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**THE USEFULNESS OF
A SELF-ASSESSMENT APPROACH
BASED ON A BUSINESS
EXCELLENCE MODEL:**

Case studies of textile and garment
enterprises in Vietnam

NGUYEN THI HOANG LIEN

PhD

2010

Volume 1 of 2

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NGUYEN, THI HOANG LIEN
BEng, MBA

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the requirement of the University of
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Abstract

Since Vietnam became an official member of WTO in 2006, enterprises need to pay attention and invest in their management capacities in order to build robust strategies and improve their competitive advantage. The application of self-assessment (SA), an advanced management tool, based on a business excellence model (BEM) has been recognised as improving organisational performance by providing a referenced framework and a common language to direct organisations' focus on improvement and to assist them to deliver both financial and non-financial performance enhancement. This study focuses on the investigation of BEM-based self-assessment experiences of two Vietnamese enterprises. The two case study companies, both in the garment and textile industry, undertook SA using a simple EFQM questionnaire tool. Subsequently, this study used semi-structured interviews with senior managers in order to gather data evaluating the benefits of SA to the companies and to identify factors influencing the success of the implementations. Template analysis and Nvivo software were used for the data analysis.

Findings provide several insights into how SA outcomes benefit Vietnamese enterprises. Firstly, out of six intended benefits of this SA tool identified in the literature, managers strongly confirmed only one — the benefit of helping them to identify their current position and to determine future directions and priorities — as being useful in improving company performance. Two additional benefits were confirmed relating to the use of SA in identifying the company's strengths and weaknesses and in enhancing organisational learning and awareness.

In relation to factors influencing the success of implementation, several were identified as being crucial: a lack of scorer understanding of SA and BEM knowledge; a risk of emphasis on high scores; and the unique 'encouraging scoring' style in Vietnam. Significantly, training was regarded as crucial in overcoming these difficulties, and was as important to managers as top level commitment for successful SA.

The research confirms that SA is useful for Vietnamese companies in enabling benefits which should enhance performance. However, training is crucial in overcoming implementation issues which may impact on success. Whilst benchmarking is normally closely associated with SA and BEM, it had limited relevance in the case companies due to the prevalence of high-scoring, which limited the usefulness of comparisons, and the current low levels of comparative data available in Vietnam.

Keywords: *Self-assessment, business excellence model, quality award, the EFQM, Vietnam.*

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List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

%	percent
ADB	Asian Development Bank
APQO	the Asia Pacific Quality Organization
BEM	Business Excellence Model
BQF	British Quality Foundation
CIEM	Central Institute for Economic Management of Vietnam
CR	Criterion
Dept.	Department
EFQM	European Foundation for Quality Management
EQA	European Quality Award
EEA	EFQM Excellence Award
<i>et al.</i>	et alii – and others
<i>etc.</i>	et cetera – and so forth
FDI	Foreign direct investment
FOB	Free on board – Term of sales
GDP	Gross domestic product
HEIs	Higher Education Institutions
IAPQA	the International Asia Pacific Quality Award
i.e.	id est – in other words
ISO	International Standard Organisation
MBNQA	Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award

MCDM	Multiple Criteria Decision-Making (making decisions in the presence of multiple criteria)
NIST	National Institute of Standards and Technology
p.	page
RADAR	Results-Approach-Deployment-Assessment and Review
SA	Self-assessment
SA-EFQM	Self-assessment using the EFQM questionnaire
SME	Small and Medium-sized Enterprise
STAMEQ	Directorate for Standards, Metrology and Quality in Vietnam
T&G	Textile and Garment
TQM	Total Quality Management
TQM/QA	Total Quality Management/Quality Award
USA	United States of America
USD	United States Dollar
VN	Vietnam
VQA	Vietnam Quality Award
WTO	World Trade Organization

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Author's declaration

I declare that the work contained in this thesis has not submitted for any other award and that is my work

Name

Signature

Date

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 A background to the Vietnamese context of this study

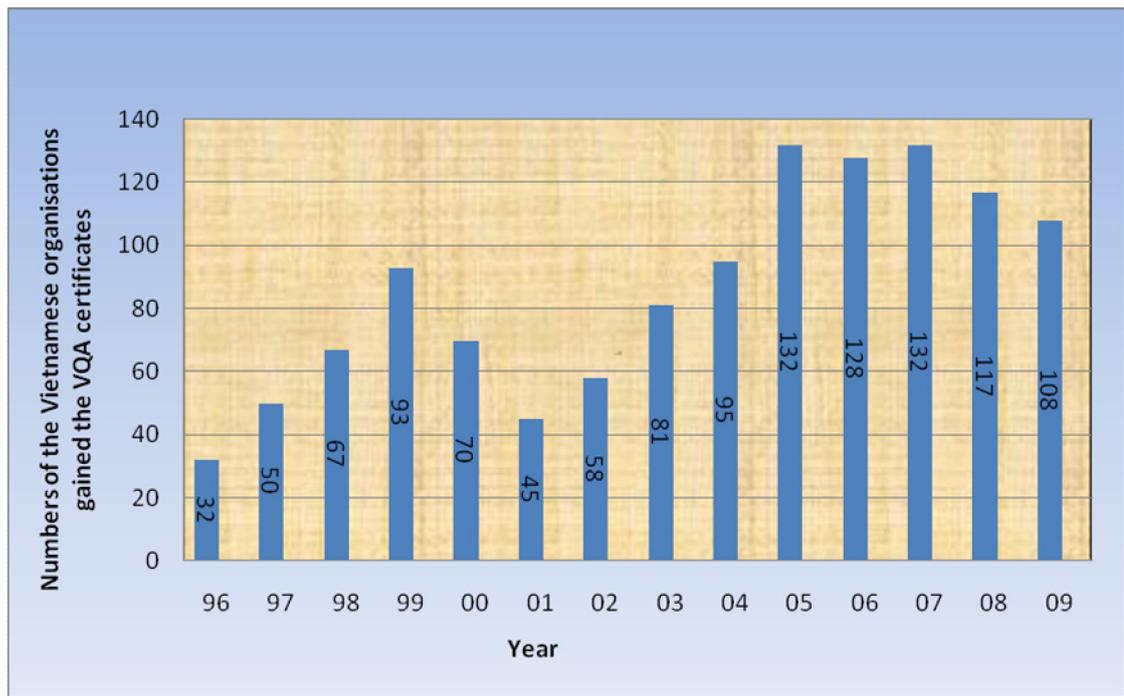
After nearly 11 years of tough multilateral negotiations with various countries, Vietnam was integrated into the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2006. Adopting globalization has created many valuable opportunities for Vietnam to expand its international trade and attract more foreign capital-flow into the country, which is shifting from a centrally planned economy to a socialist-oriented market economy (ADB, 2007a). In particular, it is creating many opportunities for the Vietnamese textile and garment industry, which is one of the key industries in the national economy (Thomsen, 2007; Dang and Nguyen, 2008), helping it to gain advantages and increase its turnover significantly.

Although the development of Vietnam's economy has been relatively substantial recently, even during the global financial crisis, the effectiveness of Vietnamese organisations does not seem to reflect this. According to the Central Institute for Economic Management of Vietnam (CIEM) in 2008, there existed an insufficiency in operational activities across the strategic management level and in management planning in the Vietnamese business community. This inefficiency was also indicated by Nguyen_d (2008). This author found that the competence of manufacturing firms was low in terms of performance, marketing, R&D¹ and human resources. There is a strong possibility that the Vietnamese textile and garment industry, as a cornerstone of national industrialisation, has the same problem.

In 1995, a productivity and quality campaign was initiated for the decade 1995-2005 at the first Vietnam Quality Conference. Based on the fact that one of the biggest challenges for Vietnamese enterprises at that time was low competitiveness and efficiency, the campaign aimed to encourage Vietnamese organisations to apply advanced quality management tools (Chung, 2001). Many countries hold national quality awards and encourage organisations to apply for self-assessment (SA) based on business excellence awards, and Vietnam is no exception. The Vietnam Quality Award (VQA) was launched in 1995 by the Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment in order to motivate manufacturing and service organisations to improve the quality of their business activities. This award provides a worldwide approach to Vietnamese enterprises in terms of the business excellence model in practice (Chung, 2001).

¹ R&D: Research and Development

Figure 1-1 Overview of the development of the Vietnam Quality Award



Source: Adapted from Vietnam Quality Centre (2010) available online at www.tcvn.gov.vn/en/

During the period 1995–2009, as highlighted in Figure 1-1, there has been a substantial growth in the number of VQA participants and certifications. Undoubtedly, the growth revealed in this graph indicates an overarching positive trend of a business excellence model (BEM) being considered an effective management approach to assist organisations in Vietnam. Although its development is still at a nascent stage, Vietnamese companies should still be able to gain benefit from its focus on assessing organisations.

With regard to Vietnam merging with the global economy, to enhance organisational effectiveness and competitiveness, a key task for managers is finding an effective tool to monitor and sustain quality improvement in order to achieve international standards. The crucial question in this situation is whether a suitable management tool exists that can enhance performance improvement through the assessment of an enterprise's activities. Kanji (2002) states that the combination of the changing face of modern businesses and an unpredictable marketplace have prompted many quality experts to propose that business enterprises can improve their overall performance through self-assessment by adopting the business excellence framework of a quality award. Moreover, the need to identify organisational strengths and weaknesses to benchmark with other competitive partners in Vietnam is essential (Dao, 2007).

With respect to an understanding of quality management implementation in Vietnam, it has been recognised that relevant knowledge is limited (Nguyen^a, 2006). The author also argues that

Vietnamese organisations seem unfamiliar with quality management terminology. A few recent studies have focused on quality practice, continuous improvement and total quality management (TQM) in Vietnam (Nguyen, 2006; Dinh, Igel and Laosihongthong, 2006). It is also recognised that there has been very little information published on the benefits of a business excellence model (BEM) and self-assessment (SA) in Vietnam. This is connected to the fact that there have been few research publications about the Vietnam setting owing to limited research resources (Nguyen and Robinson, 2010). Therefore, there is a need to discover both the usefulness and failures of SA and participation in existing business excellence models in order to share good practice within the Vietnamese business community, as well as among academic peers.

This has prompted the researcher to explore quality management issues relating to the use of award-based SA to improve Vietnam's organisational effectiveness and competitiveness when facing the challenges of integrating into the world economy.

1.2 The Vietnamese textile and garment industry

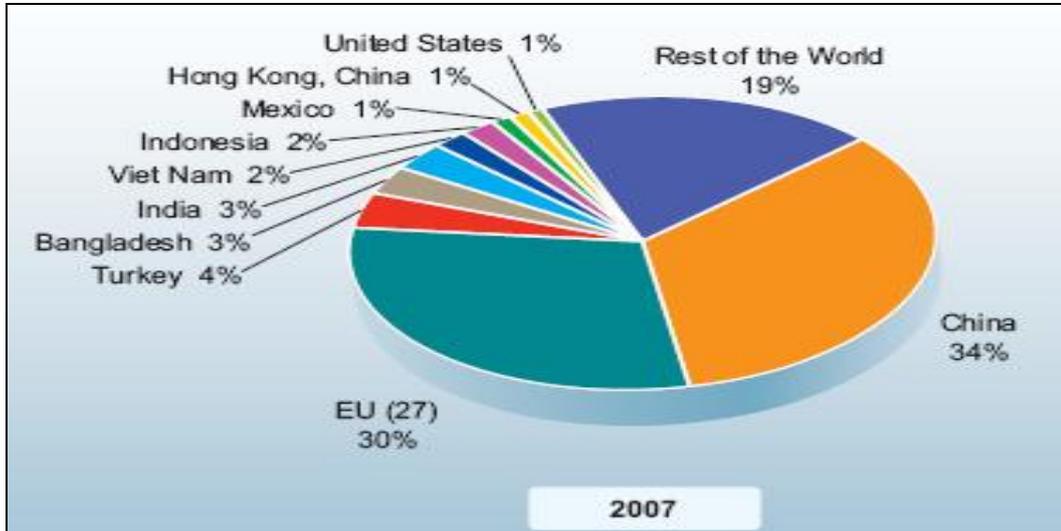
Due to it being labour-intensive, the textile and garment (T&G) industry is believed to be the traditional engine of industrial development in emerging countries (Salinger, 2003; Nordas, 2004). Models of business activity in this industry are different in that textiles have high technology and high capital requirements, while garments are labour intensive and encompass a range from low to high technology. These characteristics of the T&G industry are appropriate to Vietnam, especially the garment sector with its low-skilled labour requirements (Salinger, 2003; Nordas, 2004).

It is widely believed that Vietnam's T&G industry now occupies a vital role within the Vietnamese economy (CANPRO, 2001; Phuong, 2005; Dang and Hoang, 2005; Thomsen, 2007; Dang and Nguyen, 2008). According to a report of the National Steering Committee for Enterprise Reform and Development of Vietnam (NSCERD², 2003), the T&G industry serves as a cornerstone for national industrialisation. Since 2000, industrial growth has been at a rate of approximately 16% annually (GSO, 2009). Dang and Nguyen (2008) indicate that this industry adds about 10% to the gross domestic product (GDP) of Vietnam. In 2006, Vietnam was ranked the 16th largest exporter of garments and textiles in the world. With regards to garments, noteworthy export achievements have lifted Vietnam into a position in the top 10 largest garment

² This is a report on the restructuring plan to re-formulate three large Vietnamese SOEs, including the textile and garment, coffee, and seafood industries, and to strengthen their competitiveness in the domestic and overseas markets. It was sponsored by the World Bank in 2003.

exporters globally. Figure 1-2 shows that the export share rate of Vietnam was above 2 % in the world clothing market in 2007.

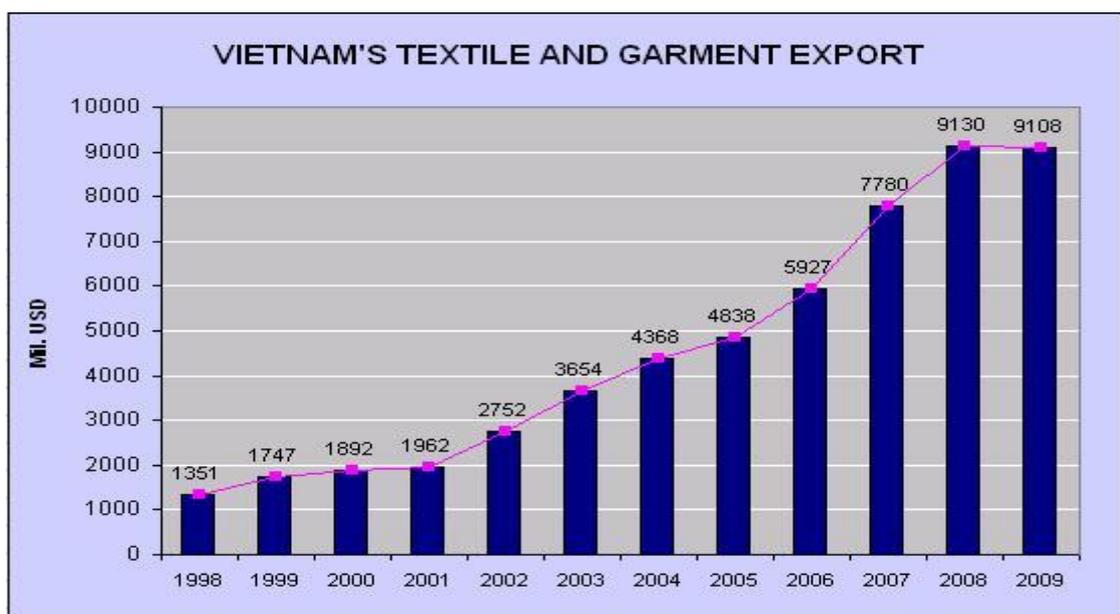
Figure 1-2. Shares in world clothing export market, 2007



Source: International Trade Statistics 2007, WTO, 2008, p.41

Compared to other export industries of Vietnam, the T&G industry has become the country's biggest exporter, contributing very significantly to reducing the national trade deficit in 2009 (VINATEX, 2010). Figure 1-3 illustrates the export volume of the Vietnamese T&G industries over a period of twelve years, from 1998 to 2009.

Figure 1-3. Vietnam textile and garment exports in 1998-2009



Source: Vietnam Textile and Apparel Association -VITAS, 2010

Predominantly, the garment industry currently exports the vast majority of its products primarily under subcontracting arrangements, the raw materials for which are largely imported (Nadvi *et al.*, 2004; Thomsen, 2007). According to Nordas (2004) and MPDF (1999), CMT³ only contributes about 20% of the value of the final product, while high-value centres on design and marketing. On this basis, Nordas states that the value-added share brought to the Vietnamese industry is not high because of the manufacturing conditions, which have a poor industrial base, and “poor financial, physical and institutional infrastructure” (Nordas, 2004, p.8). Chasing large-order production, this industry seems to adhere to a production and engineering approach, rather than a market and efficiency approach (Dang and Hoang, 2005).

The strengths of this industry include production flexibility and the availability of female workers of good quality in terms of intelligence, diligence and high rates of literacy (VIE, 2001; Salinger, 2003; Hill, 2000; Nordas, 2004; Tsang and Au, 2008). In a research study on the Vietnamese garment sector by Schaumburg-Muller (2009), some evidence has been presented suggesting that although Vietnamese manufacturers have reasonably satisfied customers because of their flexible policies, they tend not to upgrade their strategies properly. Another advantage is that the country possesses low-cost labour, which is a major competitive advantage (Dang and Hoang, 2005; Kapuge and Smith, 2007; Tsang and Au, 2008).

According to the Vietnam Textile & Apparel Association, there are an estimated two thousand businesses and an approximate workforce of over 1 million, which comprises 250 000 labourers in textiles and 800 000 in garments (VITAS, 2010). Details of the structure of the Vietnamese T&G industry, categorised by ownership, geography and functions, are presented in Table 1-1.

Table 1-1. The structure of Vietnam’s T&G industry in 2009

Category	Type	Number	Percentage
Ownership	State Owned	10	0.5%
	Liability and Joint Stock	1 490	74.5%
	FDI	500	25.0%
Geography	The North	300	15.0%
	The Middle	150	7.5%
	The South	1 550	77.5%
Function	Textile and Garment	600	30.0%
	Garment	1 360	68.0%
	Spinning	40	2.0%

Source: Vietnam Textile and Apparel Association -VITAS, 2010b

³ CTM: one of the subcontracting arrangements in T&G sector, and is shorted for Cut Make and Trim.

In the above table it is easy to recognise that in terms of ownership, the role of limited and joint stock enterprises is important in Vietnam. In terms of function, the garment focus is significant in the Vietnamese T&G industry.

In short, considering the data above there is no doubt regarding the significance of the role of the Vietnamese T&G industry with regards its contribution to the national budget and also its competitive position in the world. This overview also demonstrates the solidity and weaknesses of Vietnamese T&G enterprises, particularly in view of their competitiveness during the current economic crisis. It can be noted that this industry seems to attract academic peers because of its impressive achievements in contributing to the Vietnamese economy. The pursuit of a rational approach, which takes into consideration Vietnamese organisational weaknesses, leads to a requirement for application of quality management, such as TQM or business excellence model, in order to achieve large-scale performance improvements. Taking the above into account, the Vietnamese T&G industry has been chosen as the dominant context of the current research.

1.3 Initial thoughts on literature issues

After obtaining several quality assessment certifications, along with personal work experience in the manufacturing and service sectors, the researcher realised that better organisational performance could be achieved by addressing certain quality management issues. As Lee and Quazi (2001, p.118) have indicated:

“Quality management philosophy inculcates business practices that will satisfy customers, reduce costs, increase productivity, and enhance quality of outputs. In short, quality management practices help enhance business excellence.”

According to these two authors, business excellence models (BEMs) and quality awards have been recognised as the key to national competitiveness. Moreover, applying for a quality award can lead to increased customer satisfaction (Eriksson, 2003), thus organisations can strengthen their competitiveness (NIST, 2010b). An increasing number of studies have been unanimous in agreeing that business excellence practice delivers both financial and non-financial performance enhancement, strategic and leadership improvement, and greater shareholder empowerment (GAO, 1991; Hendricks and Singhal, 1997; 2000; Kumar *et al.*, 2009). Not only does it allow businesses to achieve a quality award, an award framework can provide a noteworthy focus on improvement, “creating consistency of direction and consensus about the strengths and weaknesses” (Oakland, 1999, p.29).

Quality management SA is believed to be a powerful and systematic tool to review the results of organisational activities regularly using a bespoke BEM/quality award as a reference (Porter and Tanner, 2004). To emphasise this idea, the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) organisation has demonstrated that companies should recognise and evaluate not only previous tangible performance but also feedback from other stakeholders in order to predict sustainability in the future with the increasing global competition, rapid technology changes, and social and environmental movements of nowadays. Collecting evidence through SA using the business excellence approach targets organisations, enables their potential valuation, and also improves their competitiveness (EFQM, 1999-2003b). Furthermore, the BEM assessment procedure, which provides a competitive mechanism, can be useful for facing future integrated challenges (Sharma and Talwar, 2007).

