




Determining the Components of the Excellence Model in Educational Development and Human Resource Development in the Zahedan Education Organization

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ABSTRACT

Objective: The purpose of this research was to determine the components of the excellence model in educational development and human resource development in the Zahedan Education Organization.

Method: The research method was applied in terms of objective and qualitative in terms of research methodology. The research population consisted of selected experts from the Zahedan Education Organization with experience in management and policy-making, who were determined purposively based on theoretical saturation to a number of 17 individuals. The method of data collection was through library research, and the measurement tool was semi-structured interviews. In this plan, the stages of analyzing the collected qualitative data were conducted in two stages: open coding and axial coding.

Results: The results showed that the dimensions of the excellence model in educational development and human resource development in the Zahedan Education Organization were divided into five aspects: causal factors, contextual factors, intervening factors, strategic factors, and outcomes. The components identified were 1. Equity 2. Financial resources (inputs), 3. Efficiency and management in the dimension of causal factors; and the components 1. Effective management in the organization 2. Legal support for innovation in staff training 3. Resource capacities in the dimension of contextual factors; and the components 1. Managerial weaknesses 2. Procedural barriers 3. Legal and regulatory obstacles in the dimension of intervening factors; and the components 1. Increasing economic capacities and financial support 2. Development of educational capacities 3. Increasing agility in the dimension of strategic factors; and the components 1. Improving employee performance 2. Developing employee participation 3. Sustainable development in the dimension of outcomes were identified.

Conclusion: Given the obtained results, it was suggested that the Zahedan Education Organization should act gradually and step by step towards the realization of these categories, considering a roadmap and a long-term strategic plan. The development of an operational plan is necessary to implement it. Having a paradigmatic approach with a local and regional perspective also helps its realization.

Keywords: Educational Excellence Model, Human Resource Development, Education and Training.

1 Introduction

In any society, there are multiple systems, such as the administrative system, economic system, and educational system. The education system is referred to as a system that is the general model of institutions, establishments, and official organizations of the society, responsible for the transfer and flourishing of culture, individual development, and training of skilled and specialized human resources (Ramezani & Najjari, 2022). A significant question facing the education organization is how to identify, through various assessments, all strengths and areas for improvement comprehensively, and prepare for successful competition. Nowadays, productivity scholars and thinkers emphasize comprehensive quality management as a universal solution for enhancing organizational effectiveness through a system in management that ensures tasks are performed correctly, consistently, and at all organizational levels and angles. Within the framework of comprehensive quality management, educational excellence models are introduced as tools for implementing various management systems and structures in the education organization, as well as for measuring their success in establishing these systems. The use of these models in the education organization indicates significant growth in their performance indicators. Regardless of the sector in which the education organization operates or its economic scale, it must choose an appropriate management framework to succeed. The educational excellence model is a strong operational tool used for various organizational purposes. Educational excellence is not just a theoretical concept, but rather the acquisition and presentation of tangible, observable results based on evidence, ensuring sustainability and durability (Shafiee-Zadeh, 2022).

The educational excellence model generates a need in the field of education and employee empowerment for designing and developing a conceptual model and common language, aiming to elevate the status and performance of educational management in the Iranian Education Organization. The educational excellence model, due to its successful experience in implementing excellence models in educational organizations, familiarizes educators with concepts of excellence and subsequently launched the National Education Excellence Award (Aldarmaki & Yaakub, 2022; Pathak & Agrawal, 2019; Shafiee-Zadeh, 2022). One method defining the educational excellence model is valuing employee creativity. Educational excellence models, as a comprehensive tool with an all-

encompassing view of all aspects of the education organization, assist managers in better understanding the organization. These models are used for assessing and comparing the performance of the education organization, enabling it to evaluate its successes in implementing programs at different times, identify its strengths and weaknesses, define projects, and move towards excellence (Ramezani & Najjari, 2022).

