0	1	0	2
R13	IE	28	3	12	48	91
	IR	0	0	1	10	11
R14	IE	13	12	10	23	58
	IR	0	1	0	3	4
R15	IE	1	0	6	21	28
	IR	0	2	1	0	3
R16	IE	0	8	7	16	31
	IR	2	0	1	9	12
R17	IE	13	7	20	4	44
	IR	2	0	1	2	5
R18	IE	7	2	16	3	23
	IR	0	0	0	1	1
R19	IE	4	0	10	5	19
	IR	1	2	0	2	3

Word	Total	
	IE	IR
Core business	112	12
Mandate	46	7
Services	139	12
SMEs	224	45
Total	531	76
Grand Total	607	

Legends: IE= Interviewee, IR-Interviewer

12-4 Analysis of National Agenda/Government Plan Theme

The table below counts the number of times the theme 'National Agenda/Government Plan' and related words were mentioned in the interviews.

Respondents		National Agenda/ local Government Plan	Others	Sub-Total
R1	IE	6	18	24
	IR	0	9	9
R2	IE	2	8	10
	IR	0	1	1
R3	IE	3	0	3
	IR	1	1	2
R4	IE	20	2	22
	IR	0	2	2
R5	IE	9	4	13
	IR	0	0	0
R6	IE	2	0	2
	IR	2	0	2
R7	IE	3	1	4
	IR	0	1	1
R8	IE	9	11	20
	IR	0	0	0
R9	IE	16	1	17
	IR	0	0	0
R10	IE	8	48	56
	IR	1	0	1
R11	IE	6	0	6
	IR	1	0	1
R12	IE	9	0	0
	IR	0	0	0
R13	IE	4	7	11
	IR	0	0	0
R14	IE	2	14	16
	IR	0	0	0
R15	IE	8	14	22
	IR	0	0	0
R16	IE	8	11	19
	IR	0	1	1
R17	IE	13	6	19
	IR	1	3	4
R18	IE	7	0	7
	IR	0	0	0
R19	IE	15	5	20
	IR	3	0	3

Word	Total	
	IE	IR
National Agenda/ local Government Plan	115	5
others	139	15
Total	254	20
Grand Total	274	

Legends: IE= Interviewee, IR-Interviewer

12-5 Analysis of Recognition Theme

The table below counts the number of times the theme 'Recognition' and related words were mentioned in the interviews.

Respondents		Recognition/Award	Others	Sub-Total
R1	IE	6	7	13
	IR	3	3	6
R2	IE	8	7	15
	IR	2	5	7
R3	IE	4	2	6
	IR	1	0	1
R4	IE	2	8	10
	IR	0	1	1
R5	IE	3	1	4
	IR	0	0	0
R6	IE	0	9	9
	IR	0	2	2
R7	IE	4	7	11
	IR	0	0	0
R8	IE	7	1	8
	IR	0	0	0
R9	IE	3	14	17
	IR	0	0	0
R10	IE	0	0	0
	IR	0	0	0
R11	IE	3	2	5
	IR	0	0	0
R12	IE	4	1	5
	IR	0	0	0
R13	IE	5	5	10
	IR	4	1	5
R14	IE	5	3	8
	IR	1	0	1
R15	IE	7	0	7
	IR	0	0	0
R16	IE	8	1	9
	IR	3	0	3
R17	IE	1	1	2
	IR	2	0	2
R18	IE	1	3	4
	IR	3	2	5
R19	IE	3	0	3
	IR	1	0	1

Word	Total	
	IE	IR
Recognition/Award	69	68
Others	14	12
Total	83	80
Grand Total	163	

Legends: IE= Interviewee, IR-Interviewer

12-6 Analysis of Culture of Pioneering Theme

The table below counts the number of times the theme 'Culture of Pioneering' and related words were mentioned in the interviews.

Respondents		Culture of Excellence	Corporate Culture	Sub-Total
R1	IE	4	6	10
	IR	2	0	2
R2	IE	1	4	5
	IR	1	2	3
R3	IE	3	1	4
	IR	4	2	6
R4	IE	3	7	10
	IR	1	1	2
R5	IE	5	5	10
	IR	1	0	1
R6	IE	13	8	21
	IR	1	1	2
R7	IE	2	9	11
	IR	0	1	1
R8	IE	8	8	16
	IR	0	0	0
R9	IE	2	1	3
	IR	3	1	4
R10	IE	2	3	5
	IR	0	0	0
R11	IE	2	4	6
	IR	2	0	2
R12	IE	7	0	7
	IR	2	0	2
R13	IE	6	1	7
	IR	1	0	1
R14	IE	2	6	8
	IR	0	1	1
R15	IE	2	8	10
	IR	0	0	0
R16	IE	0	0	0
	IR	0	0	0
R17	IE	0	7	7
	IR	0	0	0
R18	IE	1	5	6
	IR	0	1	1
R19	IE	1	7	
	IR	0	1	

Word	Total	
	IE	IR
Culture of excellence	62	18
Corporate culture	71	9
Total	133	27
Grand Total	160	

Legends: IE= Interviewee, IR-Interviewer

12-7 Analysis of Commitment Theme

The table below counts the number of times the theme 'Commitment', and related words were mentioned in the interviews.