Regarding achieving business excellence, Hayes, Wheelwright and Clark Hayes (1988) argue that superior manufacturing sustained by the effective combination of product and process development leads to the competitive advantage of a firm. Oakland (1993), Benavent (2003) and Arumugam *et al.* (2009) also suggest that the benefit of SA is that it improves overall effectiveness and competitive advantage, thus helping organisations to move towards achieving world-class status by identifying opportunities and threats. This view seems to have been accepted widely and has motivated the study of the application of business excellence frameworks to help organisations achieve greater efficiency and greater competitiveness in both domestic and global business marketplaces (Stok, Mesko and Markic, 2009).

Generally, the considerable role of SA has been increased among global organisations due to the existence of prestigious quality awards (Zink and Schmidt, 1998; Biazzo and Bernardi, 2003). According to Tari (2008), SA literature focuses on three major areas: the link between the application of the quality award model in organisations and their performance; the nature of the SA process, its benefits and risks; and the expansion of new SA tools based on TQM elements or multiple criteria decision making (MCDM⁴). Key publications in the SA field include Hakes (1994), Lascelles and Peacock (1996), Porter and Tanner (2004), EFQM (1999-2003, 2010), Baldrige National Quality Program (2006, 2009), and numerous academic articles by Ton Van der Wiele (Holland), Barrie Dale (UK), Robin Mann (New Zealand), Henrik Eriksson (Sweden), Juan Jose Tari and Balbaster Benavent (Spain). In these studies, SA practice is examined in different ways and in relation to different sectors. Thus, the key steps of the SA process are suggested to applicants in relation to a selected business excellence framework. Moreover, the SA topic in general seems to be more attractive to the private sector than the public sector (Hides, Davis and Jackson, 2004; Tari, 2010).

⁴ Multiple-Criteria Decision Making (MCDM) and its application, the Intelligent Decision System (ISD) tool, are based on the Evidential Reasoning approach (Yang and Xu, 2002). These approaches have been applied recently to support SA activities using different models.

There are many approaches to the SA process, from simple to complex, which allow organisations to regularly classify their good and bad practices against a selected quality award/BEM (Ritchie and Dale, 2000a; Porter and Tanner, 2004). There are several common approaches used to carry out the SA process (i.e. questionnaires, matrices, workshops, pro-forma, and award simulation/application) and each organisation can adopt one or more of these techniques based on its resources and needs, as well as the techniques' relevant limitations (Jackson, 2001). Thus, the success of organisational SA is primarily influenced by the SA technique/approach used, based on its reliability and accurateness in producing SA outcomes (Karapetrovic and Willborn, 2001; Hides, Davis and Jackson, 2004). If organisations have not found the exact approach that matches their stage of maturity than a relevant execution process will be difficult, and also the resources used for the SA implementation will be wasted (Svensson and Klefsjö, 2006)

Regarding evaluation of the benefits or usefulness of adopting an SA approach based on a BE/quality award model, the body of literature provides rich empirical evidence for adopting a BE/quality award model approach to improve business results and drive improvement (Coulambidou and Dale, 1995; Van der Wiele *et al.*, 1995, 1996a,b; Ruben *et al.*, 2007); benefit organisational learning (Dale and Coulambidou, 1995; Tari, 2010); increase staff involvement (Hillman, 1994; Gadd, 1995; Davies, 2004); foster the learning process (Benavent, 2003); improve process management (Dale and Coulambidou, 1995; Davies, 2004); provide internal and external benchmarking opportunities (Van der Wiele *et al.*, 1995, 1996; Benavent, 2003; Ruben *et al.*, 2007); and improve strategic planning (McAdam and Kelly, 2002). It is recognised that the majority of findings are based on SA practice developed in the West. Moreover, the use of self assessment with an excellence model is best suited for organisations on the path from ISO 9000⁵ registration to business excellence (Van der Wiele *et al.*, 2000a).

Notwithstanding the above, the SA technique is not uncontroversial. It has been considered very time-consuming and resource intensive (Shergold and Reed, 1996; Saunders and Mann, 2005; Clark, 2006), there are problems with the measurement system (Li and Yang, 2003), and there are also language and execution difficulties (Dale and Coulambidou, 1995; Wong and Dahlgard, 2003). Another criticism raised by Conti, one of the protagonists of the European Quality Award, about the negative side of SA implementation is related to award procedures (Conti, 2007). This author illustrates the problem of the 'image document', which is intended to impress the judges by focusing on improving the quality of the submission, rather than on improving the quality of the company in question.

⁵ ISO 9000 is a family of standards for quality management systems that serve as a basis for quality standards for global organisations. ISO 9000 is maintained by ISO, the International Organization for Standardization and is administered by accreditation and certification bodies.

Regarding the current research, this brief review of SA, which looks at its benefits, advantages and disadvantages, as well as its different approaches, has caused the researcher to doubt whether SA using the Vietnamese award application currently bring benefits to the majority of Vietnamese organisations. Porter and Tanner (2004) suggest that the choice of SA approach is based on many factors, in particular organisational experience in SA, which is an element most Vietnamese companies lack. From this point of view, the researcher's assumption has been that SA using (Vietnamese quality) award application is appropriate for top enterprises, whilst the maturity of quality management in Vietnamese companies in general is seen to be in its early stages. On this basis, the idea proposed is that adoption of another, simpler and less-resource intensive technique (for instance an SA questionnaire), may be more useful to Vietnamese companies rather than the SA associated with the VQA.

1.4 Research focus – the research aims and research question

Following the above-mentioned analysis, this research attempts to fill the gap in literature by investigating SA using a BEM in the Vietnamese context. Specifically, this empirical study centres on assessing the usefulness of an appropriate BEM, using a SA approach, to help organisations improve their effectiveness. Along with the benefits of SA, recommendations concerning an implementation strategy and the applicability of the SA approach in Vietnamese T&G organisations will be made by the study.

In line with the preceding section, the main aim of this research has been to evaluate whether the use of an appropriate SA method based on the BEM leads to benefits which may improve effectiveness in the Vietnamese T&G industry. In pursuit of this aim, there are a number of objectives of this research:

- (i) *To evaluate the usefulness of the BEM using the self-assessment approach in Vietnamese enterprises.*
- (ii) *To explore implementation issues associated with self-assessment in specific contexts.*
- (iii) *To suggest an appropriate self-assessment approach and implementation strategies suitable for Vietnamese organisations based on the research findings.*

Building on the main aim and objectives of this research, the main research question is:

‘How useful is self-assessment using the business excellence model for Vietnamese organisations?’

With respect to the research question, the assumption of the author is that the application of SA against bespoke BEMs will lead to improvement actions in business performance. Thus, all contributions toward business results which have taken place after accomplishing SA in the research context are reflected upon and used to measure the level of improvement in organisational effectiveness.

1.5 Scope of the research

The objectives of this study are focused on determining the degree of business improvement when a company adopts a new SA tool, namely *Determining Excellence: A questionnaire approach* (the EFQM SA questionnaire). Specifically, the usefulness and benefits, as well as the difficulties and critical success factors are examined. These research issues are relatively similar to those investigated in other works describing different contexts, such as the work of Van der Wiele *et al.* (1996b), Teo and Dale (1997), Ritchie and Dale (2000a,b), Tari and Juana-Espinosa (2007), Davies (2008), and Tari (2010). These studies are significant because they directly describe the experience of European companies using the same SA approach considered in the current study. Additionally, organisational experiences of VQA application are also reviewed in order to clarify the value of such participation.

It is important to be aware that the current study employed a conceptual research framework, which was based on the SA literature review, to reflect the reality of the application of SA using the BEM/quality award in Vietnamese case companies. This framework was constructed in the organisational context in which the SA has taken place, bearing in mind relevant factors. Through this framework a greater insight of SA application, including the connection between resources of the SA process and potential benefits, has been achieved.

1.6 Research methodology

In order to clarify the explorative research question, the author chose the interpretivist paradigm to conduct this research. An interpretivist approach seems to be the most suitable paradigm whenever a researcher intends to conduct an inductive work with a conceptual framework within a small sample of cases (Crotty, 2003; Bryman and Bell, 2007; Creswell, 2007).

In the first stage of this study, SA literature is examined to determine the relevant knowledge that has been published in the field. Intentionally, this review has emphasised two SA tools: the questionnaire and the award application, which are the most related to the purpose of the current research. Furthermore, the inductive evaluation of the topical range includes the benefits, difficulties and critical success factors of the SA process; helping to develop a conceptual

research framework. Based on the review of SA literature, the EFQM questionnaire was selected for application in the Vietnamese business context.

According to Yin (2003), Richie and Lewis (2004), and Gummerson (2002), investigating an existing phenomenon, the application of SA in this study, needs to be evaluated in the context in which it takes place. Case studies were seen as the most appropriate method for this study. Benavent (2006) also notes that case studies seem the best approach in the SA discipline. The Vietnamese T&G industry is the subject area considered in this research, as this sector is one of the largest export revenue earners in Vietnam, and has recently been experiencing strong competition as a result of WTO integration. Case studies were selected as main research strategy and two Vietnamese T&G companies were chosen to apply the EFQM SA questionnaire. It can be noted that both cases investigated satisfied the essential research criteria — and had participated in and possessed the VQA certificate.

Data was gathered from two sources: semi-structured interviews and outcomes of SA using a questionnaire approach. In this study, data analysis from SA outcomes was used as a foundation for further qualitative analysis. Specifically, the SA results were numerical findings obtained from the EFQM SA process, but descriptive data obtained by interviewing senior managers was the primary source of data.

The main analysis tool used in this project for qualitative interview data analysis was a combination of template analysis (King, 2004a) and qualitative data analysis software NVivo 8 (QRS, 2008). The reason for employing this was to gain credibility through the analysis of large quantities of rich data. This approach is effective with a within–case and cross-case analysed strategy (Miles and Huberman, 1994), or coding tactics in connection with the template of King (2004a).

In short, the major strategy employed consisted of case studies (Yin, 2003) and template analysis (King, 2004a), with the support of NVivo quantitative data analysis software. A variety of data collected from interviews and SA questionnaire’s outcomes were expected to enable the researcher to achieve the requirements of the study.

1.7 The expected contributions of this study

Current research has revealed that the topic of the BEM and SA has been widely researched, but no empirical and academic works that have been conducted with regards to Vietnam. Thus, this research offers an analytical critique of the usefulness of the SA method using the BEM/quality award in helping Vietnamese enterprises.

Regarding this intention, the major findings of this study will contribute to SA knowledge by being the first work to investigate the application of the EFQM SA questionnaire in Vietnam. Both the intended and suggested benefits of using this tool are assessed to shed light on whether the cutting-edge Western technique is useful for Vietnamese business in terms of coping today's tough competitive market. Furthermore, discovering the barriers to the execution process in the Vietnamese context provides some interesting and unique information which potentially indicates a more suitable strategy for SA activities in Vietnam.

The minor contribution related to the first insights of the advantages and disadvantages of participating in the existing BEM, the VQA, by including reflections of managers of the two cases companies. These evaluations clearly helped the author to make suggestions for implementing SA using the questionnaire approach in Vietnamese organisations in the future.

1.8 Outline of the thesis

This thesis comprises 7 chapters, the details of which are given below.

Chapter 1: gives an introduction to the current study, describing the research background and the initial motivation of the author. A brief review of SA and business excellence literature is also provided. In the research background, the Vietnamese context, specifically focussing on the T&G industry and quality management, is explored. Next, the research objectives and research question are addressed, followed by a summary and outline of the scope of the methodology adopted.

Chapter 2: covers in-depth exploration of the SA field, its concepts, the relevant theories, its benefits and problematic issues, the implementation process, and critical success factors. Two significant BEMs, the Malcolm Baldrige model and the EFQM Excellence model are reviewed in terms of their significance to SA. Furthermore, two SA approaches, the questionnaire and award application, are investigated closely in order to justify their choice as the most suitable SA approach to researching BE applicability to Vietnamese organisations.

Chapter 3: outlines the philosophical stance underpinning the research, followed by a description of the research strategy employed and the methods of data collection and analysis. Justification is given as to why the selected methods adopted fit within the research process. The rationale of choosing the main SA tool, the EFQM SA questionnaire, is explained in this chapter based on suggestions from the literature reviewed in Chapter 2 and the quality management experience of Vietnamese organisations discussed in Chapter 3. The research template comprising 4 themes is formed and used as a foundation to analyse data from Company A (in Chapter 4) and Company B (in Chapter 5). Finally, ethical issues are addressed.

Chapter 4 and Chapter 5: provide evidence of the usefulness of SA in Company A and Company B. An in-depth discussion of SA using the EFQM questionnaire in each company, examining 4 dominant themes, is conducted in an attempt to answer the research question. In both chapters, within-case analysis and comparisons are used to investigate three management groups: top leaders, senior department managers and manufacturing managers. The purpose of this structure is to illustrate the possible gaps in BEM evaluation in different management groups.

Chapter 6: provides cross-case discussion in accordance with the literature reviewed in terms of four main themes in both case companies. How SA using a business excellence tool, the EFQM SA questionnaire, to enhance a company's effectiveness is covered in detail to provide a greater understanding. The findings, which comprise qualitative interview data and statistical results, from the two textile and garment companies in Vietnam are used to undertake cross-case analysis of three management groups — providing different management views. Lastly, a discussion of SA using the existing quality award is also undertaken.

Chapter 7: summarises the level of achievement in each research objective. Significantly, the potential contributions towards the area of SA and quality award knowledge are considered. Following this, the implications and limitations of the study are reported.

CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

Since the 1980s, the SA theory has been established through the “traditional logic of the quality assurance checklist” used to assess the conformity of the organisational quality system to requirements and carried out internally (Conti, 2007, p.116) or simply as a technique of total quality management (TQM) and continuous improvement.

At the core of quality management SA, TQM and quality award commonly was adopted as the foundation for measuring organisational performance (Hendricks and Singhal, 1997; Chin and Pun, 2002). A range of terminologies includes TQM-based SA, award-based SA, or business excellence model (BEM) SA (occasionally diagnostic benchmarking) habitually have had the same meaning.

Whilst TQM theory is recognised by academics and practitioners since 1950s, the BEM topic is quite new discipline. Indeed, BEM was acknowledged in the 1980s with the first introduction of the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award (MBNQA) in the United States. Since then, business excellence and other equivalences such as organisation excellence quality awards, have all given a considerable amount of concentration to the quality management aspect. They have been promoted universally because their impacts contribute performance improvement to organisations (GAO, 1991; Easton, 1993; Ernst and Young, 1993; Hendricks and Singhal, 1997; Kumar *et al.*, 2009; Kim, Kumar and Murphy, 2010).

The benefits and the applicability of the adoption of SA, originally from industrial organisations, attract the attention of both scholars and executives in many sizes of organisation (Hides, Davis and Jackson, 2004; Tari, 2008). The key influential publications include Hakes (1996), Porter and Tanner (2004), Lascelles and Peacock (1996), the European Foundation for Quality Management - EFQM (1999-2003, 2010), and the Baldrige National Quality Program – BNQP (2008, 2009a,b). As well as numerous academic leaders: Professor Ton Van der Wiele (Holland), Professor Barrie Dale (UK), Professor Robin Mann (New Zealand), Henrik Eriksson (Sweden), Tito Conti (Italia), Juan Jose Tari and Balbaster Benavent (Spain), and Professor Alan Brown (Australia).

In the current study — aiming to explore and evaluate the usefulness of SA approach in the new context in Vietnam — an in-depth knowledge of the SA field including concepts, the relevant theory, the benefits, the implementation process and critical success factors, is reviewed in this chapter. Another purpose of this review is to serve to build the conceptual research framework adopted subsequently in this study.

At the beginning of this chapter, the definitions of SA and other relevant terminologies including a business excellence model will be explained. Also an overview of two popular BEM/quality awards is provided in section 2.1. Then, the core theories underpinning this topic, TQM and BEM/quality award, will be outlined to guide the reader's understanding in section 2.2. Section 2.3 aims to provide details of a series of key methods and techniques which could apply SA in organisation. More importantly, the valuable information presented particularly in this section will help the researcher clarify which SA technique is appropriate to Vietnamese companies. In the following parts, sections 2.4 and 2.5, two main themes of this study, the usefulness and critical factors of the SA implementation, are analysed by the review of existing SA knowledge. These analyses help to construct the conceptual framework in section 2.6. Afterwards, a summary based on the scarcity of appropriate literature in this particular research field is provided in section 2.7.

2.1 Introducing quality management SA and BEM

Self-assessment (SA) is widely believed to express various meanings in different contexts. By May 2010, the author found that, after researching, for the past five years, the 552 articles and 18 books in Science Direct and the similarly academic Emerald, the SA term predominantly involves three aspects: organisational SA in quality management; college management (Appleby, Robson and Owen, 2003) for assessing individual students/teachers in education⁶; library management and learning; and individual behaviour self-esteem (self-evaluation) or personality assessment in health, medicine and psychological areas. In this research, SA refers to quality management SA.

2.1.1 What is Self-assessment (SA)?

In quality management theories, organisational SA based on TQM/BEM has come to be widely believed to be more advantageous for businesses (Ritchie and Dale, 2000a,b; Van der Wiele, Dale and Williams, 2000b; Ford and Evan, 2001). Internationally, SA (self-diagnosis) definitions have been recognised and characterised in various interpretations and perspectives. Table 2-1 includes several SA concepts and definitions in quality management field.

⁶ Educational assessment is the process of documenting, usually in measurable terms, knowledge, skills, attitudes and beliefs. Assessment can focus on the individual learner, the learning community (class, workshop, or other organized group of learners), the institution, or the educational system as a whole. (Source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Assessment>)

Table 2-1. Definitions of SA concept

References	SA concept
Conti, 1993	The SA process is never-ending and is the starting point for a regular strategic or operative planning process within the company to ensure continuous quality improvement.
Hillman, 1994	The process of evaluating an organisation and its improvements, achievements and processes against a model for continuous improvement.
Zink and Schmidt, 1998	A management tool deployed throughout the companies to enhance overall business performance rather than solely the quality of products and services
Zink and Voss, 1998	Tool to systematically monitor and control a company's continuous improvement process
EFQM, 1999-2003	A comprehensive, systematic and regular review by an organisation of its activities and results referenced against the EFQM Excellence Model. The SA process allows the organisation to discern clearly its strengths and areas in which improvements can be made and culminates in planned improvement actions that are then monitored for progress
Kaye and Anderson, 1999	Approach which is used to underpin continuous improvement by measuring an organisation's current performance against a model which presents a position of excellence
ISO 9004 ⁷ :2000	Carefully considered evaluation resulting in an opinion or judgment of the effectiveness and efficiency of the organisation and the maturity of the quality management system
Kanji, 2002	SA is a comprehensive, systematic and regular review of an organisation's activities and results against a model of excellence
BNQP, 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + The first step toward achieving organisational improvement and performance excellence + A "results-oriented" review + Adaptable to the needs of each organisation

Source: Adapted from Karapetrovic and Willborn (2001) and developed by the researcher

⁷ ISO 9004 is used to provide guidance to organisations to support the achievement of sustained success by a quality management approach.

As can be seen in Table 2-1, SA is strongly believed to be a continuous improvement tool and an organisational health check (business excellence audit) based on a comprehensive internal assessment of organisational activities and their performance and stakeholder perceptions. According to key studies (Van der Wiele, Dale and Williams, 1997; Ritchie and Dale, 2000a), the European Foundation for Quality Management SA definition (1999-2003) is believed to be most common and useful among them. In the case of the EFQM Excellence Model which has been based on appropriately 1000 business leaders' views in Europe; the use of this model in SA seems to be typical and more practical than others (Porter and Tanner, 2004) because it provides detailed guidance with useful techniques and approaches to various organisations.

Basically, key authors do not express that SA is a functional obligation in the process of TQM development, except in the advice from the EFQM to executives (Zink and Schmidt, 1998). The British Quality Foundation (BQF, 1995) emphasizes that this process neither serves to sort out specific problems like other quality tools, nor focuses on aligning the reality and a group of procedures but it could play major role in developing and maintaining long-term targets.

Much like SA, quality audit is another less advanced method for assessing an organisation and evaluating a system. It describes evaluation of effectiveness and efficiency both of the 'extent to which planned activities are realised and planned results achieved' and 'relationship between results achieved and the resource used' (ISO 9000, 2000). While internal audit uses formal, standardized procedures (such as in ISO 9000:2001⁸ or ISO 14000:2001⁹), SA and benchmarking¹⁰ adopt informal guidelines — for instance, criteria of excellence models (Karapetrovic and Willborn, 2002). The audit or assessment process is undertaken by the team or the unit performing the work itself. The purpose of two evaluation process is also discerned. While audit seeks non-conformance of the system, SA is concentrated on opportunities for improvement action (Van der Wiele *et al.*, 1995). Further, the additional outcome of SA is the particular score of a business with a range from 0 to 1000 which does not exist in audit (Conti, 1997a).

Another similar concept to SA is diagnostic benchmarking; its process "involves examining how an organisation operates and comparing this with other organisations operate. It is a method of identifying what processes might be causing particularly good or poor results. It helps to identify areas of comparative strength and weakness within an organisation and pinpoints where to focus effort when making improvement...." (Owen, J., 2002, p.8)

⁸ ISO 9000 is a family of standards for quality management systems. ISO 9000 is maintained by ISO, the International Organization for Standardization and is administered by accreditation and certification bodies. (ISO, 2008)

⁹ ISO 14000 is a family of internationally recognised standards for environmental management systems that is applicable to any business or organisation, regardless of size, location or income. These standards are developed by the ISO, which has representation from committees all over the world.