In this context, one of the primary tasks and processes in the human resources cycle is human resource development, which deals with issues such as creating a dynamic organization and utilizing educational and learning opportunities for employees to improve organizational, group, and individual performance. Organizational resource development activities include designing and providing training, nurturing, and development to enhance organizational effectiveness. Employee development is an essential part of an organization's efforts to improve quality, retain key employees, face global competition and social changes, and implement changes in job design. Organizations today need individuals capable of operating intelligently and effectively in a complex world. Globally, special attention is paid to human resource development, and successful organizations realize that progress in this area and improving their personnel and training systems will result in very good outcomes in organizational efficiency, effectiveness, and productivity (Rajabi et al., 2017). The topic of human resource development, usually accompanied by various training methods, must be recognized as a primary task of organizational management. The important point is that nowadays, human resource development is not achieved solely through specialized and technical training but through a comprehensive system that nurtures organizational employees (Houshangifar, 2022; Nahi-Far et al., 2018; Otoo, 2019).

According to Swanson (1995), the cognitive bases of human resource development include economic theories, system theories, and psychological theories, demonstrating how individual performance, process execution, and organizational performance can be improved simultaneously through appropriate interventions via human resource development processes. These processes and activities of human resource development are considered at both individual and organizational levels and should play a more significant role by providing necessary learning mechanisms to encourage employees to think and perform their jobs optimally (Valentine et al., 2013).

Given that no comprehensive model regarding educational excellence and human resource development in education has been researched in the education organization or scarcely outside it, in industries, military, and health organizations, the researcher intends to provide suitable outcomes for officials and educational experts of the province and other researchers, utilizing the results of completed research and the opinions of educational system experts. Therefore, considering the aforementioned points, the main issue of the current research is to answer the question: What model can be designed for educational excellence and human resource development in the education organization?

2 Methods and Materials

2.1 Study Design and Participants

The research method was practical in terms of purpose and qualitative in terms of research methodology. The research population included selected experts from the Zahedan Education Organization with experience in management and policy-making, determined purposively based on theoretical saturation to a number of 17 individuals. The method of data collection was through library research, and the measurement tool was semi-structured interviews. The qualitative data analysis process in this study involved two stages: open coding and axial coding.

Participants included selected experts from the Zahedan Education Organization with experience in management and policy-making. Given the research method used in this study, no specific sample size was initially determined, and purposive sampling continued until theoretical saturation was achieved after 17 interviews. In the qualitative approach, "information-rich" purposive sampling was used, and the researcher selected potential individuals for observation who could enrich the required data repository. Characteristics of research participants in the qualitative section (selected experts from the Zahedan Education Organization with management and policy-making experience) included familiarity with the nature of human resource management, selection, employment, training and development of an organization's human resources, acquaintance with recruitment, selection and appointment, training, performance evaluation, and knowledge of compensation and job design.

2.2 Measures

2.2.1 Semi-Structured Interview

Considering the research stages, the most suitable method for data collection was interviewing experts (17 selected experts from the Zahedan Education Organization with experience in management and policy-making). This method was chosen to enhance the accuracy and reliability of the final research model. In the current study, interview questions were employed based on the opinions and perspectives of experts and elites, as well as the study of various articles and theses within the framework of the theoretical model.

2.3 Data Analysis

For qualitative data analysis, content analysis was used. In this method, a theory is developed using a set of data. In other words, this method is used when a theory is needed to explain a process, especially when existing theories do not explain such a process. It is also used to gain a new perspective on things that are already somewhat known. It was noted that in this research, a systematic method attributed to Strauss and Corbin was used for data analysis. This method is employed to uncover less-known phenomena and see what lies behind them. Accordingly, in this study, in-depth interviews with experts and specialists were used as the primary method of data collection. Furthermore, theoretical sampling continued until each category reached theoretical saturation, meaning no new data emerged in subsequent interviews, and the categories were sufficiently dense and their relationships established and confirmed.

3 Findings and Results

After conducting the interviews, various stages of implementation, primary and secondary coding, categorization, and analysis were performed, and the results are presented in this section.

A) Causal Factors: In grounded theory, causal factors refer to concepts that generally influence strategies, contextual factors, intervening factors, and outcomes within a set of identified codes. Code A relates to causal factors, defined from the first interviewee A1 to the seventeenth interviewee A17. The results from the categorization of codes in the open and axial coding stages are presented in [Table 1](#).

