Programme Management of Business Excellence Programmes in the Government Organisations

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Purpose

Today, many organisations are being aware and interested in the discipline of programme management. The approach is used as a means to implement strategy, develop and maintain new capabilities in order to manage business change. It operates on a strategic level to create synergy between various projects and deliver a set of benefits by coordinating between projects. 'Programmes' provide a transformational way for integrating projects as well as organizational strategies. The growth in using programs has led to the need to better understand the phenomenon of program success. Only few studies can be found that offer measurement dimensions for programme success such as those set by The Standard for Program Management, and Managing Successful Programmes. The later set of standards evaluates a programme's performance based on value creation and learning loop. Some scholars have linked programme success with achieving organisational change and strategies. Others developed a construct for successful programmes and provide a step forward in investigating and measuring the dimensions of programme success. However, the literature on program success and its definition remains at the conceptual level. The proposed thesis aims to bridge this gap through evaluating the success of business excellence programmes (BEPs) in the context of the UAE Government Sector. Managing these programmes involves the management of several projects that develop a multi project working culture. This is considered to be an essential factor for the development and success of organisations in today's continually changing environment. Further, many organisations have tried to adopt the model but failed to achieve much, while others have achieved great success. Adopting these programmes is an exceptional challenge which requires the art of balancing priorities and resources in a way that enables organisations to achieve their strategic objectives.

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The objectives of the proposed thesis are namely: 1) To review the existing theoretical perspective of programmes' success and to identify programme management dimensions; and business excellence critical success factors (CSFs); 2) To develop constructs of business excellence programme context and programme success constructs; 3) To identify programme success factors that contribute to the successful implementation of BEPs; 4) To identify appropriate programme management models that can be used by UAE Government organisations that would achieve successful implementation of BEPs; 5) To provide practitioners with success factors enabling them to enhance the success of programmes.

Design/Methodology/Approach

In order to achieve the aims and objectives of the research and gain an in-depth understanding of the various measurement dimensions for programme success in business excellence context, a qualitative interpretative research approach based on a multiple case study is selected as the most appropriate approach to achieve the objectives of this study. Four Government organisations will be selected which will assist in exploring differences within and between cases in relation to the implementation of BEPs aiming to replicate the findings across the cases. The criteria for case selection include: sector, size of organisations, number of sites number of workforce employed in addition to the results achieved during the 'Award Cycle 2013/2014' among the obligatory category "Distinguished Government Entity". Data collection is based on semi-structured interviews with programmes' directors generally members of the top management team (Steering Committee); programmes' managers who are managing the excellence programme usually heading the Excellence and/or Strategic Departments; in addition to leaders and members of the Excellence teams across the selected organisations. Reviewing the related documents such as minutes of meetings, award's submissions, strategic plans, internal systems, etc. is another source of data. Analysing data will be based on theories of programme management; programme success; Total Quality Management, business excellence; business excellence success factors; in addition to business excellence and quality awards in the UAE .

Findings

The analysis will provide an in-depth understanding of business excellence programmes in the UAE Government Sector from various perspectives and the way these programmes are managed. This will involve the identification of various practices and approaches used by organisations to deploy BEMs from the outset. Challenges that hinder the applicability of BEMs along with success factors will also be identified. The analysis of BEMs applicability will then be related to the programme management approach and programme's success dimensions. As a result, the study will then be in a position to identify the most appropriate programme management model to be used in evaluating the success of BEPs.

Research Limitations

The limitations incurred are related to: 1) the context of UAE public sector specifically the selected entities; 2) a case study approach limits the ability to generalize the findings of the study; 3) time constraint and the duration of the Award's cycle may be difficult to test the proposed framework developed for BEPs; and difficulties related to access organisations and the power to test the proposed framework.

Originality/Value

Once completed, the outcomes of this thesis will contribute to filling the existing gap in the literature related to programme success constructs and dimensions. It will also provide the government sector organisations as well as practitioners with appropriate programme management models that can be adopted by the Government organisations to enable them to enhance the success of business excellence programmes which improves their performance and capabilities.