¹⁰ Benchmarking refers to 'a physiological or biological reference value against which performance is compared' (Zairi, 1992).

Comparing this definition with those in Table 2-1, it is quite clear that the boundary of SA covers a full range of continuous improvement, performance measurement and strategic planning; whilst diagnostic benchmarking focuses on two functions, diagnostics and benchmarking. However, they are virtually the same in some aspects, according to Yarrow (2006, p.1): “diagnostic benchmarking is a close relative of the types of SA”.

2.1.2 What is business excellence model (BEM)?

Several academics have provided different definitions and frameworks regarding the business excellence concept. One of the most revered definitions is that of the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM), which defines ‘Excellence’ (whether it be organisational or business excellence) as the “outstanding practice in managing the organisation and achieving results, all based on a set of eight fundamental concepts” and its framework will “guide your organisation towards achieving success exist in various forms across the world” (EFQM, 1999-2003a). According to Tanner, “BE is a philosophy [which] requires leaders to set a clear vision and to be actively involved in driving the organisation forward to meet its objective” (Tanner, 2005a, p.3). Furthermore, Ritchie and Dale (2000a, p.246) noted:

“Within the companies studied business excellence is perceived as being a measure of ‘how good we are’ and a means by which ‘business can move forward’”

In recent times, the term TQM and BEM have been used interchangeably due the fact that BEM is the development of TQM (Wongrassamee, Gardiner and Simmons, 2003; Fallon, Brown and Allen, 2003; Tanner, 2005a). Kanji (2002) argues that business excellence has a meaning the same as or similar to TQM. His view has been endorsed by other academics (de Dommartin, 2000; Puay *et al.*, 1998; McDonald, Zairi and Idris, 2002; Eriksson and Hansson, 2003). In a doctoral thesis investigating how BE can contribute to sustained organisational performance in both private and public sector organisations, Bauer (2002) uses the terms BE and TQM interchangeably.

Furthermore, Dale pointed out that a BEM “provide a definition and description of TQM, within a defined framework, which gives better understanding of the concept” (Dale, 2006, p.473). However, this author argued that this ‘replacement’ or ‘swopping’ has been challenged because it has led to tarnishing the successful icon of TQM as a ‘fallen star’. Therefore, although the ‘fashionable’ BE term is still a dispute to writers in the quality area, it is logical to swap ‘Quality’ and ‘Excellence’ in the Awards and Models’ language (Dale, 2000). Furthermore, he concluded that “there is no rigorous definition of Excellence and what, if any, is the difference from Business Excellence” (Dale, 2000, p.109). Although the confusion in terms of language still causes difficulties to researchers in the quality field, this topic is seldom debated today. In short, it

seems reasonable to conclude that the BE definition varies tremendously and there is little agreement within the literature.

BE theory includes several terms such as the Excellence Model and Excellence framework. Referring to the former term, excellence practices are all directly depicted by certain BE models which explain how an organisation will work well and gain the highest achievements. First, the Excellence Models have provided a reference scheme for organisational SA to measure quality progress and provide improvement actions (Sturkenboom, Van der Wiele and Brown, 2001). Secondly, they are also used for assessing and recognising business through awards programmes. The latter term, excellence framework, concerns a specific framework technically connected to a particular quality award; for example, the Baldrige framework or the EFQM Excellence Framework. According to Jayamaha (2008), three common elements of typical BE model among different national quality awards include: a scoring system, a category-link framework and a set of core principles

In conclusion, business excellence is used to define a business concept which involves top-performing and recognised practices in managing organisations situated in a range of sectors to achieve optimal performance based on a set of fundamental values. Such excellence is found in organisations termed ‘world-class’, ‘outstanding’ or ‘superior’ and represented by famous names such as Nokia, IBM, Federal express and the Ritz-Carlton Hotel. In short, BE is the goal of every organisation (Mele and Corlucio, 2006). However, the definition used in this research study is that business excellence is “excellence in strategy, business practice, and stakeholder-related performance results that have been validated by assessment using proven business excellence models” (BPIR, 2008).

2.1.3 An overview of popular business excellence models (quality awards) associated with typical SA frameworks

The history of business excellence pedigree started with the establishment of the Deming Prize in 1951 which is considered the first prize that used excellence frameworks to recognise organisations for business excellence and quality achievement (Porter and Tanner, 2004). In fact, the BE concept was inspired originally from the 1950s quality philosophy by W. Edwards Deming. Since the mid-1980s and early 1990s, several industrial countries have launched quality awards based on business excellence frameworks to recognise ‘excellent’ organisations and also spread good practice. In particular, “the competitive forces that managers face today and will continue to confront in the future demand organisational excellence” (Ulrich, 1998, p.129).

In understanding the foundation of TQM/award-based SA, a review of the famous quality awards is needed. The literature shows that consultancies and professional bodies build their own BE models consistent with the quality awards announced for the award programme. Using basic BE concepts, most national bodies perceive that their own quality award leads to improved national economic performance (BPIR, 2008).

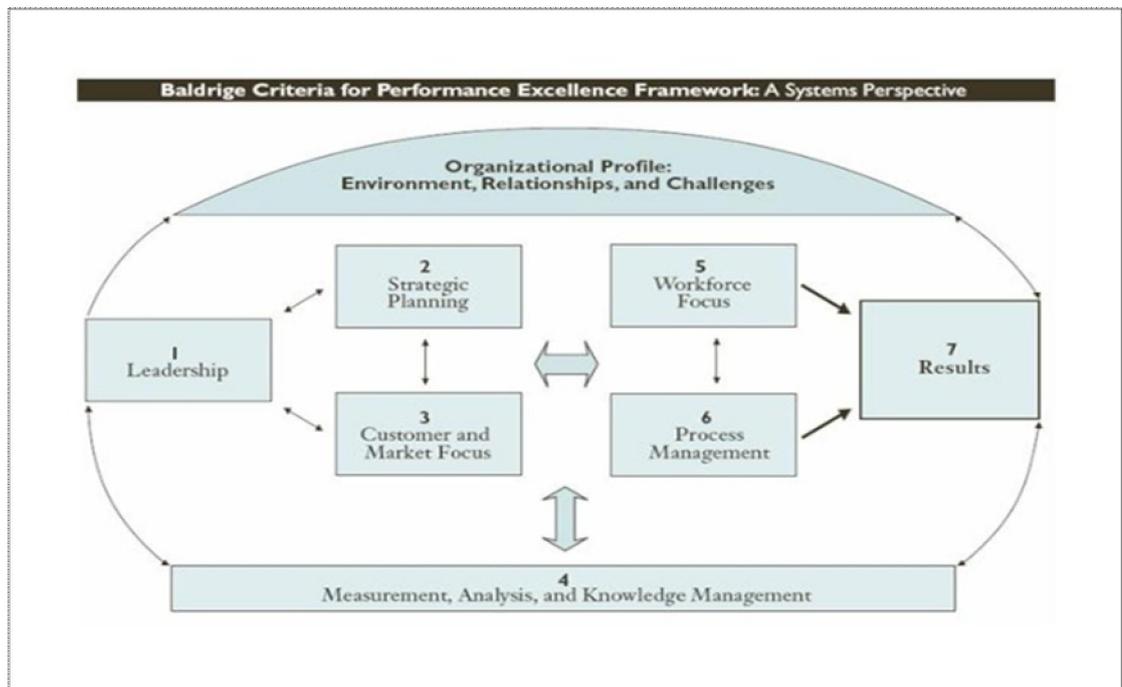
Although the Deming Prize in Japan is believed as the first quality award in the world, the two salient BE models, which virtually connect with SA activity in organisations worldwide are represented here. In the context of this study, it is thus necessary to understand a high level of aggregation of widely-adopted BE models. Owing to the most common use of SA employs against BEMs, they are so-called SA models. They are: The Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award (MBNQA) in the USA and The European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) Excellence Award in Europe. Later, the existing BEM of the quality award in the Vietnamese context is also provided.

The Malcolm Baldrige model and the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award

Recognised as the best-known excellence model in the world, the Malcolm Baldrige model is designed to aid organisations improve their competitiveness; to promote the understanding of requirements for performance excellence and to share successful information derived from recipients' strategies (NIST, 2010). The Baldrige framework provides a systems perspective for understanding performance management; it uses seven criteria and recognises the role model practices of world organisations.

The framework has three basic elements: Organisational Profile; System Operation, which includes six criteria (Leadership; Strategic Planning; Customer and Market Focus; Workforce Focus; Process Management and Results); and System Foundation, which includes criterion Measurement, Analysis and Knowledge Management. All seven categories relating to quality serve as the foundation for the performance management system. These elements illustrate the relationship between the various quality management constructs and between quality management and organisational performance (Pannirselvam and Ferguson, 2001). Its distinct objectives help improve organisational performance management, which results in delivering improved value to customers and employees. It also improves overall operational effectiveness and capacities with a concentration on organisational and personal learning. The award framework assists the award applicants to assess their performance in line with Award categories (Brown and Van der Wiele, 1996).

Figure 2-1. Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence Framework



Source: NIST (2010b) *Criteria for Performance Excellence*

Along with the framework which is illustrated in Figure 2-1, the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award (MBNQA) was launched on 20 August 1987 “in an effort to restore American’s ability to compete” (Wisner and Eakins, 1994, p.10). Not simple like the European, this Award has custodians (the national bodies that promote and administer BEM) who form sophisticated combinations among different organisations: Department of Commerce, National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) and American Society for Quality as Contractor. The Board of Examiners evaluates the award applications and writes the feedback reports. There are six categories of the Award so far: manufacturing businesses, service businesses, small businesses, education organisations, healthcare organisations and non-profit organisations (NIST, 2010).

The MBNQA process allows nominees to receive a feedback report on how well they meet the criteria. According to the latest booklet (NIST, 2010), the award’s criteria play three additional roles:

- “To help improve organization performance practices, capacities, and result.
- To facilitate communication and sharing of best practices information among U.A. organisations of all types.
- To serve as a working tool for understanding and managing performance, for guiding planning, and opportunities for learning”

The Baldrige Award (short name of the MBNQA) process comprises of 4 stages that includes: Independent review, Consensus review, Site visit review and Judges recommended award recipients (NIST, 2010). Particularly, once the 50-70 pages award application¹¹ is submitted the independent board of examiners, consisting of quality experts and including executives and professionals, would score the case. After getting the consensus on award candidate selection, they also make a site visit verification. The final national judges will warmly recommend the winners. A written summary feedback report from the award's judges is highly valuable to organisations for improving their performance (Vokurka, 2001; NIST, 2010).

Like any award, there are several plausible criticisms of the Baldrige Award. According to Garvin (1991), they are: (i) the award can be bought; (ii) it does not reflect outstanding product/service and (iii) the poor sales and earnings of past winners. In the very interesting debate surrounding this topic, many famous readers and experts in this area took part in a discussion on the merit of this award. Another study by Loomba and Johannessen (1997) tried to explain unethical limitations of this award raised by some publications, surrounding fairness, superficiality and publicity-related issues. In term of superficial accusations, they argued that the short assessment period of 4 months was not adequate for choosing the best candidates who may thus possibly deliver a poor performance or bankrupt the company even after winning the award.

Similar to the EFQM Excellence Award, the Baldrige Award is believed to be 'a tough contest' with 'tough scoring scale' (Brown, 2008). After a site visit has been made by the judges in the third stage, with the purpose of clarification, verification, resolution or investigation, the site visit report is prepared, recommending or declining an award without set score. In the last stage, although there is no solid score to win an award, it is usually given to an applicant with a core in the region of 700 out of the maximum 1000 scores (Porter and Tanner, 2004). Additionally, one suggestion from Brown (2008) is that those winners have usually received a score between 70 % and 80 %. A breakdown of the Baldrige applicants for the period 2000-2008 from his book shown that the majority of organisational scores were below 500, out of a possible 1000. Historically, during this period, under 7 % of the MBNQA applicants won the award.

Since the Baldrige Program's inception in 1988, there have been more than 1,300 applicants for the Award and the average number of winners is four yearly (NIST, 2010). Not only adopted widely as significant award, Baldrige model is employed for SA by various organisations in order to improve their performance.

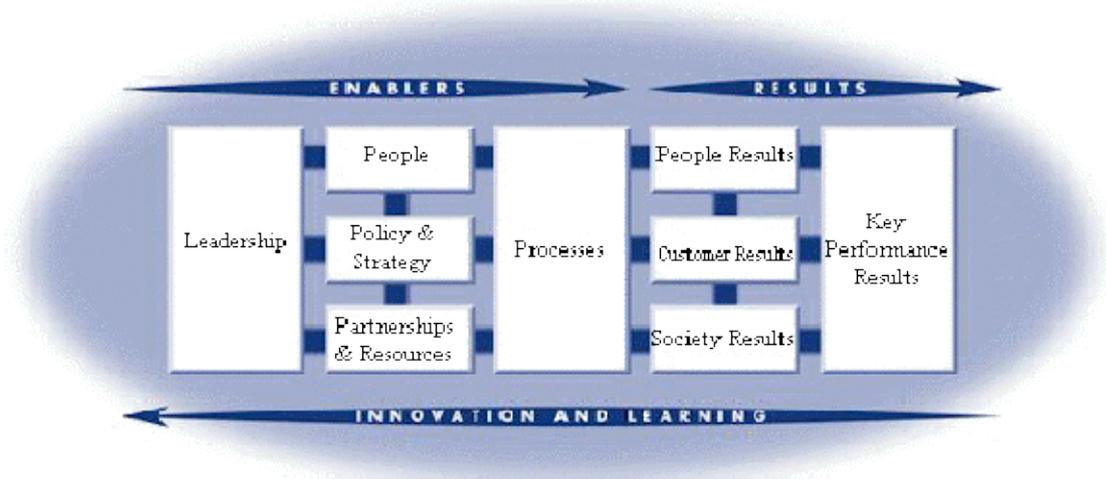
¹¹ The length of application document depends on whether the participating organisation was from small or large scale (Porter and Tanner, 2004)

The EFQM Excellence Model and the EFQM Excellence Award

The EFQM Excellence model was introduced in 1991 as a framework to assess applicants for the EFQM Excellence Award (EEA). “It is a non-prescriptive assessment framework that can be used to gain a holistic overview of any organisation regardless of size, sector or maturity” (EFQM, 2010). This model can also be used as a guide to identify areas for improvement within an organisation’s management system. Additionally, the model has been designed to provide organisations with a common management language and tools, thereby facilitating ‘good practice’ sharing across the industry.

Andersen, Lawrie and Shulver (2000, p.12) have suggested that this model is “a framework designed to assist organisations achieve business excellence through continuous improvement in the management and deployment of processes to engender wider use of best practice activities”. To help those businesses interested, regarding the several Excellence levels, an 8-stage roadmap to Excellence was provided by the EFQM organisation. Two techniques, called SA and benchmark, are given to measure the current standing of an organisation on the road to Excellence.

Figure 2-2 The EFQM Excellence Model



Source: EFQM (1999-2003a) - *Introducing Excellence*

The EFQM Excellence Model, which can be seen in Figure 2-2, is based on nine criteria, five of which are categorised as ‘Enablers’ and the remaining four as ‘Results’. The enablers are centred around organisational inputs and processes, whereas the results are focused on output, which is referred to as organisational achievement. According to Tanner (2005a), there were over 30 000

organisations which used the EFQM Excellence Model to help their organisation achieve key objectives and to enhance business performance.

The scoring system of this award is a combination of several factors. Whilst Enablers are evaluated by Approach, Deployment, Learning and Integration; Results criteria are scored by the 'Relevance & Usability' and 'Performance' results available (EFQM, 2009). And the RADAR scoring matrix is underpinned by four-element logic (Results, Approach, Deployment, Assessment and Refinement) is used for assessing Award participants (EFQM, 2009).

The core theme which surrounds the EFQM Excellence Model is based on the premise that excellent results with respect to performance, customers, people and society are gained through leadership, driving policy and strategy — which is delivered through people, partnerships, resources and processes. The fact that all the criteria of this model are updated continuously to adapt to the dynamics of organisational change and assess an applicant's "performance suggests the modern and developed characteristics of this model" (EFQM, 1999-2003a)

The latest EFQM Excellence version in 2009 was revised by the regular review of the Board, the feedback from many trustworthy resources and thanks to the greater insights emerging from management trends in the field. Several emerging tendencies were updated and included in the new releases: 'Creativity and Innovation', 'Sustainability', 'Corporate Governance', 'Organisation Agility', 'Risk management', 'Promoting product and service', and 'Supply management'. There are four major changes in the new version. Firstly, there is a more vigorous expression and slight shift in content in the Fundamental Concepts of this model. For example, 'Achieving Balanced Results', the later form, replaces 'Results Orientation', the former version. Secondly, there is a small change in the name of both sub-criterion and Enabler and Results criteria. Thirdly, the elements of the famous RADAR logic are changed in name and focus. Finally, there is change in proportion in the weighting scale of this model. The details of latest content of all criteria and its evaluation are provided in Appendix A.

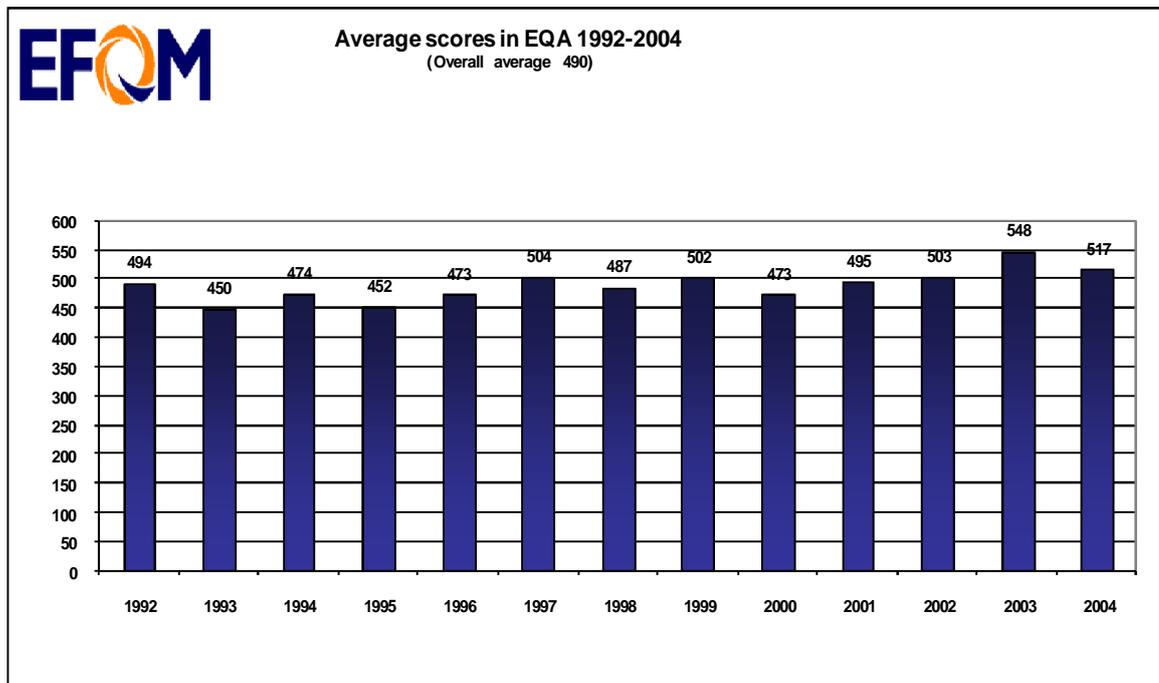
There are several criticisms surrounding this model such as a claim that "the European Quality Award model is a technique within TQM and not a model of the same and similar view applied to the MBNQA model" (McAdam and O'Neill, 1999, p.192). Porter and Tanner (2004, p.151) discussed this argument as follows:

"The European Award took the Baldrige Award as a starting point, and refined it as a business improvement vehicle. This development led to an approach that at the time was more business orientated than that of the Baldrige Award"

The original European Quality Award (EQA) has been termed the EFQM Excellence Award (EEA) since 2006; it has been run with the first winner since 1992 and increasingly been of interest to hundreds of European organisations and their governments (de Dommartin, 2000). The award’s objective is to recognise the top performance organisations across Europe. The latest recognition scheme has encompassed three strands of Excellence and is designed for “celebrating achievement and even greater effort in the future” (EEA, 2006). They include *Committed to Excellence*, *Recognised for Excellence* and *The Award recognition*. Appendix B is provided the award process as well as three recognition levels of the EQA.

According to Dibley (2004), there are estimated to be 40 to 50 applicants who apply for the EQA annually. Typically, two to three award winners are recognised who are chosen from the list (three Prize winners from each category). Basically, this decision is made by the assessment of hundreds assessors, comprising senior managers, quality professionals and academics from across Europe. At the level of *Recognised for Excellence*, a figure of 40 % is admitted. Historically, based on amended scores of the 75-page (maximum) submission document and considering the reports from the site visit which typically lasts 2 -4 days, the Jurors would make a decision on the list of the Award and Prize winners. Figure 2-3 gives the average scores of the EQA between 1992 and 2004. A score range of 450- 550 scores has been indicated to win the award.