Table 1

Qualitative Results for Causal Factors

Axial Codes	Open Codes	Coding
Financial Resources	Insurance premiums paid by the organization	A1
	Various insurance premiums and medical service fees	A4, A7, A9
	Government contributions and commitments	A6
	Income from damages and penalties	A2
External Factors	Economic factors like inflation, economic progress, recession, economic sanctions	A2
	Social factors like demographic changes	A3, A6, A9
	Political factors like government interventions, laws, and regulations	A4, A7, A9
Human Resources and Equipment	Comprehensive personnel systems, presence/absence tracking in the entire organization	A6
	Competent human resources and prepared equipment	A1
	Information technology and equipment for service provision and follow-ups	A2, A4, A6
	Merit-based selection and meritocracy	A3
Stakeholder Inputs and Expectations	Service provision and capital, creativity and innovation	A5, A6
	Requests for retirement, survivor, and disability pensions	A7
Equity	Role of managers and employees in decision-making, directly or indirectly	A12
	Equal opportunities for colleagues, stakeholders, and clients	A12
	Selection and appointment based on equity, establishment of a fair system	A11
Accountability	Creation of a fair system for encouragement and discipline	A12
	Existence of an accountability system at all organizational levels	A13
	Accountability for complaints and criticisms	A13, A16
	Clear definition of duties and responsibilities for each task	A15, A17
Responsibility	Oversight by owners and primary stakeholders	A16
	Timely completion of tasks, responding to clients and colleagues	A17
	Respecting the rights of internal and external stakeholders	A11
Anti-corruption	Execution of tasks based on defined processes within set timelines	A12
	Fighting corruption through responsibility	A12
	Implementing control, evaluation, and providing feedback to employees	A12
	Strengthening ethical and belief foundations	A13, A17
Transparency	Two-way transparent communication between the organization and stakeholders	A15, A17
	Transparent management	A16
	Free flow of information and easy access for all stakeholders and the public	A13
Laws and Regulations	Rule of law	A2, A4, A6
	Consolidation and transparency of circulars, precise expertise in issuing circulars and guidelines	A5, A6
	Interaction with legislative bodies to protect the organization's capital	A7
Empowerment and Efficiency	Optimal use of human and material resources	A8
	Participation of all stakeholders in decision-making, directly or indirectly	A8

B) Contextual Factors: Contextual factors are a collection of causes and conditions that encourage an actor to engage in specific behavior. Code B relates to contextual factors,

defined from the first interviewee B1 to the seventeenth interviewee B17. The results from the categorization of codes in the axial coding stage are presented in [Table 2](#).

Table 2

Qualitative Results for Contextual Factors

Axial Codes	Open Codes	Coding
Flexibility	Creating an informal space while maintaining formality	B1
	Unity of procedure	B3
	Lower hierarchy	B4, B7, B9
	Facilitating laws	B6
	Transparency and accountability	B2, B16
Resource Capacities	Organizational commitment	B14
	Order and coordination	B12, B16, B17
	Technology update	B4, B7, B9
	Use of virtual networks for faster communication	B10, B12, B15

Legal Support	Financial support	B9, B11, B15
	Specialized human resources	B12, B16, B17
	Information system	B12, B16, B17
	Enforcement guarantees of laws	B6
	Enactment and amendment of specific laws and regulations	B1
	Removing legal barriers to investment, income generation, financing	B2, B4, B6
Effective Human Resource Management	Clarification of ambiguities and multiple legal definitions	B3
	Implementing communication policy and interaction with employees	B5, B6
	Aligning organizational perspectives	B7
	Having a specialized steering committee	B8
	Ratio of changes in human resources to total staff	B16, B16, B17
	Managing cultural differences	B15, B14, B17

C & D) Intervening Factors and Strategies: This section examines the challenges and problems in designing and validating the model of educational excellence and human resource development in the Zahedan Education Organization. Code C, related to intervening factors, is defined from the first interviewee C1 to the seventeenth interviewee C17. Additionally, this section examines the design and validation of the model of educational excellence

and human resource development in the Zahedan Education Organization. Code D, related to strategies, is defined from the first interviewee D1 to the seventeenth interviewee D17. The results from the categorization of codes in the open and axial coding stages for identifying effective intervening factors and strategies in the design and validation of the model are presented in Table 3.