Respondents		Commitment	Others	Sub-Total
R1	IE	3	2	5
	IR	2	0	2
R2	IE	6	5	11
	IR	4	1	5
R3	IE	1	0	1
	IR	1	0	1
R4	IE	5	4	9
	IR	0	0	0
R5	IE	1	7	8
	IR	3	0	3
R6	IE	6	0	6
	IR	4	2	6
R7	IE	0	4	4
	IR	0	0	0
R8	IE	1	2	3
	IR	0	0	0
R9	IE	0	1	1
	IR	0	0	0
R10	IE	0	0	0
	IR	0	0	0
R11	IE	0	3	3
	IR	0	0	0
R12	IE	3	3	6
	IR	0	0	0
R13	IE	7	5	12
	IR	0	0	0
R14	IE	3	7	10
	IR	0	0	0
R15	IE	3	11	14
	IR	0	2	2
R16	IE	1	2	3
	IR	1	0	1
R17	IE	7	3	10
	IR	0	0	0
R18	IE	1	0	1
	IR	1	1	2
R19	IE	6	7	13
	IR	2	1	3

Word	Total	
	IE	IR
Commitment	40	15
Others	56	5
Total	96	20
Grand Total	116	

Legends: IE= Interviewee, IR-Interviewer

12-8 Analysis of Resources Theme

The table below counts the number of times the theme 'Resources' and related words were mentioned in the interviews.

Respondents		Financial	Non-financial	Resources	Sub-Total
R1	IE	9	1	0	10
	IR	2	0	0	2
R2	IE	6	8	4	18
	IR	0	2	1	3
R3	IE	0	3	0	3
	IR	2	1	0	3
R4	IE	4	9	10	23
	IR	2	0	0	2
R5	IE	0	3	4	7
	IR	0	0	0	0
R6	IE	4	2	8	14
	IR	1	1	4	6
R7	IE	1	4	1	6
	IR	0	0	0	0
R8	IE	2	3	0	5
	IR	1	2	1	5
R9	IE	0	6	3	9
	IR	0	0	1	1
R10	IE	0	1	0	1
	IR	0	0	0	0
R11	IE	0	4	2	6
	IR	0	0	0	0
R12	IE	0	0	1	1
	IR	0	0	1	1
R13	IE	0	0	0	0
	IR	0	0	0	0
R14	IE	0	15	2	17
	IR	0	0	0	0
R15	IE	1	9	1	11
	IR	0	0	0	0
R16	IE	1	15	3	19
	IR	0	0	1	1
R17	IE	1	2	5	8
	IR	1	2	5	8
R18	IE	1	0	5	6
	IR	0	0	2	2
R19	IE	1	1	0	2
	IR	0	0	0	0

Word	Total	
	IE	IR
Financial	28	8
Non-Financial	83	6
Resources	39	24
Total	120	38
Grand Total	158	

Legends: IE= Interviewee, IR-Interviewer

12-9 Analysis of People Capability Building Theme

The table below counts the number of times the theme 'People Capability Building' and related words were mentioned in the interviews.

Respondents		Capability Building	Sub-Total
R1	IE	2	2
	IR	8	8
R2	IE	4	4
	IR	4	4
R3	IE	11	11
	IR	7	7
R4	IE	17	17
	IR	0	0
R5	IE	15	15
	IR	1	1
R6	IE	21	21
	IR	2	2
R7	IE	8	8
	IR	0	0
R8	IE	38	38
	IR	0	0
R9	IE	12	12
	IR	1	1
R10	IE	7	7
	IR	1	1
R11	IE	8	8
	IR	3	3
R12	IE	12	12
	IR	5	5
R13	IE	7	7
	IR	0	0
R14	IE	5	5
	IR	0	0
R15	IE	15	15
	IR	5	5
R16	IE	7	7
	IR	9	9
R17	IE	6	6
	IR	3	3
R18	IE	4	4
	IR	1	1
R19	IE	11	11
	IR	7	7

Word	Total	
	IE	IR
Capability Building	181	46
Grand Total	227	

Legends: IE= Interviewee, IR-Interviewer

12-10 Analysis of Award Custodian Theme

The table below counts the number of times the theme 'Award Custodian' and related words were mentioned in the interviews.

Respondents		Award Custodian/Office(s)	Sub-Total
R1	IE	2	2
	IR	5	5
R2	IE	7	7
	IR	4	4
R3	IE	6	6
	IR	1	1
R4	IE	7	7
	IR	2	2
R5	IE	4	4
	IR	1	1
R6	IE	6	6
	IR	4	4
R7	IE	8	8
	IR	5	5
R8	IE	18	18
	IR	2	2
R9	IE	8	8
	IR	7	7
R10	IE	9	9
	IR	4	4
R11	IE	4	4
	IR	4	4
R12	IE	6	6
	IR	5	5
R13	IE	3	3
	IR	2	2
R14	IE	4	4
	IR	3	3
R15	IE	4	4
	IR	6	6
R16	IE	10	10
	IR	7	7
R17	IE	12	12
	IR	9	9
R18	IE	1	1
	IR	3	3
R19	IE	14	14
	IR	8	8

Word	Total	
	IE	IR
Award Custodian/Office(s)	106	62
Grand Total	168	

Legends: IE= Interviewee, IR-Interviewer