Figure 2-3 The average scores of the EQA winners in 1992-2004



Source: Adapted from Dibley (2004)

Comparison between the American and European (award) models

For a better understanding these two BEMs mentioned it seems reasonable to judge them briefly. According to Finn and Porter (1994), both quality award frameworks have not established on 'arbitrary expert opinion' been subjected to instead of the result of empirical testing.

In a comparative study among the Baldrige Award, the EFQM and the Deming quality award by Bohoris (1995), American and European models have the same common philosophy focused toward TQM and achieving business excellence, but "each model has its unique award system and set of examination criteria, different from the other two in terms of purpose, overall approach, underlying values and concepts represented in their frameworks, and their contributions to the practice of TQM" (Bohoris, 1995, p.40). It is important that while the Baldrige Award and framework are more customer driven, the European one prefers to develop a latest idea, the impact on society. Conti (1997a) also agrees with this distinction, explaining the 'positioning' role which involves the distinguishing characteristics of the model and the intention of the award to recognise the organisation within the business community. Standing and Vorkuka (2003) gave the same idea and explain that the European award more concerned with the impact of organisation on society.

Moreover, the two models have used structured criteria on a strategic level to undergo continuous improvement in framework design and award administration (Vokurka, Stading and Brazeal, 2000). Specifically, the EFQM Excellence Award was built to encourage European organisations to implement TQM. This explains why its criteria are close to TQM principles. Put simply, the TQM themes have been developed and extended to integrate with organisational activities, including social and global environmental factors, into excellence concepts of the EFQM Excellence Model.

Furthermore, McDonald, Zairi and Idris (2002) claimed that the differences allocated to the business results of the MBNQA were weightier than the EEA/EQA. As can be seen in Table 2-2, the importance of Results [category] to the overall evaluation in the American award (53%) seems to lead to a somewhat more generous allocation of points than in the European evaluation (50%). Even though the weight of the MNBQA categories was modified slightly in the latest version, the percentage of category 7 (category Results) was still kept the same. Both models have a weighted scoring mechanism in Table 2-2 below.

Table 2-2. Percentage weighting of MBNQA and the EFQM Excellence criteria

EFQM Excellence criteria (2010)	EEA percentage weighting	MBNQA percentage weighting ¹²	MBNQA criteria (2010)
Leadership	10	10	Leadership
People	10	10	Human resources
Strategy	10	8	Policy and strategy
Partnerships and Resources	10	8	Information and analysis
Processes	10	10	Process management
People satisfaction	10		
Customer satisfaction	15	8	Customer focus
Impact on society	10		
Business results	15	45	Business results
TOTAL PERCENTAGE	100	100	

Sources: EFQM (2010), NIST (2010)

The Vietnam Quality Award

The Vietnam Quality Award (VQA), which fully adopted the MBNQA, was established in 1995 to motivate manufacturing and service organisations to improve the quality of their business activities, including products and services (Nguyen_b, 2005; Nguyen_c, 2008; Tan *et al.*, 2003). Thus, the exiting BEM in Vietnam has adopted the American model. The chosen model has particularly been affected by the influence of the non-profit Asia Pacific Quality Organisation¹³ (APQO), which has Vietnam as one of its core council members.

¹² According to the 2008 Baldrige Criteria Booklet, the weight of Leadership is 12%; Strategy Planning – 8.5%; Customer and Market focus – 8.5%; Measurement, Analysis and Knowledge management – 9%; Workforce focus – 8.5% and Process Management – 8.5%.

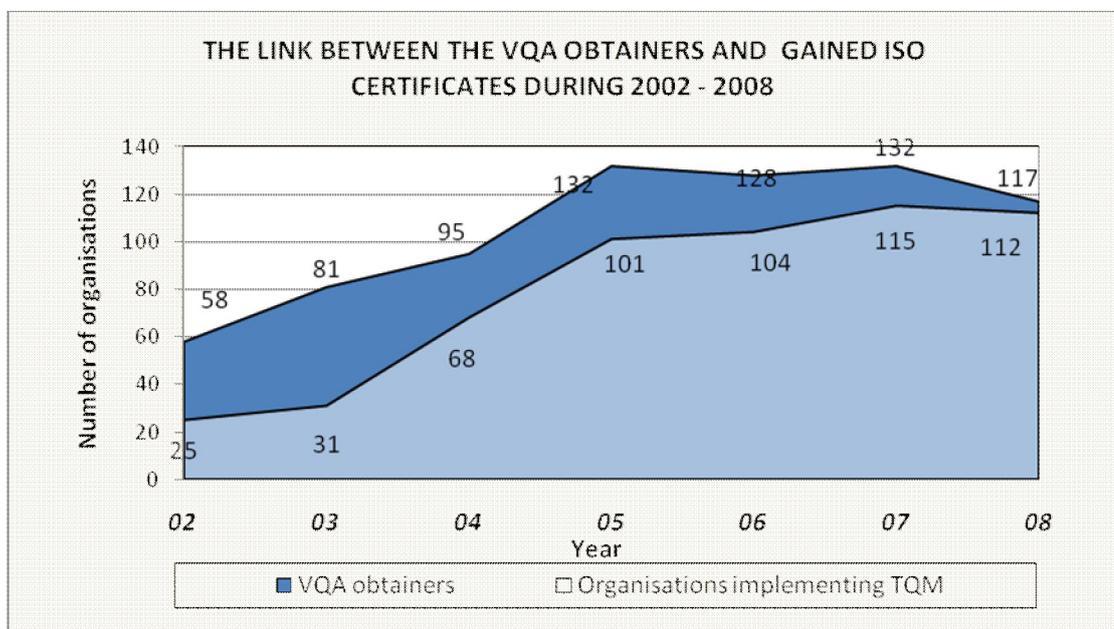
¹³ This organisation represents 14 Asian Pacific nations, including Australia, China, India, Indonesia, Iran, Korea, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Pakistan, the Philippines, Singapore, the United Arab Emirates, and Vietnam.

The winners of this Vietnamese award could apply for the International Asia-Pacific Quality Award (IAPQA), which also adopted the Baldrige Award framework and has been administered by the APQO since 1999. So far, there are 20 Vietnamese enterprises achieving this Award. Only one company in Vietnam's garment and textile industry, Garment Company 10 (Garco 10), was awarded this World Class honour in 2003.

The VQA's development has comprised of 4 phases (VQA, 2008a), more details can be found more in Appendix C. Up to three awards can be given in the four categories of enterprises (Large production enterprises; Small and medium production enterprises; Large service enterprises; and Small and medium service enterprises) and the total number of final (gold) awards is six annually.

Since the establishment of the VQA, there has been a substantial growth in the number of VQA participants who possess ISO certificates, as highlighted in Figure 2-4. Undoubtedly, this growth indicates a positive trend in BEM being adopted as an effective management approach to assist organisations in Vietnam. In this figure, it is easy to recognise the narrowing gap between those companies who gained the VQA and implemented TQM. It also shows the significant improvement in Vietnamese quality development generally.

Figure 2-4. The link between the Vietnamese Quality Award obtainers and gained ISO certificates in implementing TQM in 2002-2008



Source: VQA (2008a)

To apply for the award, each applicant company should submit its own assessment application documentation (VQA, 2008b). This includes self-scoring through organisation and documentation. To choose the winner, external assessors carefully evaluate and score the

organisational performance on a scale of 0 to 1 000 points. The applicants receive thorough feedback which comprehensively explains relative strengths, weaknesses and make proposals for improvement.

It is noted that training materials of the VQA, including books and textbooks, have only been used to train external examiners. Besides this, according to a report of the Directorate for Standards and Quality in Vietnam (STAMEQ), a total of 85 Vietnamese examiners underwent training courses between 2000 and 2008 with support from the APO (VQA, 2008a). Thus, there is clearly a shortage of trained assessors in Vietnam.

With respect to the Vietnamese T&G industry, the official data from the VQA office about T&G winners throughout the thirteen-year period (1996 – 2008) shows that they represent only 3% of the total winners. Specifically, 15 outstanding businesses have gained the VQA with three categories (Golden, Silver and Encouragement). The list of these 15 enterprises is illustrated in Appendix D. Only two T&G companies achieved the honour Golden award. It is clear that this result reflects the poor performance of this industry.

2.2 The theoretical underpinning of SA

In quality management, the core concepts of SA have their roots in TQM (Porter and Tanner, 2004), another trend is based on BEM. Two overlapping theories, TQM and BEM, are reviewed below.

2.2.1 A review of total quality management theory

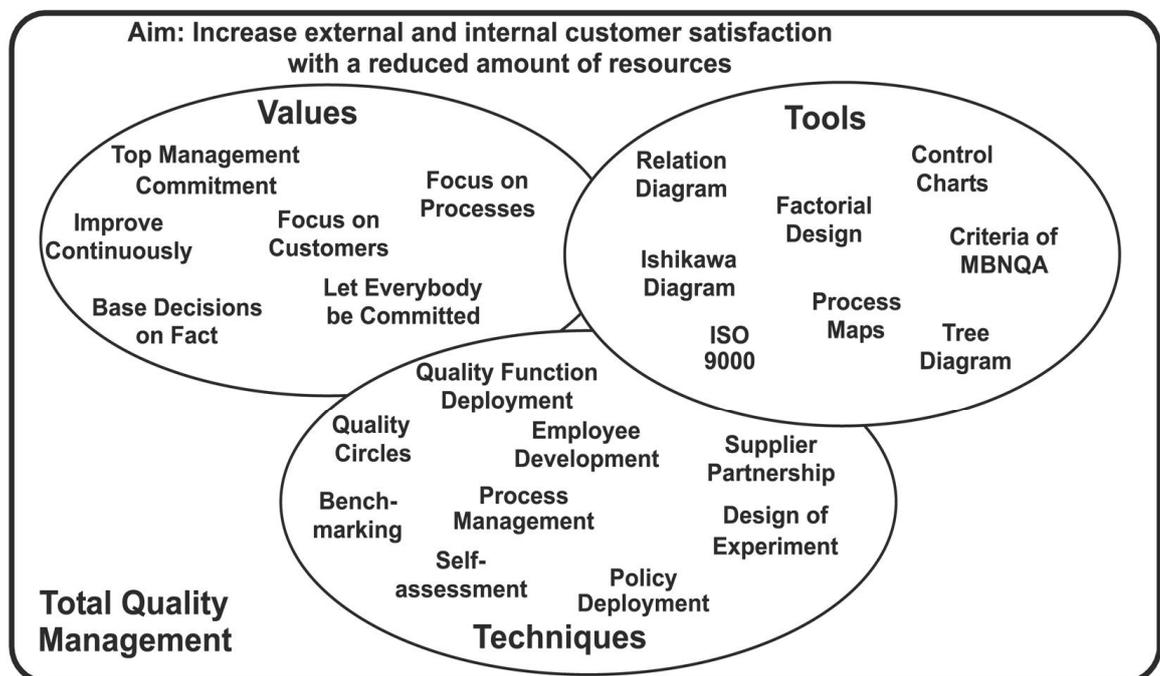
There are numerous studies in the SA topic which are considered to have strongly emphasised the TQM concept (Van der Wiele *et al.*, 1996a, 1996b; Longbottom, 1998; McDonald, Zairi, and Idris, 2002; Lee and Quazi, 2001; Pannirselvam and Ferguson, 2001; Arumugam *et al.*, 2009).

Since the 1950s, many quality gurus, including Crosby, Feigenbaum, Ishikawa and Juran have developed prescriptive principles of TQM for fostering continuous improvement and leading organisations successfully (Dale, 2003). Given this, the term TQM became one of the most used management acronyms throughout the period of the 1980s. Nevertheless, because of "*a convergence of ideas from several sources*" over decades (Reed, 1997, p.25), TQM is regarded a philosophy (Quazi *et al.*, 1998; Pun, 2002), an approach (Oakland, 1993), or a management system as suggested by Hellsten and Klefsjo (2000) and Eriksson and Hansson (2003), or a set of guiding principles and practices (ISO 9004). Martínez-Lorente, Dewhurst and Dale (1998, p.378) explained the diversity of TQM definitions:

“Almost every writer on the subject has their own definition, by and large devising it to suit their own belief prejudices and business and academic experience”

The conceptual systematic definition of Hellsten and Klefsjo fully views TQM as “a management system in continuous change and consisting of values, methodologies and tools” (Hellsten and Klefsjo, 2000, p.243). Figure 2-5 shows linkages between the three main components of TQM, core value (such as top management commitment, focus on processes, focus on customers, continuous improvement), tools and techniques. It is easy to recognise that SA is one of the TQM techniques.

Figure 2-5. Three components of TQM



Note: The techniques and tools in the figure are just examples and not a complete list. In the same way the values may also vary a little between different organisations and over time

Source: From Hellsten and Klefsjö (2000)

Source: Hellsten and Klefsjo (2000, p.243)

To implement TQM successfully, the organisations should identify core values as a basis for the organisational culture. Developing the internal factors critical to successful TQM implementation, many studies have consistently concluded a set of seven behavioural factors to improve performance and gain organisational competitive advantages (Terziovski and Samson, 1999; Brah, Tee and Madhu, 2002). These factors are: (1) corporate planning; (2) role of top management leadership; (3) customer focus; (4) human resources focus; (5) process focus; (6) quality focus and (7) information and analysis.

Many studies have evidenced the positive relationship between TQM and organisational performance and marketing orientation (Terziovski and Samson, 1999; Prabhu *et al.*, 2000; Taylor and Wright, 2006; Kumar *et al.*, 2009; Santos-Vijande and Álvarez-González, 2009). According to McDonald, Zairi and Idris (2002, p.26), the successful implementation of TQM can deliver “increased efficiency, reduced costs and greater satisfaction, that all lead to better business results”.

TQM is still receiving attention from academics around the world (Jung, Wang and Wu, 2009). Much of the research focuses on the role of TQM and its links to organisational performance or operational performance in different contexts.

The controversy about the TQM

The articles ‘*Is TQM dead?*’ and ‘*The cracks in Quality*’¹⁴ are famous titles in the public domain which question the popularity and financial performance of TQM implementations, according to Hendrick and Singhal (2000). There are many claims to the failure such as TQM is a fad — too sophisticated with practical execution issues (Dale *et al.*, 2000).

Vokurka, Stading and Brazeal (2000) argue that the failure of TQM implementation is not due to its concept. In fact, there are many fundamental mistakes related to primary operational aspects in organisations. Many studies have examined the reasons for difficulty in utilizing TQM (Adebanjo and Kehoe, 1999; Salegna and Fazel, 2000; Al-Zamany, Hoddell and Savage, 2002; Bhat and Rajashekhar, 2009); for example: inadequate training, lack of leadership commitment, lack of communication and essential skills, no benchmarking foundation or resistant to change.

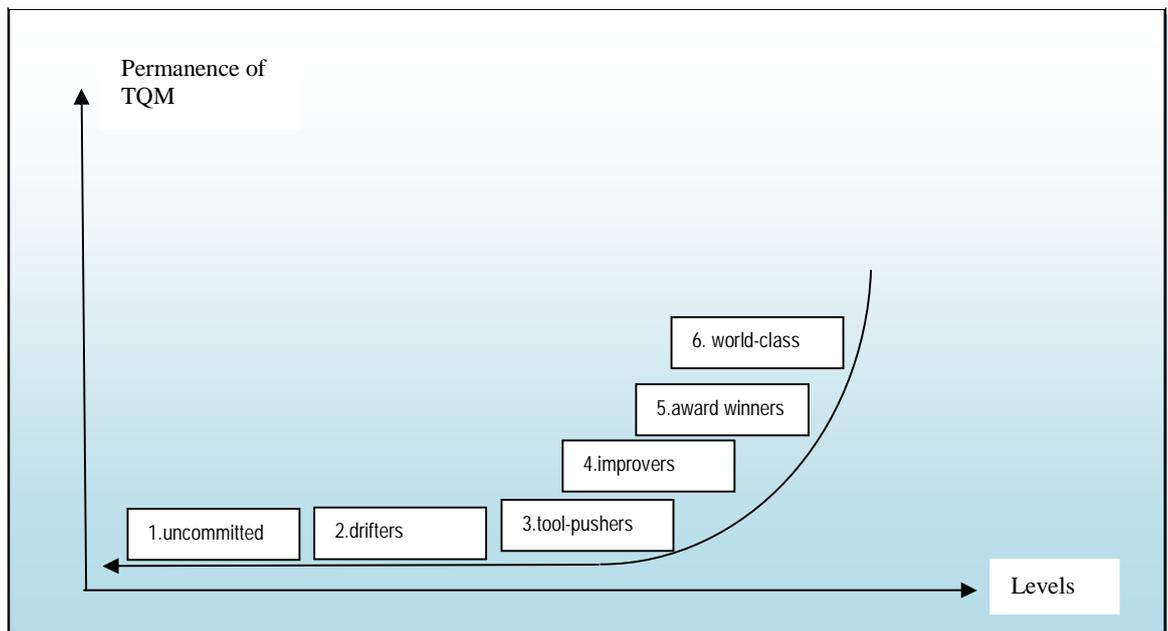
The TQM adoption

Researchers in SA have agreed the quality management maturity as the basis for participant organisations (Van der Wiele *et al.*, 1996b; Ritchie and Dale, 2000a). Dale and Lascelles (1997) developed a 6-level TQM adoption scale, which is useful for organisations to diagnose the level of their TQM maturity.

¹⁴ ‘The crack in Quality’ was published by The Economist on 18 April 1992, and from page 67-68; ‘Is TQM dead’ was published by Quality Digest in April 1994, page 24-28

The description of these levels is argued by Dale and Lascelles (1997) as follows (see Figure 2-6).

Figure 2-6. The different levels of TQM adoption



Source: Dale and Lascelles (1997, p.419)

Level 1: Uncommitted organisations have been pursuing ISO 9000 by applying some quality techniques for customer orientation. These companies have not yet designed a long-term strategy for continuous improvement.

Level 2: Drifters organisations are those which have been engaged for up to three years in TQM implementations. These firms follow the fashion trend in quality programmes without a clear baseline. The challenges facing these firms at this level include frustration and disappointment in seeking an appropriate program to fulfil their own particular organisational expectations.

Level 3: Tool-pushers have more quality improvement experience than drifters and possess ISO 9000 registration. In a period of between three and five years, they employ effective operational activities through a selection of the latest techniques to encounter the major requirements of the quality system standards. Although they have several similarities, drifters try to apply a new tool while tool-pushers move onto another new technique within the same context. Continuous improvement activities tend to be much paid attention by manufacturing and quality managers.

Level 4: Improvers. These organisations have achieved significant benefits from TQM during a three to eight-year period: leadership commitment, TQM strategy in conjunction with other business strategies, a customer-focus culture and, finally, improved financial performance.

Moving in the right direction, the involvement and quality improvement issues in companies are likely to cross-function, except in the case of implementing overwhelmingly complex techniques.

Level 5: Award winners are those who reach the level of winning the recognised quality awards. Not all organisations at this level have gained international prizes but their maturity has developed so that continuous improvement becomes habitual. TQM is widely adopted throughout these organisations to manage the business and satisfy customers.

Level 6: World-class. This level is characterised by expansion of total quality highlighting customer satisfaction, continuous improvement and sustained exclusive competitiveness. There is perhaps a small number of world-class companies confirmed at this level, but only for few years because of a tough ever-changing environment.

TQM and continuous improvement studies in Vietnam

One of the rare PhD studies by Nguyen (Nguyen_a, 2006), investigated whether IT support applications for TQM lead to improvements in organisational performance. This author claimed that there are few studies of TQM implementation in Vietnam. The main findings of this study, which analyzed data from 146 organisations, are that five out of seven dimensions of TQM of 91 organisations with QMS¹⁵ certificates have an organisational performance significantly better than 55 companies without it.

Another significant study in the field of TQM practice in Vietnam was led by Dinh (Dinh, Igel and Laosihongthong, 2006); his structural model was tested on 14 practitioner experts and academics. This study investigated the relationship between TQM practices and innovative performance in the Vietnamese industrial context. The findings show that TQM had a positive impact on organisational innovation. Another conclusion was that top management determined high commitment in quality management. This study also found weaknesses of Vietnamese companies in both information systems and statistic process controls.

Recently, a cross-industry research project in five case companies examined Vietnamese practice in continuous improvement (Nguyen and Robinson, 2010). The study found that there was little or no attention paid to continuous improvement. The ISO certifications which companies obtained are used to seek new customers as well as retain the loyalty of their current clients. Those certificates did not contribute to improve their quality activities. Moreover, these companies focused on immediate targets, such as revenue and profit, rather than “long-term sustainability and continuous improvement” (Nguyen and Robinson, 2010, p.36).

¹⁵ QMS: Quality management system

2.2.2 A review of BE literature

There is a consensus that the BE framework was originally developed from TQM principles and practices (Dale *et al.*, 2000; Saunders and Mann, 2002; Lee, 2006). BEMs steer organisational thinking and focus for actions in a systematic and structured way, which world-class organisations have implemented successfully.

One of the significant improvement features brought by BEMs is the vital role of stakeholder perceptions which not only focus on external customers but also internal parties (staff) and impact on society (McAdam and Kelly, 2002). Authors such as Adebajo (2001); Wongrassamee, Gardiner and Simmons (2003); Fallon, Brown and Allen (2003); Tanner (2005a,b) and Mele and Colurcio (2006) also consider BE to have evolved from TQM, with a broadening of its scope to focus on stakeholders rather than customers. Dale (2000) suggested that there is little different in the underlying approaches between these two interpretations of BE and TQM. However, in Table 2-3 below, it can be seen that the main difference between two is that while BE focuses on results and public responsibilities, whilst TQM highlights decision making.