Table 3

Qualitative Results for Intervening Factors and Strategies

Axial Codes	Open Codes	Coding
Legal and Regulatory Obstacles	Lack of appropriate laws	C1
	Legal barriers	C1, C2, C4
	Governmental obstacles	C3, C4
	Financial and administrative corruption	C1
	Individuals evading the law	C6, C7
Procedural Obstacles	Financial problems	C1, C5, C12
	Organizational resistance to change	C10
	Managers and employees unaware of advertising benefits	C11
	High advertising costs	C12
Managerial Weaknesses	Ineffective resource management	C13
	Professional incompetence of officials	C14
	Inability to calculate risk of dismissing officials	C15
	Conflicts among officials	C16
	Failure to update officials' knowledge with new trends	C17
	Insufficient government support	C8
Capacity Development	Succession planning for officials	D1
	Skills training	D1, D2, D4
	Hiring specialists	D3, D4
	Increasing learning capacities	D1
Economic Capacity and Financial Support	Defining financial provision projects	D1, D5, D12
	Attracting financial sponsors	D10
	Aligning laws with objectives	D11
	Enacting facilitative laws	D12
Strengthening Effective Civil Society Relations	Increasing effective communication with employees	D13
	Building trust among employees	D14
	Effective use of media	D15
	Effective communication with government managers	D16
	Eliminating discrimination	D17
	Reflecting employees' desires	D8
Increasing Agility	Enhancing technological capacities	D11, D12, D13
	Reducing bureaucracy	D14, D15, D16

Implementing decentralization policies	D14, D12, D11
Reducing hierarchy	D13, D14, D4
Accelerating processes	D15, D16, D7

E) Outcomes: This section investigates the outcomes and innovations of designing and validating the model of educational excellence and human resource development in the Zahedan Education Organization. Code E, related to outcomes and innovations, is defined from the first

interviewee E1 to the seventeenth interviewee E17. The results from the categorization of codes in the open and axial coding stages for identifying effective outcomes in the design and validation of the model are presented in [Table 4](#).

Table 4

Qualitative Results for Outcomes

Axial Codes	Open Codes	Coding
Development of Participation	Awareness building	E1
	Increasing employee participation	E1, E2, E4
	Enhancing employee sensitivity to responsibility	E3, E4
	Increasing volunteer activists	E1
	Direct employee supervision of organizational activities	D6, D5, D7
Performance Improvement	Enhancing organizational group capabilities	E1, E5, E12
	Optimal use of financial resources	E10
	Optimal use of volunteer forces	E11
	Outsourcing organizational services to the private sector	E12
Sustainable Development	Optimizing time	E13
	Enhancing quality of life	E14
	Security and comfort of employee life	E15
	Reducing class disparities	E16
	Increasing employee trust	E17
	Increasing social justice	E8

4 Discussion and Conclusion

The goal of this research was to identify the components of the excellence model in educational development and human resource development in the Zahedan Education Organization. Based on the findings from qualitative data and using grounded theory, the model was divided into five dimensions: causal factors, contextual factors, intervening factors, strategic factors, and outcomes. These include:

A) Components of causal factors in designing and validating the model, consisting of 11 components: 1. Financial resources, 2. External factors, 3. Human resources and equipment, 4. Stakeholder inputs and expectations, 5. Equity, 6. Accountability, 7. Responsibility, 8. Anti-corruption, 9. Transparency, 10. Laws and regulations, 11. Empowerment and efficiency.

B) Components of contextual factors, consisting of 4 components: 1. Flexibility, 2. Resource capacities, 3. Legal support for innovation in employee training, 4. Effective human resource management.

C) Components of intervening factors, consisting of 3 components: 1. Legal and regulatory obstacles, 2. Procedural barriers, 3. Managerial weaknesses.

D) Components of strategic factors, consisting of 4 components: 1. Development of educational capacities, 2. Increasing economic capacities and financial support, 3. Strengthening effective communication with employees, 4. Increasing agility.

E) Components of outcomes, consisting of 3 components: 1. Legal and regulatory obstacles, 2. Procedural obstacles in the organization, 3. Managerial weaknesses.