Table 2-3. A comparison in fundamental concepts between business excellence and total quality management

BUSINESS EXCELLENCE (EFQM, 1999-2003a)	TOTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT (BS EN ISO/CDI 9000 ¹⁶)
“Result orientation; customer focus, leadership and constancy of purpose; management by processes and facts; people development and involvement; continuous learning, innovation and improvement; partnership development; and public responsibilities.”	“Customer-focused organisation; leadership; involvement of people; process approach; system approach to management; continual improvement; factual approach to decision making; mutually beneficial supplier relationship”

Source: Dale (2000, p.109)

The BE model requires organisations to integrate fully to achieve and sustain outstanding results for all stakeholders. In the book *Assessing Business Excellence*, Porter and Tanner (2004) suggested nine-fundamental core concept: Leadership; Customer focus, Strategy alignment, Organisational learning, innovation and improvement, People (employee) focus, Partner development, Fact-based process management, Results focus and Social responsibility.

¹⁶ BS EN ISO/CDI 9000: Standard Number of Quality management systems. Requirements (English version)

Providing a justification to move from TQM to BE, Ackoff (1993, p.67) argued that the term 'total' in TQM should be applied to all aspects and activities of organisations to include internal and external customers; fulfilling the expectations of stakeholders such as suppliers, employees, consultants, stockholders, and bankers. His view has been confirmed by Shin, Kalinowski and El-Enein (1998), who assert that TQM requires total participation, total commitment, total responsibility of one and all members in an organisation. Further, an analysis by Vokurka, Stading and Brazeal (2000) concluded that because TQM did not guarantee increased profit, the criteria of the BEM must give weight to business results which focus on customers, employees, and the community as well.

Wang's paper (Wang and Ahmed, 2001) on a comparison between TQM and BE revealed mutual concepts in philosophy, principles, process, performance and problem as shown in Table 2-4 below.

Table 2-4. TQM versus Business Excellence

	Total quality management	Business Excellence (The EFQM Excellence Model)
Philosophy	TQM is to combine people and quality techniques, based on a sub-structure and value, to achieve continuous improvement in the quality of the product and hence in all aspects of the operation (Harriss, 1995)	EFQM 1988: "To stimulate and assist organisations throughout Europe to participate in improvement activities leading ultimately to excellence in customer satisfaction, employee satisfaction, impact on society and business results, and to support the manager of European organisations in accelerating the progress of Making total quality Management a decisive factor for achieving global competitive advantage" (EFQM, 2000) EFQM 2000: "To be driving force for sustainable excellence in organisation in Europe" (EFQM, 2000)
Process	SPC (Statistical process control) PDSA (Plan-Do-Study- Act)	RADAR (Results, Approach, Deployment, Assessment and Review)

Table 2-4 (continued). TQM versus Business Excellence

	Total quality management	Business Excellence (The EFQM Excellence Model)
Performance	Continuous improvement of the organisation; customer satisfaction; and employee development	Customer Results; People Results; and Society Results; Key Performance Results (financial and non-financial)
Problems	TQM is conceptual and philosophical. Its strong ideological and cultural perspective cannot be easily deploy in company (Salegna and Fazel, 2000)	Business excellence needs to avoid evolving into a purely point scoring, short-term oriented mechanism, losing the fundamentals of the quality focus.

Source: Wang and Ahmed (2001, p.23)

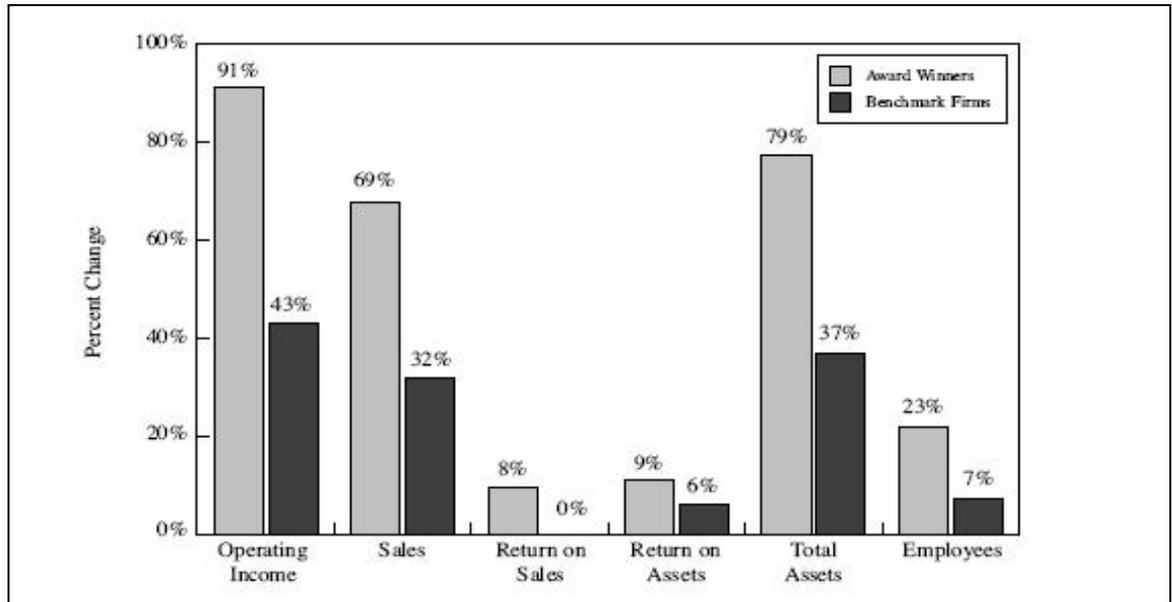
Several authors suggest that the holistic nature of TQM is reflected accurately by two famous BEMs, the Baldrige model and the EFQM Excellence Model (Van der Wiele, Dale and Williams, 2000c; Curkovic, Vickery and Dröge, 2000; Bou-Llusar *et al.*, 2009). Curkovic, Vickery and Dröge (2000) argue that the MBNQA criteria capture the main dimensions of TQM.

General benefits of BEM implementation

A substantial number of studies have shown a strong relationship between business excellence (or quality award model) and improved organisational performance (GAO, 1991; Easton, 1993; Ernst and Young, 1993; Hendricks and Singhal, 1997, 2000; Oakland, 1999; Khoo and Tan, 2002a; Eriksson and Hansson, 2003; BQF, 2005; Kumar *et al.*, 2009). The majority of these studies focus on award winners, particular MBNQA and the European Quality Award (EQA).

In deciding to use award winners as a proxy for effective implementation, Hendricks and Singhal (2000) have statistically shown that BE improves long-term financial performance in sales, assets, shares and so on. Figure 2-7 demonstrates improvement outcomes for key BE indicators.

Figure 2-7. Key BE indicators when applying BEM in organisations: comparing performance and productivity in the post-implementation period



Source: Hendricks and Singhal (2000)

As shown in Figure 2-7, the results of this survey conducted in the United States showed that 600 companies that had effectively implemented BEMs experienced higher growth compared to benchmark firms.

Further, an extensive study was carried out in 2005. It found that three years after receiving the European Quality Awards, 120 winning companies outperformed their counterparts by an average of 36% for share value, 17% for sales, 5% for sales over assets, 4% for capital expenditure over sales, and had experienced a higher growth in assets (20%) and a further decrease in costs (-1.4%) (BQF, 2005).

Additionally, BEM has been found to be a key factor in achieving an enhanced national competitiveness (APO, 2002). It is also attractive to the public sector of developed nations because it can fulfil the government's aim to improve quality levels across organisations (PriceWaterhouseCoopers, 2000).

An extremely important benefit which could be derived by adopting the BEM is the great opportunity for SA and benchmarking (Adebanjo, 2001; Tanner, 2005a,b). The criteria of the BEM offer the possibility to appraise the strengths and weaknesses of organisational activities, and also to discern the current level of performance by determining where an organisation is on the journey forward to excellence. An important early study conducted by Van der Wiele *et al.* (1996b) found that SA was accepted as an effective business performance management system.

Companies have the intentions “to diagnose the state of health of their improvement process and provide indications of how to achieve business excellence” through SA against BEM (Dale, 2003, p.473).

Criticism of BEM

According to Hellsten and Klefsjo (2000), Singh and Smith (2006) and Seddon (2006), one of the main criticisms of BEM is a lack of theory. Similarly, Jayamaha, Grigg and Mann (2008b, p.59) claimed that there is the “lack of a unified theory that explains how organisations outcomes are achieved”. This problem is easy to understand because BEMs are established by practitioners, according to Dale *et al.* (2000).

In addition, academics argues that there is no single model that can be used for all organisations and all industries, as they all have their own structure and vary in size (Porter and Tanner, 2004; Tanner, 2005a).

The other shortcomings of BEM are: the lack of strategic focus (Singh and Smith, 2006) and implementation problems (Hansson, 2003; Hansson and Klefsjö, 2003). The other issue is raised by Crosby that these BEMs only provide a living to consultants (Crosby, 1996). Furthermore, the validity of BE has been the concern of Williams *et al.*, (2006). The similar attempt was conducted by a doctoral study of Jayamaha (2008). His findings indicate that there is a low degree of validity of the three BEMs when assessing from a conceptual standpoint.

2.3 How organisations apply SA to achieve business excellence?

Organisations can choose among various approaches, from quantitative to qualitative, from their invention or from academic/consultant product or from famous quality awards, to carry out SA implementation e.g. questionnaire, workshop, pro-forma¹⁷, matrix¹⁸, software, peer involvement¹⁹, hybrid²⁰ and award simulation/award approaches (Zink and Schmidt, 1999; Dale, 2003; Porter and Tanner, 2004). Among several common techniques used to carry out the SA process, Ritchie and Dale (2000a) suggest three main approach categories, from simple to complex respectively: questionnaire which consists of a set of questions designed to assess organisational performance; workshops which involve management team meetings and presentations to peers; and award

¹⁷ Pro-forma is a set of work sheet to capture important and descriptive information, and this is useful for reducing overload data gathering in SA, especially bring greater benefit in large organisations

¹⁸ Matrix used to customize the specific need of each organisation and practical guideline to attainment, and also develop organisational understanding in order to direct scoring more efficient, less demanding but need review regularly

¹⁹ Peer involvement relates to site visit, information filling documents and evaluation by senior manager typically

²⁰ Hybrid indicates to use the combination of two or several tools in different stage in the same company

simulation/application, which refers writing a full award submission document and having this document reviewed and scored by an assessor team. Organisations should consider adopting one or more of these techniques depending on the resources and needs as well as the limitations of selected technique (Jackson, 2001b; Benavent, Ros and Moreno-Luzon, 2005)

Organisations used the EFQM Excellence Model or the Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence for organisational SA (EFQM, 1999-2003b; NIST, 2010b; Ritchie and Dale, 2000a; Eriksson and Garvare, 2005; Williams *et al.*, 2006; Lam, Wang and Lam, 2008a). These excellence models are useful tools for measuring organisations and identifying areas for improvements because they are based on the common language used in employing SA (Richie and Dale, 2000; Samuelsson and Nilsson, 2002; Ruben, 2004). Conti (1997a) pointed out that the American and European Quality Awards have similar assessment processes. Under the umbrella of specific quality awards, those participating organisations would use a bespoke multiple criteria framework as a SA instrument to verify performance and standards in the review period.

The Baldrige journey consists of a combination of several techniques in five specific steps (details can be seen in Appendix E). The five steps are:

1. Two SA questionnaires: *Are We Making Progress?* and *Are We Making Progress As Leaders?*
2. e-Baldrige questionnaire
3. Completing the Organizational Profile of the MBNQA application form
4. Answering the 19 criteria Item title questions
5. Conduct a full SA

Source: BNQP, 2008

The National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), the custodian of the MBNQA, found that this award framework was used in SA activities in most large American companies.

Along with the American award, the SA tools of the EFQM comprise questionnaire, workshop, pro-formal and simulation/application. The main difference between the highest level of SA (award simulation/application) and others is that the former necessarily involve a third-party as external examiner (Eriksson, 2004). Details of benefits, relevant risks and specific step of process are shown in Appendix F.

According to the EFQM guide book, a clearly defined guide will provide a standardised framework regarding which approach organisations can use when apply SA. For example, a ‘starter’ organisation should undertake an elementary questionnaire as an initial step which only requires ‘low effort’ on the excellence journey. On the other hand, mature business could adopt an

award simulation/application. As showed in Figure 2-8, some SA tools are suggested by the EFQM based on the low or high effort from the company.

Figure 2-8. SA Selection Criteria – Maturity/Effort Differences

ON THE WAY	Questionnaire & Workshop	Pro-forma	Pilot Award Simulation
	Facilitated Assessment Workshop	Facilitated Assessment Workshop	
STARTING ON THE EXCELLENCE JOURNEY	Elementary Questionnaire	More detailed Questionnaire	Customised Questionnaire
			Facilitated Assessment Workshop
	LOW EFFORT	MEDIUM EFFORT	HIGH EFFORT

Source: *Assessing for Excellence - EFQM (1999-2003b, p.15)*

The EFQM suggests that each approach when adopted can deliver distinct benefits, either ‘*quick fixes*’ in the short term or a quality award in the long term. In Figure 2-9, selection criteria are presented for a variety of SA approaches. For instance, if a company possesses limited SA knowledge and has few resources, a questionnaire method could be used. However, the outcomes of the SA do not ensure the accuracy of the score nor the identification of strengths and areas for improvement.

Figure 2-9. SA Selection Criteria – Input/Output Differences

	Resource effort	Knowledge of Model	Trained Assessors	Site Visit	Strengths & AFIs	Accuracy of score
Questionnaire	Low-Medium	No	No	No	No	Low
Assessment Workshop	Medium	Yes	Yes plus Facilitator	No	Yes	Medium
Pro-forma	Medium- High	Yes	Yes	Optional	Yes	Medium-High
Award Simulation	High	Yes	Yes	Optional	Yes	High

AFI: Area for Improvement

Source: *Assessing for Excellence - EFQM (1999-2003b, p.16)*

Regarding the selection of the SA tool, Van der Wiele *et al.* (1996b, p.87) point out an alternative approach which is assessing the company's quality management maturity, which can be measured by "the scores achieved against the criteria of a recognised quality award such as the EQA or the MBNQA".

In order to help organisations identify their maturity level, Dale and Smith (1997, p.309) suggest a 7-level scale to offer "a quick road map for plotting a path". This scale is based on the six levels of TQM adoption developed by Lascelles and Dale (1997) in Figure 2-6. Using practical experience, they also suggested adding two additional levels; 'unaware' presented for companies begun the excellent journey and the other 'initiators' referring to companies "whose awareness of continuous has been aroused but not taken the first step" (Dale and Smith, 1997, p.309). This scale also combines 'drifters' and 'tool-pushers' of Lascelles and Dale (1997) into the Drifters. Dale and Smith (1997) also provide the equivalent EFQM scores in terms of 7-level scale (can be seen in Table 2-5).

Table 2-5. The equivalent score scale in the EFQM Excellence Model for the TQM adoption levels

	Stages	The equivalent EFQM scores
1	Unaware	0 – 100
2	Uncommitted	0 – 100
3	Initiators	0 – 300
4	Drifters	100 – 300
5	Improvers	300 – 650
6	Award winners	650-750
7	World class	750+

Source: Dale and Smith (1997, p.310)

In reality, there are many academic SA techniques/approaches and Table 2-6 provides a summary of them. The benefit of such variety is that it enables businesses to have greater flexibility when choosing their SA tool (Lee and Quazi, 2001).

Table 2-6. Summary of non-standard (academic base) SA tools

Authors	Basis (BEM) of the development of tool	Description of SA tool/approach
Voss, Chiesa and Coughlan (1994)	Process-base and the EFQM Excellence Model	A benchmarking and SA framework is developed for using in manufacturing
Brown (1997)	MBNQA	The 10-point scale SA questionnaire to measure the level of quality management
Prybutok and Stafford (1997)	MBNQA	An SA questionnaire instrument to appropriately use in an American health care organisation.
Wu, Wiebe and Politi (1997)	MBNQA	Development of an instrument to assist organisations in conducting SA of their TQM programs
Quazi <i>et al.</i> (1998)	MBNQA	Corroborate the usefulness of an Likert scale instrument to develop a measurement of organisational quality management practices and the possibility of employing such an instrument as an SA tool in SME context
Svensson and Klefsjö (2000)	Swedish Quality Award	Using less complex language than that of awards, developed SA tool, named Lavererk matrix, which is believed to be widely adopted in majority of schools within the Swedish system.
Lee and Quazi (2001)	MBNQA and the Singapore Quality Award	A 6-range questionnaire-based assessment followed by the exact nature and structure of the 7 criteria of the Singapore Quality Award
Siow, Yang and Dale (2001); Li and Yang (2003)	The MCDM and the EFQM	Development of a multiple criteria decision-making (MCDM) model for application to the SA scoring process
Sturkenboom, Van Der Wiele and Brown (2001)	A SA model based on 3 principles of QM	An SA instrument that suits for the maturity level of quality management in SMEs; proposed an SA matrix framework and tested it in 4 Netherlands companies.

Table 2-6 (continued). Summary of non-standard (academic base) SA tools

Authors	Basis (BEM) of the development of tool	Description of SA tool/approach
Conca, Llopis and Tari´ (2004)	EFQM	An assessing framework can be used to measure the performance system of SMEs
Davidson and Stern (2004)	TQM	A web-based model to assess the effectiveness of TQM in manufacturing firms used for self-evaluation in German education
Van Aken <i>et al.</i> , (2005)	MBNQA and the EFQM Excellence Model	The modern improvement system assessment tool (ISAT) which was piloted in the Belgian public sector to assess the maturity and effectiveness of performance’s enterprises
Xu, McCarthy and Yang (2006)	The IDS ²¹ and the EFQM Excellence Model	Software which uses multiple criteria analysis to support innovation SA tasks in organisations
Lam, Wang and Lam (2008a,b)	MNBQA	A survey tool for contractors in the construction sector to investigate TQM practice in Hong Kong construction industry
Arumugam <i>et al.</i> , (2009)	MNBQA	A survey instrument in Malaysian manufacturing to assess the TQM level within manufacturing companies in Malaysia
Antony and Bhattacharyya (2010)	A generic excellence model	A conceptual model which can be used for measuring organisational Excellence level in SMEs

Source: developed by the researcher

Porter and Tanner (2004) introduced a three-phase SA Excellence roadmap of the SA progress over time. These phases consist of Entry, concerned with getting started; User, concerned with using the SA results to improve performance; and World-class, related to gaining the sustained excellence. Table 2-7 shows several appropriate SA approach and relative benefits across three phases in this roadmap.

²¹ IDS: Intelligent Decision System, one of the multiple criteria decision analysis software.

Table 2-7. The SA roadmap

Aspects	Phase 1 – Entry	Phase 2 – User	Phase 3 – World class
	Laying the foundations	Building the house	Reaping and maintaining the benefits
Points recommend	0-300 points	300-600 points	600-1000 points
SA approach	Very simple approach	Greater accuracy	Holistic, but accurate feedback at high level
Rigour	High level Limited data collection	Richer feedback Need for confirmation of real progress Examination of results/enabler linkages	Measure of integration of approaches within business Diagnostic in nature Approaches may vary dependent on level
Benefits/ deliverables	‘Strategic’ level improvements Mainly cultural at lower levels	First use of SA to inform and deploy strategy Fundamental building blocks of excellence put into place High level of improvement activities Some quantifiable demonstration of benefits Organisation more receptive to change More customer-focused attitude	Improvement contributing to achievement of business objectives Continued improvement in performance Desired culture continuously reinforced

Source: Adapted by Porter and Tanner (2004, p.365-368)

In terms of a generic approach, two authors have provided specific instructions for each phase that organisations should implement on their SA road. For example, to start on the SA journey, a company should select a very simple tool which has been selected by high level management.

In the following sections, in-depth descriptions of two SA techniques, the simple questionnaire using SA and the more rigour award simulation/application, are explored.

2.3.1 Questionnaire SA approach

The questionnaire tool is surely valid for beginners on the SA road (Lascelles and Peacock, 1996) and also as “an excellent approach to gather information on the perceptions of the people in the organisation” (Shergold and Reed, 1996, p.51). Generally, at the beginning of the SA (BE) road, when a SA tool, such as the questionnaire, is adopted it requires respondents to use a scoring scale to assess the current situation or performance of relevant divisions, and or the organisation as a whole (Porter and Tanner, 2004).

A typical simple questionnaire would include from 40 to 100 questions constructed around each criterion of the particular BEM. Such a questionnaire has been widely accepted because of simple process, very quick completion and low cost (EFQM, 1999-2003b; Porter and Tanner, 2004)

Standard questionnaires are supplied by MNBQA, such as *Are We Making Progress?* and *Are We Making Progress As Leaders?*, or from EFQM, ‘*Determining Excellence: A questionnaire approach*’ and *Self-assessment workbook*. Under each criterion, there was an amount of questions or statements. For example, several questions relate to the Leadership criterion in the EFQM questionnaire tool in Table 2-8.

Table 2-8. An extract *Determining Excellence: A questionnaire approach*

LEADERSHIP	D²²	C	B	A
(i) <i>Are all the senior managers personally involved and visible in generating and communicating a strategic statement for the purpose, direction and culture of organisation (including its quality values and priorities)</i>				
(ii) <i>Have the senior managers ensured the implementation of an organisational structure and process management system that is respected and is effective in delivering consistent and improving results</i>				
(iii) <i>Do the senior managers, by example and action, demonstrate support and emphasize the values of their organisation and are these values widely accepted and practiced throughout the organisation?</i>				

Source: EFQM (1999-2003) - *Determining Excellence: A questionnaire approach*, p.14

²² D=Not started (0%); C=Some progress (33%); B=Considerable progress (67%) and A=Fully achieved (100%)

Alternatively, an extract from the *Are We Making Progress* questionnaire version (BNQP, 2009a) showing category 1 – Leadership follows in Table 2-9.

Table 2-9. An extract from *Are we making progress?* SA survey

CATEGORY 1: LEADERSHIP	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1a <i>I know my organization's mission (what it is trying to accomplish).</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1b <i>I know my organization' vision (where it is trying to go in the future)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1c <i>My senior (top) leaders use our organization's values to guide us.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1d <i>My senior leaders create a work environment that helps me do my job.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1e <i>My organization's leaders share information about the organization</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1f <i>My organization asks what I think.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Source: BNQP (2009a)

Other non-standard survey-based tools existed, such as the DTI Benchmark Index, *How do you shape up?* and Probe (PRoMoting Business Excellence), based on a standard quality award for assessment and benchmark purposes in particular aspects or in specific organisations (Prabhu *et al.*, 2000; Pemberton, Stonehouse and Yarrow, 2001; Yarrow, Hanson and Robson, 2004a; Yarrow, Robson and Owen, 2004b).

A generic 6-step process for questionnaire implementation is suggested by Porter and Tanner (2004, p.320) as a typical process to use alongside the questionnaire. The six steps comprise of planning, briefing, data collection, data analysis, action and review.

To complete those questionnaires, the yes-no or multiple answer are needed, as seen in Table 2-8. A more sophisticated questionnaire requires selection of the relevant degree, from weak to strong (EFQM, 1999-2003b), as seen in Table 2-10; or the Likert-type interval scale (BNQP, 2009a) in the two questionnaires with Baldrige SA (see Table 2-9).

Table 2-10. An example of the EFQM SA questionnaire approach

Criterion 3: People	APPROACH					DEPLOYMENT					ASSESSMENT AND REVIEW					RESULTS				
	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1= weak evidence 5=strong positive evidence																				
Q1 ²³ :																				
A1:																				
Q2 ²⁴ :																				
A2:																				

Source: EFQM (1999- 2003b, p.37)

Whilst there are some disadvantages in using questionnaire, research based on this approach confirms that it enables identification of organisational strengths, as well as weaknesses and encouraging the improvement actions (Tari and Juana-Espinosa, 2007; Michalska, 2008). Many recent studies (Tari and Juana-Espinosa, 2007; Venero *et al.*, 2007; Tari, 2010) confirm the benefits and implementation issues of using the questionnaire approach, which focused on the EFQM Excellence Model in Spain HEIs context.

Further, Appendix G shows the benefits and limitations of using the questionnaire approach in detail. A summary of the information of its advantages and disadvantages are showed in Table 2-11.

Table 2-11: A summary of the advantages and disadvantages of SA using questionnaire approach

Advantage experienced	Disadvantage encountered
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ <i>Easy to implement/use</i> ✓ <i>Clearly defined goals</i> ✓ <i>It is a simple tool</i> ✓ <i>Quick/ not time-consuming</i> ✓ <i>Low efforts/ Low resources requirements</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ <i>Lack of accuracy of overall outcome/ difficult to score</i> ✓ <i>The outputs represent perception and require validation</i> ✓ <i>Difficult to identify the causal factors</i> ✓ <i>Lack of the need to provide evidence</i>

²³ How do you ensure that your HR plan is aligned with your organisational strategy?

²⁴ What are the key human resource policies in your organisation? (e.g. Resource Planning, Recruitment, Career Development, Equal Opportunities, Appraisal)

2.3.2 Award application/simulation SA approach (Award-type)

Similar to the questionnaire approach, the adoption of an award-type assessment could rely on an original award, or a modified model which is believed to suit best the applicant company (Ritchie and Dale, 2000a). Compared to the questionnaire approach, award simulation/application in SA is far more precise, having a high creditability and consistency, and its outcome provides a more accurate list of strengths and areas for improvement.

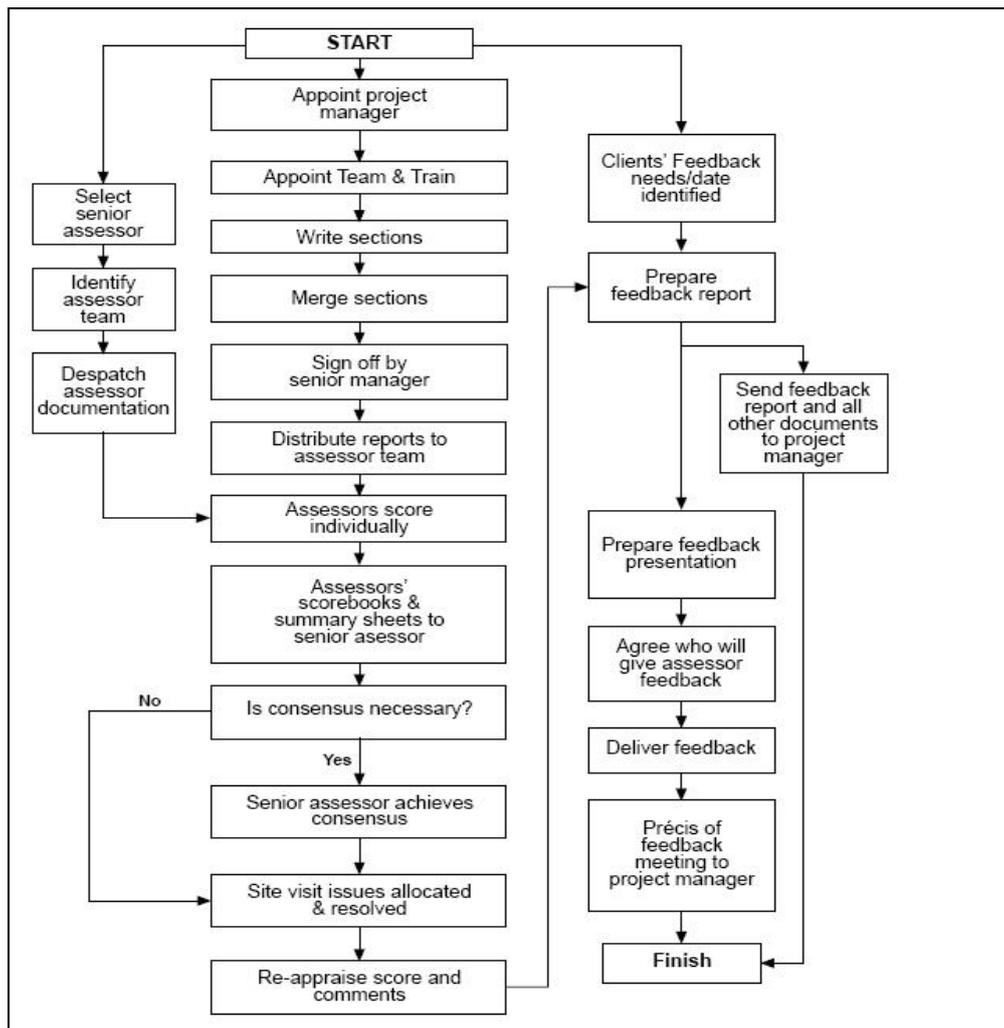
Beside the basic aim of employing this technique for achieving a quality award, the learning experience is believed to be one of the biggest potential benefits — a greater understanding about organisation goals, visions, and expectation are communicated to participants (Halachmi, 1995). Employing a ‘standard’ model, such as the MBNQA or the EQA, enables benchmarking in the same industry. Many studies (Van der Wiele *et al.*, 1995, 1996a, b; Eriksson, 2004) provide evidence of the benefits of award application, such as comprehensive evaluation of the whole company against internal and external targets, enhancement of the business structure, and better suggestions for continuous improvement activities.

In spite of this, award simulation/application is very costly and time consuming to implement (Shergold and Reed, 1996; Lee and Quazi, 2001; Saunders and Mann, 2005). Further, Sturkenboom, Van der Wiele and Brown (2001) and Svensson and Klefsjö (2000) suggest that the existing award criteria are too complicated to implement because of their complex language and the large efforts required. A list of challenges given by Lascelles and Peacock (1996) and EFQM (1999-2003b) includes: it is easy to drop in ‘creative’ writing to hide the negative side and there is less attention from the management team owing to building up a team that usually consists of quality managers. The details of the benefits and limitations of this tool was summarised in Appendix H.

The most important point in using this SA approach is that this is not suitable for newcomer businesses on the SA road. Finn and Porter (1994) found that SA award application was favoured by enterprises with great experience in SA activities.

In SA award simulation, the whole organisation or business unit will produce an application format report for a particular quality award (BQF, 1996; EFQM 1999-2003b; Porter and Tanner, 2004; BNQP, 2009a). In terms of a SA process in award simulation/application, Zink and Schmidt (1998) suggest a standard flow chart. It is clear that this process requires multi-function involvement and is more complicated than the questionnaire approach. The establishment of an assessor team, which might be external, is important for the credibility of scores and organisational assessment. Figure 2-10 shows graphically flow chart of Zink and Schmidt (1998).

Figure 2-10. An award simulation approach process



Source: Zink and Schmidt (1998, p.162)

2.4 The benefits of organisational SA

Many studies have suggested that SA based on TQM/BEM contributes towards achieving successful results (Dale, 2003). The first major study on SA practice was conducted in 1994 led by Van der Wiele, a co-operation between six European universities. It investigated the understanding of SA methods and the mechanism and benefits of European quality management SA practice (Van der Wiele *et al.*, 1995, 1996a, 1996b). In this pan-European survey, many reasons for organisations to use SA were identified.

One of the common views of classifying the SA benefits is by Gadd (1995) who suggested these benefits could fall into four categories: business results, culture, process management and benchmarking. Moreover, the benefits which relating to strategic planning is recognised by

number of authors (Brown, Van der Wiele and Millen, 1999; McAdam and Kelly, 2002; Angell and Corbett, 2009). With respect to Gadd's view²⁵, the researcher will report all the actual and suggested benefits provided by SA literature, then cascade them down into the four above-mentioned categories. However, the description of SA used in strategic planning does not align with any area which is depicted by Gadd. Finally, the researcher decided to use Gadd's four categories, but also to add strategic planning. Thus, this research employs five categories to explore the benefits of SA and they are described below.

2.4.1 Improving business results and driving improvement focus

The contribution of SA to business results is strongly affirmed by Gadd (1995, p.18):

“SA focuses management's attention not just on the key financial drivers of the business, but also the other key measures which drive those financial measures”

It is noted that key performance is measured not only by financial results but also other (non-financial) stakeholder indicators include customers, employees and society (such as increased job satisfaction, fewer complaints and improved attendance).

From the financial perspective, the application of BEM in SA activities assists those organisations to outperform others (Winner and Easkin, 1994; ECforBE, 1997; Longbottom, 1998; Hendricks and Singhal, 2000, 2001; Eriksson and Hansson, 2003). In addition, research recognised the following benefits: cost reduction, reduce customer complaints and to manage the business on common goals in general (Coulambidou and Dale, 1995; Van der Wiele *et al.*, 1995, 1996a,b; Brown and Van der Wiele, 1996; Van der Wiele and Brown, 1999, Van der Wiele *et al.*, 2000a).

Regarding the impact of SA on the focus on business results, Gadd (1995) remarked that the role of business results shapes the focus to drive business improvement. The outcome of SA provides a tailored evaluation of organisational performance and areas for improvement (Calhoun, 2002). In this issue, several potential benefits of SA are described, as follows:

- To encourage an ethos of continuous process improvement (Gadd, 1995; Coulambidou and Dale, 1995; Van der Wiele *et al.*, 1995, 1996a,b; Brown and Van der Wiele, 1996; Teo and Dale, 1997; Van der Wiele and Brown, 1999; BNQP, 2009; Ruben *et al.*, 2007, Michalska, 2008; BNQP, 2009; Tari, 2006, 2010)
- To provide new motivation for the quality improvement process (Coulambidou and Dale, 1995; Van der Wiele *et al.*, 1995, 1996a,b; Brown and Van der Wiele, 1996; Van der Wiele and Brown, 1999; Yarrow, 2006)

²⁵ This approach was also referred by Eriksson (2004), Davies (2005)

- To foster organisational self-reflection (Ruben *et al.*, 2007)
- To facilitate the links between business planning process and progress with continuous improvement (Pitt, 1999; Van der Wiele *et al.*, 2000c).

2.4.2 Benefiting organisational culture

According to Gadd (1995, p.82), the use of SA to benefit organisational culture is through allowing managers “to gain broader understanding of the business”. The experiences of senior managers and other participants in SA implementations will provide them with opportunities for gaining richer integrated management awareness and increased quality awareness (Coulambidou and Dale, 1995; Teo and Dale, 1997; Tari, 2006, 2010). In the mixed-method study by Tari (Tari, 2008) comparing SA in the private sector and that of the higher education by using the EFQM Excellence Model, this author found that its benefit provided greater awareness of quality and SA issues in the public sector than the private sector. On the other hand, similarities in approaches, the stage of process and difficulties were mostly the same in both fields. Similar results occurred with the Baldrige SA process, the majority view being that this process is valuable for organisational learning, providing a better understanding of threats, opportunities for improvement and as an aid for improving business results (Ruben *et al.*, 2007).

Furthermore, cross-function SA implementation is undertaken with a high degree of involvement and team-working. As a result, SA can help to motivate and energize people (Porter and Tanner, 2004; BNQP, 2009), enhance communication by creating a common language for assessment (BNQP, 2002; Ruben 2004; Ruben *et al.*, 2007), increase staff involvement (Hillman, 1994; Gadd, 1995; Coulambidou and Dale, 1995; Davies, 2004) and encouraging team-building (Ruben, 2004; Ruben *et al.*, 2007).

Lastly, organisational culture can be enhanced by fostering the learning process via SA based on repeatable measurement within the organisation (Balbastre and Moreno-Luzon, 2003; Benavent, 2003). The chance of learning from ‘world-class’ organisations or good-to-best practice (Hillman, 1994; Aly, 1997; Teo and Dale, 1997; Saunders and Mann, 2005) will help educate organisations (on the principle of performance excellence) (EFQM, 1999-2003b; Ruben *et al.*, 2007) and may even develop a global business culture (Aly, 1997).

2.4.3 Improving process management

According to Gadd (1995, p.82): “Using the model, therefore, enforces a process management perspective”.

One of the principal aims of TQM/QA based SA is to pinpoint organisational strengths and weaknesses or areas for improvement (Hillman, 1994; EFQM, 1999-2003b; Oakland, 1999;

Svensson and Klefsjö, 2000; BNQP, 2009). SA results identify the most effective or the worst areas within a company. Many business units should look back and review the circumstances. It can be said that SA improves process management because it links processes to results (Gadd, 1995) and removes inter-departmental barriers (Wong and Dahlgaard, 2003).

2.4.4 Providing benchmarking opportunities

The scoring mechanism of BEM enables comparison with other companies (Coulambidou and Dale, 1995; Van der Wiele *et al.*, 1995, 1996a,b; Brown and Van der Wiele, 1996; Van der Wiele and Brown, 1999). Undoubtedly, the chance to benchmark performance against others and world-class organisations and to win an award is defined (Hillman, 1994; Coulambidou and Dale, 1995; Van der Wiele *et al.*, 1995, 1996; Aly, 1997; Benavent, 2003; Benavent, Ros and Moreno-Luzon, 2005; Ruben *et al.*, 2007). However, the usefulness of benchmarking is influenced by the experience of the assessors (Porter and Tanner, 2004).

Many scholars consider SA to be a TQM methodology (Hellsten and Klesjo, 2000; Eriksson, 2004; Eriksson and Garvare, 2005; Conti, 2007). Thus, numerous studies around the world have adopted TQM-based SA to test TQM maturity and TQM practice (Lam, Wang and Lam., 2008a,b; Arumugam *et al.*, 2009). In these cases, the criteria of major quality awards such as the MBQNA and the European Quality Awards are used as assessment frameworks to evaluate the company's performance in terms of quality management.

Additionally, benchmarking can be used to stimulate internal (divisional) competition within units in the same organisation (Hakes, 1994; Coulambidou and Dale, 1995; Van der Wiele *et al.*, 1995, 1996a,b; Benavent, Ros and Moreno-Luzon, 2005). By stratifying outcomes by function/department, learning opportunities can be quickly identified and cascaded down into the organisation, and improvement actions can then be taken (Porter and Tanner, 2004). A holistic view generated will help management team re-evaluate the performance of their units by comparing the gaps between them.

2.4.5 Improving strategic planning

The view of SA as a strategic tool is confirmed by several authors (Hakes, 1994; Van der Wiele *et al.*, 1996b; Porter and Tanner, 2004). Studies found that it is possible to use SA to link quality management with strategic planning (Halachmi, 1995; Coulambidou and Dale, 1995; Van der Wiele *et al.*, 1995, 1996a, b, 2000a). An Australian survey by Brown, Van der Wiele and Millen (1999) shows that conducting SA by the matrix method helps to gain a higher degree of involvement, which led to enhancement of the strategic issues. Other empirical evidence from a survey in the service sector by McAdam and Kelly (2002) supported the benefit of the EFQM as a

strategic tool. Calhour (2002) states that the SA outcomes, strengths and opportunities for improvement, can be contribute to business strategy. According to BNQP (2009), aligning a company's resources with its strategic objectives is one of the benefits of SA.

On the other hand, there is a variety of arguments surrounding this benefit. Although there is a consensus of 'helping to improve strategic thinking' or 'supporting decision-making' (Gadd, 1995; Benavent, 2003), the challenge for the company using BEM for strategic and dynamic is to ensure that the latest version of recognised award is used (Leonard and McAdam, 2002). According to Benavent (2006, p.16):

“...this relation [between SA application and strategic planning] appears to be especially close when the competitive environment becomes turbulent. In such a situation, self-assessment is employed to obtain a nondetailed organizational diagnostic — hence a nonsophisticated approach is employed — and its results constitute a fundamental input for strategic planning”.

2.5 Factors influencing the success of SA implementation

Many companies have faced a variety of problems in conducting SA against the BEM. Ritchie and Dale (2000b) stated that the reason is that these businesses have underestimated the complexity of the SA process. They also found that the actual measurement of SA results among the respondents' feedback was problematic owing to diversified points of view.

It is noted that the accuracy and validity of the SA results impact on the usefulness of SA application (Porter, Oakland and Gadd, 1998, Porter and Tanner, 2004). SA implementation, of course, has encountered problems relating to measurement issues. Teo and Dale (1997, p.373) argue that:

“The validity of the business excellence model criteria which underpin the quality awards and the suitability of the methods applied are a clear determinant of whether or not the SA results truly reflect the current position of an organization and identify the vital areas for improvement for achieving its objectives”

Importantly, the reliability and completeness of SA progress is primarily influenced by the SA approach, such as a questionnaire or workshop. Clearly, the choice of a simple SA technique for use in an organisation, such as the questionnaire approach (one which has inherently less accurate data collection), also affects the validity of SA implementation.

Also, it is clear that when employing a new management tool such as SA against a BEM, how to measure the final score to achieve the acceptance and recognition of the management team is a key point (Ritchie and Dale, 2000a). If organisations have not pointed out exactly which maturity stage matches the chosen approach, the process will be difficult and also the resource of the SA process will be wasted (Svensson and Klefsjö, 2006).

This view was also echoed by Yang, Dale, and Siow (2001, p.3809) with the focus on particular the EFQM Excellence Model, that:

“The credibility and acceptance of the results from the SA process against the EFQM Model is dependent upon many factors, including the variability of scores obtained; the non-scientific method in which the scores are determined; the subjective judgements of the assessors and how they interpret criteria; and assessor’s knowledge of TQM/excellence/continuous improvement”

Several reasons for failure have been identified including executing the evaluation process poorly (Hakes, 1996): lack of awareness (Sturkenboom, Van Der Wiele and Brown, 2001), lack of one of the most vital elements such as top commitment and enthusiasm (Ritchie and Dale, 2000a), attitude and psychological impact (Zink and Schmidt, 1998; Teo and Dale, 1997).

To sum up, regarding how the SA implementation should be undertaken and the responsibility of persons involved in this process, two objectives in the organisational context , the ‘WHO’ and the ‘HOW’ aspects, are explored. Firstly, the human being factor (the ‘WHO’ aspect), is represented by the role of individual assessor (scorer), who is directly involved in the assessment. Assessors are totally responsible for their scores, which create a foundation for the benefit of SA in identifying organisational strengths and weaknesses (Coulambidou and Dale, 1995). This issue is presented in section 2.5.1. In terms of the ‘HOW’ aspect, the literature suggest two other important factors for successful SA: organisational management resources and organisational management culture, which will be explored in the two following sections, 2.5.2 and 2.5.3.