These results align with and confirm the findings of various researchers ([Aldarmaki & Yaakub, 2022](#); [Dash & Pati, 2018](#); [Deshmukh & Deshmukh, 2016](#); [Gholizadeh et al., 2022](#); [Houshangifar, 2022](#); [Khorasani et al., 2016](#); [Lu et al., 2011](#); [Mayes et al., 2017](#); [Nahi-Far et al., 2018](#); [Otoo, 2019](#); [Pathak & Agrawal, 2019](#); [Philip, 2017](#); [Rajabi et al., 2017](#); [Rakhshani et al., 2020](#); [Ramezani & Najjari, 2022](#); [Shafiee-Zadeh, 2022](#); [Thu Thuy & Thanh Tam, 2017](#); [Valentine et al., 2013](#)).

It can be concluded that educational excellence and human resource development face issues that cannot always

be independently controlled. Factors such as equity, financial resources, resource efficiency and management, and accountability to employees are crucial. Moreover, political, economic, social, and cultural changes, among others, cannot be ignored in implementing educational excellence and human resource development. One of the main challenges governmental organizations like the Governor's Office face in implementing modern management models like innovation in employee training is a traditional organizational structure that lacks adaptability to environmental changes. Another key factor is the capacity for innovation within the organization. The implementation of human resource productivity requires legal and regulatory support, where enforcement mechanisms must be organized to identify and rigorously address any administrative deviation or negligence. Additionally, these factors are crucial not only in implementing the model of educational excellence and human resource development but also in executing any policy or decision-making in any organization. Organizational processes play a significant role in human resource productivity, referring to activities and communications within the organization during operational hours.

5 Limitations and Suggestions

Limitations of this study included: measurement tools limited to questionnaires and interviews, geographical scope limited to the Zahedan Education Organization, and caution in generalizing results. Weak cooperation from some respondents in completing questionnaires due to various reasons such as lack of motivation, indifference, unawareness of the research activity, bureaucratic hurdles, geographical and distance dispersion of respondents' workplaces, and varied understanding of respondents in answering questions.

Based on the results, it is recommended that governmental organizations should strive to make their structures more flexible. Creating an informal atmosphere, maintaining formality, unity of procedure, lower hierarchy in a flexible structure, and forming administrative teams in the organization for employee training are effective. Updating technology, utilizing virtual networks for faster communications, financial support, specialized human resources, knowledge management, legal frameworks, financial transparency, and enhancing organizational capacities are also vital. Additionally, legal support for innovation in employee training through law enforcement

guarantees, enactment and amendment of specific laws and regulations for human resource productivity, addressing legal ambiguities, and multiple legal definitions are effective. Human resource management in the organization is crucial and can be somewhat effective through communication policies, specialized steering committees, and centralization. Another important strategy in educational excellence and human resource development is increasing economic capacities and financial support in the organization, which can be achieved through financing projects and attracting financial sponsors. Furthermore, governmental organizations should establish more effective communication with employees. Utilizing media effectively, eliminating discrimination, reflecting employees' desires, can improve government organizations' communication with employees. Finally, future researchers are suggested to conduct studies to determine the infrastructures required for implementing the model of educational excellence and human resource development, as well as to investigate the effectiveness of various dimensions in educational excellence and human resource development in other organizations in the country.

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Declaration of Interest

The authors of this article declared no conflict of interest.

Authors Contributions

All three authors, Farzaneh Hormozi Moghaddam, Saeid Saffarian Hamedani, and Reza Uosefi Saeedabadi, collaborated closely throughout the research process. They collectively designed the study, selected the research population, and conducted semi-structured interviews. Together, they performed data analysis, including open coding and axial coding, to identify the components of the excellence model in educational development and human resource development. The authors jointly interpreted the results, discussed the dimensions and components of the model, and collectively contributed to writing the research findings, conclusion, and recommendations. Finally, all authors contributed to the writing of the research findings, conclusion, and recommendations, ensuring the accuracy

and completeness of the manuscript. They reviewed and approved the final version of the article for submission.

Ethics principles

In this research, ethical standards including obtaining informed consent, ensuring privacy and confidentiality were observed.

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