2.5.1 Individual impacts on the success of SA implementation

According to Zink and Schmidt (1998), the dangers associated with the role of SA participants in the success of the SA tool are lack of qualifications, scoring and psychological issues. This view is supported by Siow, Yang and Dale (2001) who attribute the typical SA problems with the assessor’s background and prejudices, as well as level of understanding of the TQM/excellence philosophy. Black and Crumley (1997, p.92) were concerned about the negative attitude of managers, who feel “the unknown and the challenge of a new management philosophy”. Lack of

awareness and understanding are also stated as difficulties in SA by Sturkenboom, Van der Wiele and Brown (2001). Yang, Dale, and Siow (2001, p.3809) emphasize the danger of “the subjective judgements of the assessors and how they interpret criteria; and assessor’s knowledge of TQM/excellence/continuous improvement. These problems are compounded if the assessors are inexperienced and there is a mix of experienced and inexperienced assessors in the same assessment team.”

Three elements of individual impacts, which include: individual scoring, awareness/understanding of proper SA knowledge (of individual), and attitude/behaviour (of participating individual), are explored below.

Scoring

Coulambidou and Dale (1995) acknowledged the shortcomings in scoring by highlighting that variability is a problem experienced in gathering data collection and its subsequent interpretation.

Empirical studies identify problems in the accuracy and consistency of scoring, focusing on ‘high’ scores (Van der Wiele *et al.*, 1996; Teo and Dale, 1997) or a lack of rigour in scoring (Zink and Schmidt, 1998; Dale, 2000; Van der Wiele, Dale and Williams, 2000b). Zink and Schmidt (1998, p.161) argue that “Scoring is no exact science... the scoring can be prejudiced or dogmatic”. Porter and Tanner (2004) state that an over-scoring tendency with a range from 50 to 150 points is not unusual in the beginning phase of organisational assessment. Brown (2008) witnessed a score gap of 250 to 800 out of a possible 1000 points when employing the Baldrige SA survey. According to Porter and Tanner (2004), the quality of assessment scores depends on the qualifications and acceptance of assessors. Teo and Dale (1997) emphasised that one of the main problems related to the lack of SA understanding among users. According to Conti, managers tend to concentrate on high-scoring, drawing the picture ‘in a favourable light’ rather than on digging out the weaknesses and relevant causes (Conti, 1997a). It is argued that shortcomings in scoring only happened when adopting a quantitative SA approach (such as questionnaires or award simulation) in companies.

Individual’s awareness/understanding of scoring

As mentioned among the drawbacks of the individual’s role in SA, criticisms made by Porter and Tanner (2004) are: (i) Ability of an assessor to access numerous information and (ii) Individual assessor’s own background and prejudices. Assessors, in some cases, rely on their subjective understanding of their company and lack adequate awareness; thus, they may easily provide ‘emotional’ evaluation or those ‘pleasant’ to themselves.

It is clear that the 'understanding' plays an important role in SA. A lack of understanding of what SA is, or a lack of knowledge of the technique has caused great concern (Coulambidou and Dale, 1995; Siow, Yang and Dale, 2001; Wong and Dahlgaard, 2003). Teo and Dale (1997) found that developing awareness is essential before attempting SA. Dale (2003, p.493) identified difficulties experienced with SA process, such as "not knowing where to start" or "people not realizing the need for documented evidence". Without adequate education and training, the participants simply give judgements which are vague, subjective or a pre-perception (Yang, Dale, and Siow, 2001).

Other issues include the complicated language used in the SA process (Svensson and Klefsjö, 2000), and interpreting SA feedback meaningfully (Kruger, 1997). These risks can be addressed from two aspects: the involvement of the individuals in the process (scorers, participants) and the two phases (training and communication) in the SA execution process.

An awareness issue can be addressed through the combination of training and communication strategies. More effective communication and training will result more successful SA implementation.

Attitude and psychological impact

The issue of attitude and psychological impact is mentioned by several authors (Zink and Schmidt, 1998; Teo and Dale, 1997; Jackson, 2001). Prejudiced or dogmatic assessment (Zink and Schmidt, 1998; Siow, Yang and Dale, 2001) arises not just from inadequate understanding but it could be a product of an unenthusiastic personal attitude to SA implementation. The barriers of lack of enthusiasm and lack of accountability are accepted by several authors (Ritchie and Dale, 2000a; Ruben *et al.*, 2007).

Van der Wiele, Williams and Dale (2000b) suggest that a SA process should start with the most supportive people. These authors also provide another reason for over-optimistic SA results; namely, that inexperienced scorers in quality management or TQM easily focus on high scores. Another problem in attitude is a lack of 'rigour.' EFQM (1999-2003b) warns that a lack of rigorous behaviour in conducting SA seems to lead to invalid final output.

Teo and Dale (1997, p.373) suggest that it is important to "be sensitive to the attitude and response of the people involved in the self-assessment process," since SA outcomes dependent on the people involved. Psychological concerns, such as being afraid of a low score or being out of line, are suggested by these authors.

2.5.2 Factors relating to ‘availability’ of organisational resource in implementing SA- The influence of organisational resources

Van der Wiele, Williams and Dale (2000b, p.426) emphasise that: “the implementation of SA demands a serious investment in resources and it will take time to develop an approach that fits the specific situation of any particular organisation”. Benavent, Ros and Moreno-Luzon (2005, p.440) argue that: “the more sophisticated the approach, the better the results that can be obtained, though the consumption of resources is greater too”.

Clearly, the SA adoption should be consistent with the contextual alignment of the organisational management level and resources.

The SA literature suggests common key success factors regarding organisational resources for SA execution. Basically, they consist of four factors: quality management resource/experience, top management commitment, education and training, and communication. Furthermore, many academics who have conducted SA practice have found important factors, including motivation (Van der Wiele, Williams and Dale, 2000b; Ritchie and Dale, 2000a; Dale, 2003; Benavent, Ros and Moreno-Luzon, 2005; Davies, 2008), integration (BQF, 1996; Van der Wiele *et al.*, 1996; Ritchie and Dale, 2000a; Benavent, 2003; Davies, 2008) and follow-up (Ford and Evan, 2006; Tari, 2010). However, it has been decided to exclude these three elements in this study because of its academic nature. The four key factors above are explored below.

Quality management resource/experience

Dale (2002) suggests that the TQM maturity (sometimes called TQM adoption), knowledge and experience of an organisation should be used to determine the SA method to be adopted and necessary resources. Porter and Tanner (2004) confirm that the impact of personal experience in quality management acts as a negative or positive influence on the SA results. A previous failure in quality management implementations tends to lead to an attitude of resistance to SA.

Van der Wiele, Dale and Williams (1997) warn that it is not beneficial for such organisations to employ SA using BE/QA without TQM experience. On this basis, it is well recognised that organisations should start SA by using the simple questionnaire technique (Van der Wiele *et al.*, 1996a, b), rather than employing an advanced approach such as a national quality award. Furthermore, Van der Wiele *et al.* (2000a, p.14) warns that in companies that have gained ISO 9000 certification so as to “get a certificate on the wall”, SA activities are possibly not conducted regularly and they mostly centre on quality audit.

Gaining the commitment of top management

One of the crucial success issues in SA practice is the significant role of senior managers who should commit themselves, be involved and review SA outcomes (Lascelles and Peacock, 1996; Hillman, 1994; Conti, 1997a,b). Many studies have found that gaining the support and commitment of top/senior management is important for the success of SA implementation (Finn and Porter, 1994; Van der Wiele *et al.*, 1996; Black and Crumley, 1997; Prabhu and Robson, 2000; Ahmed, Yang and Dale, 2003). Dahlgaard (1999, p.27) argues that:

“The first condition for the success journey toward business excellence is that the leaders understand one another. They must then be able to reach a consensus about what is important, and implement the approaches they have decided are vital for the business”

Benavent, Ros and Moreno-Luzon (2005, p.434) comment that:

“Self-assessment is not an isolated organisational exercise... It is a planned activity that requires both technical and human preparation, and where commitment and involvement of the top management is vital”

Top management plays a key role in developing improvement plans after undertaking SA. Undoubtedly, a lack of commitment and enthusiasm leads to the failure or limited achievement of SA implementations (Van der Wiele *et al.*, 1996a, b; Coulambidou and Dale, 1995; Teo and Dale, 1997; Ruben *et al.*, 2007). Teo and Dale (1997, p.373) indicate:

“The absence of this factor creates uncertainties and doubts among employees concerning the continuation of self-assessment and the amount of time and effort to be invested in such activities”

In fact, Ritchie and Dale (2000b) state that the greatest challenge to the success of SA implementation is gaining leadership commitment at all levels. The deficiency of commitment from top and senior managers leads to numerous difficulties; for example, a lack of interest, respect, and rigour from participants and a lack of involvement.

Education and training

Among the key learning lessons in European SA practice, it is believed that there is a need to train properly for the people who are involved to the process (Van der Wiele *et al.*, 1996a, b; Coulambidou and Dale, 1995). Many studies point out the link between training and the success of SA (Ritchie and Dale, 2000a,b; Samuelsson and Nilsson, 2002; Davies, 2008). The view that after gaining top leadership commitment, education and training should take place, paying more

attention to the benefits, the effects and application of particular techniques, have been stated by several authors (Teo and Dale, 1997; Van der Wiele and Brown, 1999, Dale, 2003).

According to Zink and Schmidt (1998), the lack of knowledge of SA participants is linked to inefficient comprehensive training, which includes understanding the BE model concept, the usefulness of the SA approach and the execution process.

Communication

Along with training, SA process must be communicated properly through the company (Conti, 1997b; Zink and Schmidt, 1998; Svensson and Klesjo, 2000; Samuelsson and Nilsson, 2002). This helps to maintain management commitment to SA. Oakland (1999) suggests that the communication plan should contain six elements: Why, What, Who, How, When and Where. It is clear that, lacking full preparation in communication plans, SA outcomes may be damaged.

Certainly, the widespread publication of SA feedback should be used to encourage the validity and usefulness of the SA implementation. This concern is connected with the benefit of BE in internal benchmarking. SA results, when cascading down, help managers find out shortcomings in their areas, enable them to make a comparison with other units and finally provide a detailed overview of their company.

According to Teo and Dale (1997), one of the main difficulties in SA is a lack of communication between departments. Departments did not know the activities and results of other business units, such as customer policy or outcomes of customer surveys, illness rate and safety statistics. In some companies, the complexity of hierarchy and linkages among operating units creates a problem in sharing communication.

2.5.3 Factors associated with the availability of organisational management culture – The impact of organisational management culture

The role of organisational culture in SA is confirmed by many researchers (Lascelles and Peacock, 1996; Shergold and Reed, 1996; Samuelsson and Nilsson, 2002; Sousa-Poza, Nystrom and Wiebe, 2001; Benavent, Ros and Moreno-Luzon, 2005; Davies, 2008) as being important.

Their common view is that characteristics of organisational culture would influence the 'fitness' of the SA implementation and the SA approach. In a cross-cultural study of the impact of

corporate culture on TQM in three countries, Sousa-Poza, Nystrom and Wiebe (2001) argue that one of the failures of TQM implementation in the UK is the unsuitable management culture of many companies. This study found that management style may create a resistance to the application of new systems.

Particularly, resistance to change is believed to be one of main factors that can increase the failure rate of TQM/BE implementations (Conti, 1997b; Thiagarajan and Zairi, 1997; Davies, 2004; Porter and Tanner, 2004). According to Thiagarajan and Zairi (1997), there was a negative response from senior managers to BEM implementation due to their fear of changes in their status and power. Having a similar view, Conti (1997b) explained that resistance to change when carrying out SA was inevitable and originated from the fear of managers that key activities would be scrutinized. Tactics to overcome this dilemma are: gaining involvement (Conti, 1997b); education and communication, facilitation and support, and negotiation and agreement (Oakland, 1999).

2.5.4 The impact of national culture

There is a possibility that national culture affects SA implementation. The relationship between national culture and TQM implementation has been examined in a few studies (Flynn and Saladin, 2006; Sila, 2007). Typically, the national culture dimension will play a role in the conceptual model because TQM implementation in various countries may diverge. However, Flynn and Saladin (2006, p.583) state that:

“Although many authors have claimed that quality management requires an organisational culture transformation, the role of national culture has not been systematically investigated.”

Furthermore, concerning the cultural applicability of the business excellence model in an Asian-Pacific context, the research of Calingo (2002b) has examined how to fit core values of performance excellence, suggesting that “Asian organizations will not have great cultural difficulty in adopting most of the core values and concepts of the Baldrige Award” (Calingo, 2002b, p.39).

In this study, the researcher’s ambition was not to focus specifically on the impact of national culture on the implementation of SA in Vietnam; hence, the theory of cultural variation is not included in the review. Based on the assumption that the element of national culture possibly impacts on SA results in some way, the researcher decided to add this component as an uncertain factor influencing SA implementation in the Vietnamese context. With this initial intention, SA

experience of Vietnamese managers is reflected simply; for example, the comfortable or uncomfortable feeling of Vietnamese assessors when evaluating typical characteristics, and the failure or success of SA implementation under the impact of national value in Vietnamese context.

Lastly, details of implementation issues, which have been explored previously, are shown in Appendix I.

2.6 Justification of SA literature and design the conceptual research framework

2.6.1 Empirical studies in SA field

In this section, a summary of the empirical studies on SA practice which have influenced the current study is presented in Table 2-12. This table shows the extent of the research in the area and provides details of key findings, methodology, etc. This information has been used to influence the current research.

As can be seen, the SA phenomenon has attracted many researchers in the West, for example the USA (Leonard and McAdam, 2003; Ford and Evan, 2006; Ruben *et al.*, 2007), the UK (Longbottom, 1997, 2002; Ritchie and Dale, 2000a,b; Davies, 2008); Italy (Venero *et al.*, 2007), Spain (Tari, 2008, 2010), but there are few in Asia, except for Hongkong (Lam, Wang and Lam., 2008a,b) and the Middle East (Aly, 1997). The research examines SA in different contexts, from manufacturing to the higher education sector, and is mainly centred on the Baldrige and EFQM Excellence models.

Table 2-12 shows that more than 50% of SA empirical studies have focused on the EFQM Excellence Model and the EQA. The EFQM Excellence Model has more influence on SA practices, according to Van der Wiele and Brown (1999) and Ritchie and Dale (2000b). SA using the EFQM has been studied in many contexts, such as service and manufacturing in the private sector (Longbottom, 1998; Ford and Evan, 2006; Benavent, 2006; Michalska, 2008), and the public sector (Jackson, 1999; Pitt, 1999; Hides, Davis and Jackson, 2004; Tari, 2006; Venero *et al.* 2007; Tari and Juana-Espinosa, 2007; Davies, 2008; Tari, 2010), in SMEs (Wilker and Dale, 1998, Biazzo and Bernardi, 2003). Recently, organisational SA has been explored in the public sector, such as in HEIs and healthcare.

Significantly, the review of existing SA knowledge has shown the scarcity of empirical studies covering Vietnam — as well as developing countries in general. This scarcity also exists in terms of studies covering quality management in Vietnam.

Along with the significant influence of the EFQM Excellence Model in SA, the case studies method is popular for exploring SA implementation.

Table 2-12. Empirical studies in SA field

Study	Key findings	Methodology		Concept/Theory		SA aspect					
		Case study	Survey	TQM	Quality award base	Context	Tool/ Approach	Benefits/ Uses	SA process	Critical factors	Successes and difficulties
Tari, 2010	Use case study to review the literature on SA process and to identify the difficulties, benefits and success factors of SA and the important of follow-up	1			EBEM	HEI Spain	Workshop Questionnaire	x	x	x	x
Stok, Mesko and Markic, 2009	The advantage of the EFQM model in business management and leadership		x		EBEM	MA and SE, Slovenia				x	
Angell and Corbett, 2009	To study the progression of business excellence in award applicants over the period 1993-2007.	13			The New Zealand		Award application	x			x
Tari, 2008	To compare SA process applied in a public service and a private organisation	2		x	EBEM	MA and HEI Spain	Workshop	x	x		
Michalska, 2008	Introduce organisational experience using the EFQM Excellence Model to assess selected processes				EBEM	MA Poland	Questionnaire	x			
Tari and Juana-Espinosa, 2007	To show a SA process using the EFQM questionnaire approach in 8 university services	8		x	EBEM	HEI Spain	Questionnaire		x		
Davies, 2008	Explore the important role of integration as essential element in effective implementing the EFQM Excellence Model in UK university.	4			EBEM	HEI UK	Workshops, Documented award simulation	x	x		x

Table 2-12 (continued). Empirical studies in SA field

Study	Key findings	Methodology		Concept/Theory		SA aspect					
		Case study	Survey	TQM	Quality award base	Context	Tool/ Approach	Benefits/ Uses	SA process	Critical factors	Successes and difficulties
Venero <i>et al.</i> , 2007	Describe the SA implementation using new questionnaire tool which is based from EFQM Excellence model in health service		x		EBEM	Health Italy	Questionnaire	x			
Ruben <i>et al.</i> , 2007	To investigate the value that organisational SA programs such as the Malcolm Baldrige program have achieved prominence and popularity				MBNQA	HEI USA		x			
Benavent, 2006	Analyse how SA application used the EFQM Excellence Model to assist the process of organisational learning in manufacturing and service case studies	2		x	EBEM	Transportation & MA Spain	Award application	x			
Ford and Evan, 2006	To investigate follow-up as a salient factor in achieving results from organisational SA	14			MBNQA	MA&SA USA			x		
Tari, 2006	To study the The EFQM Excellence Model SA in a Spanish university	5 (services)			EBEM	HEI Spain	Workshop	x	x	x	x
Taylor and Wright, 2006	To examine the contribution of measurement and information infrastructure to TQM success			x				x			
Saunders and Mann, 2005	To critique the New Zealand benchmarking club (BZBC) SA process which against the Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence		x		MBNQA and New Zealand	New Zealand		x			

Table 2-12 (continued). Empirical studies in SA field

Study	Key findings	Methodology		Concept/Theory		SA aspect					
		Case study	Survey	TQM	Quality award base	Context	Tool/ Approach	Benefits/ Uses	SA process	Critical factors	Successes and difficulties
Eriksson and Garvare , 2005	To describe the activities initiated based on participation in a quality award process	3			The Swedish quality award	Sweden	Award application	x	x		
Benavent, Ros and Moreno-Luzon, 2005	To investigate the variables and the relationship underlines SA application	3		x	EBEM	MA&SE Spain	Award application		x	x	
Sanchez <i>et al.</i> , 2005	Describe the SA implementation using the EFQM Excellence Model in health service	31			EBEM	SE, Spain	External and SA		x		
Eriksson, 2004	To explore the organisational value of participating a quality award process	29		TQM	Swedish Quality Award	All sectors Sweden	Award application	x			x
Hides, Davis and Jackson, 2004	The implementation of EFQM excellence model in the UK HE.	6			EBEM	HEI UK	A full range of tool	x	x	x	
MacKerron, Masson and McGlynn, 2003	Report a generic process for SA application in individual department	1			EBEM	UK		x	x		
Benavent, 2003	The link between SA and learning at the EQA winner	1			EBEM	MA	Award application	x			

Table 2-12 (continued). Empirical studies in SA field

Study	Key findings	Methodology		Concept/Theory		SA aspect					
		Case study	Survey	TQM	Quality award base	Context	Tool/ Approach	Benefits/ Uses	SA process	Critical factors	Successes and difficulties
Leonard and McAdam, 2003	Analysis of assessment training and participation	20			EFQM and MNBQA	UK and USA			x		
Eriksson, 2003	To study how a unit experiences and is effected by the work connected with an in-company quality award	1			Swedish Quality Award	SE Sweden	Award application		x		
Samuelsson and Nilsson, 2002	SA practice in large companies	9			EBEM	Europe	Pro-formal, matrix	x	x		
Ritchie and Dale, 2000a,b	Study of SA practice, management, approaches and processes	10				UK	A range of SA tools	x			x
Van der Wiele <i>et al.</i> , 2000a	Describes the SA practices of U.S companies		x		MNBQA			x	x		x
Brown, Van der Wiele and Millen, 1999 (relevant to *)	Examine how SA and quality management and quality award guidelines can be integrated with organisational planning		x		AQA	Australia	matrix	x	x		x
Pitt, 1999	Describe the full approach taken to complete SA process	1			EBEM	Health care UK					x
Jackson, 1999	Describe the link between SA and continuous improvement in the UK health care organisation	1			EBEM	Health care UK		x			

Table 2-12 (continued). Empirical studies in SA field

Study	Key findings	Methodology		Concept/Theory		SA aspect					
		Case study	Survey	TQM	Quality award base	Context	Tool/ Approach	Benefits/ Uses	SA process	Critical factors	Successes and difficulties
Wilson, 1998	To provide the evidence of the EFQM Excellence Model effects organisational performance		x		EBEM	MA and public Ireland		x			
Longbottom, 1998	A longitudinal study examines impacts on bottom line performance, the SA process, success and failings of UK financial service sector.	20			EBEM	Financial service sector UK		x	x		x
Wilkes and Dale, 1998	Analysis of SA as a way of application of the EFQM Excellence Model in SMEs	7			EBEM	SMEs UK	Award application		x		
Hendricks and Singhal, 1997	Relationship between the achievement of a quality award and the improvement of organisational performance		x		many	USA	Award application	x			
Kruger, 1997	Examine how SA apply in a complex organisation using the EQA simulation	1			EBEM	US-based company in Europe	Award application			x	
Teo and Dale, 1997	Study of SA practice, management, approaches and processes	4			EFQM and MNBNQ		Questionnaire, workshop, award simulation	x	x	x	x
Aly, 1997	Analyse topics related to SA way of utilization	1			EBEM	MA Middle East		x			
Cangas, 1996	Describe the SA process in a winner of European Quality Award, Eriksson SA	1			EBEM	Spain		x			

Table 2-12 (continued). Empirical studies in SA field

Study	Key findings	Methodology		Concept/Theory		SA aspect					
		Case study	Survey	TQM	Quality award base	Context	Tool/ Approach	Benefits/ Uses	SA process	Critical factors	Successes and difficulties
Brown and Van der Wiele, 1996	SA practice which used similar approach of Van der Wiele <i>et al.</i> (1995)		x		AQA, MBNQA	Australia		x		x	x
Van der Wiele <i>et al.</i> (1995, 1996a,b)*; Shergold and Reed, 1996; Coulambido uanand Dale, 1995	SA application (activities linked to SA use, knowledge of organisations about SA methods, reasons for success and failure of SA application)		x		EBEM	Europe mainly/ the memberships of the EFQM		x	x	x	x
Taylor, 1995	SA as a measurement tool of TQM implementation		x	x		All sectors UK		x			
Finn and Porter, 1994	Link between SA application and benefits obtained		x		EBEM	UK		x			
Wisner and Easkin, 1994	Study SA in the framework of a quality award application: evidence for key performance improvement	17			BNQA	Public +private, USA	Award application	x			

Note: (*) key research; AQA: Australia Quality award; EBEM: European Business Excellence Model; MA=manufacturing; SE=service; HEI=higher education institutions

2.6.2 Selecting SA approach for Vietnam

In order to choose the most appropriate SA approach to apply in Vietnam, several key points are summarised below:

- According to Porter *et al.*, (1998) and Jackson (2001b), there is no ‘best approach’, each delivers advantages and disadvantages. The SA should be consistent with the contextual alignment of the organisational management level and resources (Samuelsson and Nilsson, 2002; Tanner, 2005a,b; Bauer, Falshaw and Oakland, 2005; Davies, Douglas, and Douglas, 2007)
- According to Conti (1997, p.8), an adoption of ‘standard’ model, for instance the EFQM Excellence Model or the Baldrige model, is a ‘wise choice’ for organisations. For newcomers in their Excellence journey, the least sophisticated and least expensive approach should be best suited to those companies (BNQP, 2008; EFQM, 1999 – 2003b; Porter and Tanner, 2004; Brown, 2008)
- The EFQM Excellence Model is used intensively in SA field
- Regarding the immature adoption of Vietnamese companies in general, it can be argued that the application of SA using award application is unlikely to bring full benefit to participating companies because it requires intensive organisational resources including trained scorers and proper processes. Thus, this SA technique is completely inappropriate for companies new to the SA journey using BEM. These companies should implement a much simpler technique rather than award simulation. In the scope of this study, covering the Vietnam context, it is noted that the simplest and less resource demanding SA approach, the questionnaire, is best suited for the application of BEM in SA implementation; considering the limited level of Vietnamese organisations in quality management.
- It has been noted that there is a shortage of practical guidance materials and expert assessors in Vietnam.

As a consequence, the researcher thought that SA using a BE framework in Vietnam should be approached by employing a simple standard method, such as a questionnaire

To enable this decision, two publications of the Baldrige Model and the EFQM were reviewed. They are:

- *Getting Started with the Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence and Self-Assessment* (BNQP, 2009)

- *Assessing for Excellence: A practical guide for successfully developing, executing and reviewing a Self-Assessment strategy for your organisation* (EFQM, 1999-2003b)

Specifically, focusing on questionnaires, two particular tools were reviewed. They include:

- A set of two questionnaires, named *Are We Making Progress?*, for employees, and *Are We Making Progress As Leaders?*, for the manager team, from the Baldrige National Quality Program (2009a,b). Both aim to present the seven criteria to an organisation and to support and promptly pinpoint the organisation’s strengths and opportunities for improvement.
- Two comprehensive multiple-choice EFQM questionnaires: *Determining Excellence: A questionnaire approach* and the CD ROM-based *Self-assessment workbook* (EFQM, 1999-2003b)

Several key features of the four SA questionnaire samples are presented in Table 2-13 below:

Table 2-13. A comparison of four SA questionnaire samples

SA Questionnaire		Characteristics	Sample question
BALDRIGE FRAMEWORK	<i>Are We Making Progress?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contains 40 statements in 7 categories - Check box using the 5 degree Likert²⁶ scale - The complexity of question is low - Helps to define employee agreement. - Helps to focus on improvement and learning 	<p>“<i>My senior (top) leaders use our organization’s values to guide us</i>” (Statement 1c, category Leadership, 2008)</p>

²⁶ 5 options of choice are: Strongly Disagree ; Disagree; Neither Agree nor Disagree; Agree; Strongly Agree

Table 2-13 (continued). A comparison of four SA questionnaire samples

SA Questionnaire		Characteristics	Sample question
BALDRIGE FRAMEWORK	<i>Are We Making Progress As Leaders?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contains 40 statements with slightly changed details. - Check box using the 5 degree Likert scale - Along with ‘Are we making progress’ -> Helps to define perception gap - The complexity of question is greater than in ‘Are we making progress’, but still low 	<p>“Our leadership uses our organization’s values to guide our organization and employees” (Statement 1c, category Leadership, 2008)</p>
	THE EFQM FRAMEWORK	<i>Determining Excellence: A questionnaire approach</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contains 50 equally weighted questions in 9 criteria - Addresses Excellence aspects in a broad sense - Asks scorer to make an assessment of the performance of organisation. - Offered as a useful starting point for SA - Less detailed than ‘Self-assessment workbook’ with medium degree of complexity. - Provides scoring guide with 4 levels: A, B, C, D; usage of European results benchmark standards. - Has proven to be very popular over the years for organisations that want something “quick and dirty” to get started
<i>SA workbook</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contains 90 questions in 9 criteria - Approach the 4 degree Likert-type interval scale - It is based on the RADAR concept - It can be used as part of Committed to excellence 	<p>‘Managers have communicated a set of values that support Excellence’ (Question 1a, Criterion Leadership)</p>

Sources: BNQP, 2009 a,b; EFQM, 1999 -2003b, c

Concerning the strong influence of the EFQM Excellence Model on the SA field, the EFQM questionnaire entitled *Determining Excellence: A questionnaire approach*, which comprises 50 questions, was chosen because of its appropriateness in the context of Vietnamese organisations for the following reasons:

- The complexity of this questionnaire is medium.
- Easy to understand and use.
- Often used as a preliminary to starting SA.
- It is a good method for getting widespread feedback from people.
- Ready-to-use detailed guide on scoring, its use and benchmarking.
- Multi-point SA perspective covering the whole organisation.
- It acknowledges the case management team.
- Cost effective.

In addition, the use of the EFQM questionnaire in the early phase of SA (EFQM, 2003; Lascelle and Peacock, 1996) offers the following advantages:

- Low-medium resource requirements.
- Knowledge of model not needed.
- No necessity for intensive assessor training.

While the benefits of SA have been explored earlier in section 2.4, this EFQM questionnaire approach offers the six intended benefits (EFQM, 1999-2003c, p.7), as follow:

- “Help your organisation identify its current position and determine future directions and priorities.
- Allow comparisons with the achievements of other organisations.
- Encourage your organisation to monitor its progress on a regular basis.
- Assess whether all members of a management team have the same view of the organisation’s achievements and weaknesses
- Create a focus for agreeing improvement priorities
- Ensure that the organisation is not over-stressed by too many improvement actions”.

The full version of the bilingual EFQM SA questionnaire (Vietnamese – English) utilised in this study can be found in Appendix J.

2.6.3 Design the conceptual framework

Miles and Huberman (1994, p.18) argue that “a conceptual framework explains, either graphically or in narrative form, the main things to be studied – the key factors, constructs or variables – and

the presumed relationships among them”. In developing the conceptual framework, the role of the literature review is to suggest relevant theoretical frameworks and associated key issues close to the research. The conceptual research framework of the current research is based on the presumed relationships between the usefulness of SA using a BEM approach (questionnaire) and improved organisational performance. Another assumption is that contextual factors can influence the SA’s success. The objectives of this study are relatively similar to those of other works in different contexts (Van der Wiele *et al.*, 1996; Ritchie and Dale, 2000a,b; Tari, 2006, 2010).

The purpose of the research is to provide greater insight into SA application and relevant success factors. For this purpose, two Vietnamese case studies, who had some experience with TQM and the VQA, agreed to implement the EFQM SA questionnaire.

Based on two assumptions, two major issues — usefulness and implementation factors of SA— will be examined by key emergent variations below.

‘Usefulness’ issues

In terms of the first assumption, SA using the EFQM questionnaire can benefit a company’s performance; the literature suggests that there are five main benefits associated with SA (see section 2.4). They are:

- Improving business results and driving improvement focus.
- Benefiting organisational culture.
- Improving process management.
- Providing benchmarking opportunities.
- Improving strategic planning.

In addition, the use of the EFQM questionnaire provides the six intended benefits mentioned previously.

Compared to other research which has focused on the relationship between BE and SA implementation and long-term business results (organisational performance) using tangible financial ratios (profits, sales) or measurable satisfaction indexes from employees and customers, this research focuses on the usefulness of BE using the SA experience of Vietnamese companies. The researcher does not seek to measure the impact of SA on the Vietnamese companies because according to Dale (2003) the ‘impact’ on business results is difficult to measure; such results will often be the views of managers. Rather this research attempts to identify improvements which can impact on organisational performance.

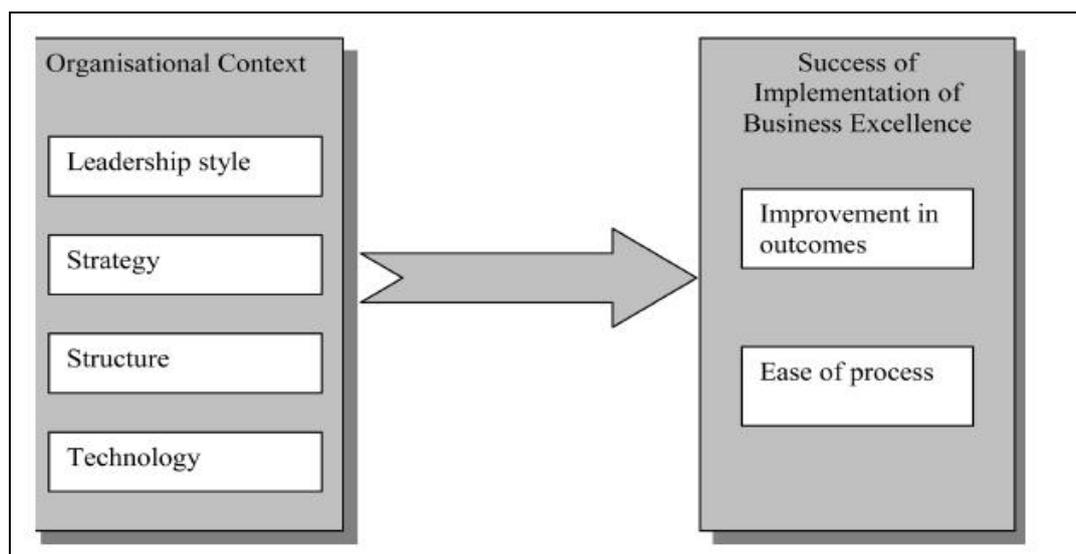
SA implementation issues

Relating to the second assumption, the key contextual factors influencing SA were explored in section 2.5. The four factors are: the impact of (i) individuals, (ii) organisational management resources, (iii) organisational management culture and (iv) national culture.

Designing the conceptual research framework

One significant PhD study covering implementing business excellence (the EFQM Excellence Model), involved multiple methods research and was conducted by Joachim Bauer in 2002 (Bauer, 2002; Bauer, Falshaw and Oakland, 2005). His research adopted a wider organisational perspective than other similar studies. Figure 2-11 shows Bauer's framework model as an example of this perspective.

Figure 2-11 Bauer's research framework



Source: Bauer, Falshaw and Oakland (2005, p.547)

The research was conducted using face-to-face interviews based on a structured questionnaire. The main aim of the research was to examine whether the organisational context — defined by leadership, strategy, structure and strategy issues — had affected the success of BE (Bauer, Falshaw and Oakland, 2005).

To construct the conceptual research model in this study the view of Bauer was considered carefully. Based on the two assumptions mentioned previously, three pillars have been developed. The details of the three pillars of this framework are showed in Figure 2-12. In the first pillar, a number of issues emerged regarding organisational context. They were:

- Individual impacts, which include:
 - Individual scoring (scoring)
 - Individual awareness/understanding of scoring (awareness/understanding)
 - Attitude and psychological impacts

- Organisational resources, which include:
 - Quality management experience
 - Top commitment
 - Education and training
 - Communication

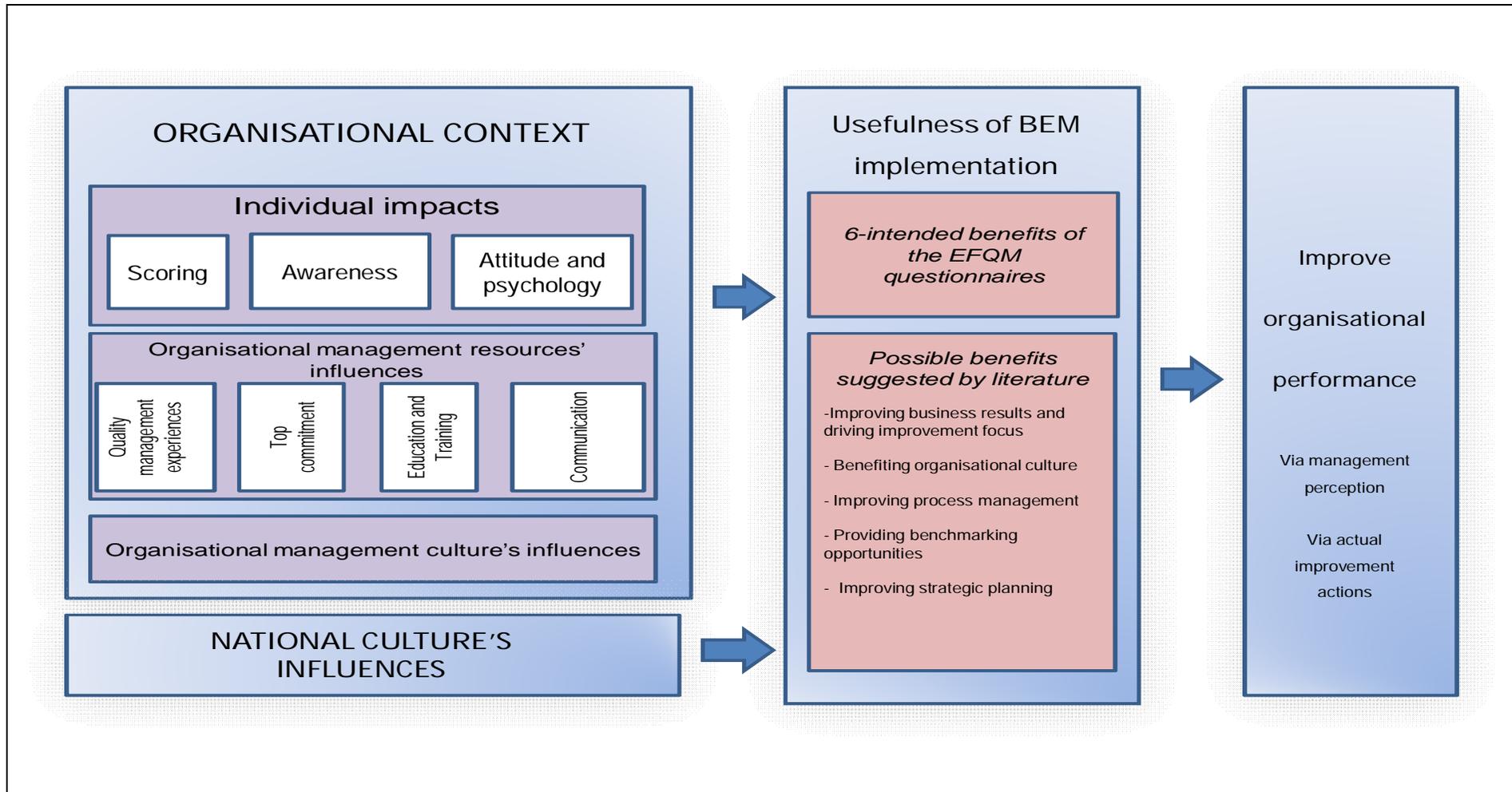
- Organisational management culture
- National culture

In the aspect of evaluating the usefulness of SA implementation, the second pillar, two categories are given:

- The list of 6-intended benefits of the EFQM SA questionnaire, which can be seen in section 2.6.2
- Other possible benefits suggested by literature which could be grouped in five categories in section 2.4

In the final pillar, whether the performance of the organisations is improved or not, management perception and actual improvement actions are used to measure the enhancement of organisational performance.

Figure 2-12. The conceptual research framework developed by the researcher



2.7 Conclusion

This chapter has reviewed the wide-ranging literature on quality management SA and business excellence. Simply put, SA is used “to diagnose the state of health of their improvement process and provide indications of how to achieve business excellence” (Dale, 2003, p.473). TQM or BEM have been examined as the foundation of SA. BEM has been developed on the basis of TQM principles. It is clear that these topics have received extensive attention from academics and practitioners in developed countries.

Extensive research supports the view that SA improves organisational performance through five benefits: improving business results and driving improvement focus, benefiting organisational culture, improving process management, providing benchmarking opportunities and improving strategic planning.

A number of SA approaches can be used by companies; from a simple questionnaire to a complicated award application. These approaches mainly relate to the MBNQA and the EFQM Excellence Model. The SA approach will vary depending on which stage the organisation is at. If companies are limited in experience a questionnaire should be used.

There are a number of contextual impacts on the success of SA, such as scoring, understanding, attitude of individuals, quality management experience, top commitment, education and training, and the communication of the organisation. Further, the outcome of an extensive review of both the benefits and implementation issues has served to develop the conceptual framework applied in this research.

The review has identified a gap in the SA field with regards to empirical and academic literature covering developing countries, in particular Vietnam. Furthermore, the sole existing SA option, award application, seems to limit Vietnamese organisational effectiveness when it is employed because it requires intensive resources and maturity of the organisation’s management.

The chapter has further reviewed the advantages and limitations of techniques and methods which can be applied in Vietnamese enterprises. With the help of extensive guidance provided by academics and specific BEM/quality awards, the researcher has identified that a simple SA method; for instance, a questionnaire seems more appropriate for a Vietnamese organisation to apply at first, rather than the application of a quality award. Moreover, justification for investigating SA using a questionnaire technique provided by two famous BEMs has helped the researcher select a questionnaire as the most suitable approach. As a consequence, the EFQM SA questionnaire was chosen to be used as a technique that would lead to specific benefits in

strengthening of Vietnamese enterprises' performance. Management perception and improvement actions have been sought in order to fill the literature gap.

This research also attempts to fill the gap in SA knowledge by investigating the usefulness of SA application in the Vietnamese context. The research question is:

How useful is self-assessment using the business excellence model for Vietnamese organisations?

Based on the research question, the main objective of the current study is:

To evaluate the usefulness of the BEM using the self-assessment approach in Vietnamese enterprises.

Details of the implementation factors influencing the usefulness of SA application have been presented. They have provided the basis for answering the second research objective:

To explore implementation issues associated with SA in specific contexts.

Finally, recommendations concerning an *appropriate SA approach and implementation strategy* will stem from the research (the third objective). It will also emphasise the benefits and applicability of SA using a potential questionnaire SA approach in the Vietnamese context. This will be the main contribution of this study to existing knowledge.

CHAPTER 3. PHILOSOPHY AND RESEARCH METHODS

3.0 Introduction

Chapter 3 outlines the philosophical stance underpinning the research; followed by a description of the research strategy employed, the methods of data collection and analysis. More importantly, there follow justifications of how the methods adopted fit overall within the research process. All methodological issues of research strategy serve to answer the research question defined in Chapter 2.

At the beginning of this chapter, an overview of the research strategy adopted for this study is given in section 3.1. After this, the chosen research philosophy is presented in section 3.2 through a discussion on the philosophical stance. The two sections 3.3 and 3.4 describe the research strategy and explain in detail all methods and activities used for the data collection. After this, a number of issues concerning credibility, ethical matters and limitations are discussed.

3.1 Overview of elements of this research strategy

It is useful to outline briefly the essentials of the research strategy applied in the current study. According to Crotty (2003), the decision to adopt a particular research strategy basically depends on the aims of the research. In terms of the examination of SA in the Vietnam context, four elements of the strategy were considered: epistemology, theoretical perspective, methodology, and interrelated methods. Table 3-1 gives an overview of related explanations of the theory underpinning this study; and a more expanded description of each stage of the strategy is provided in Figure 3-1.

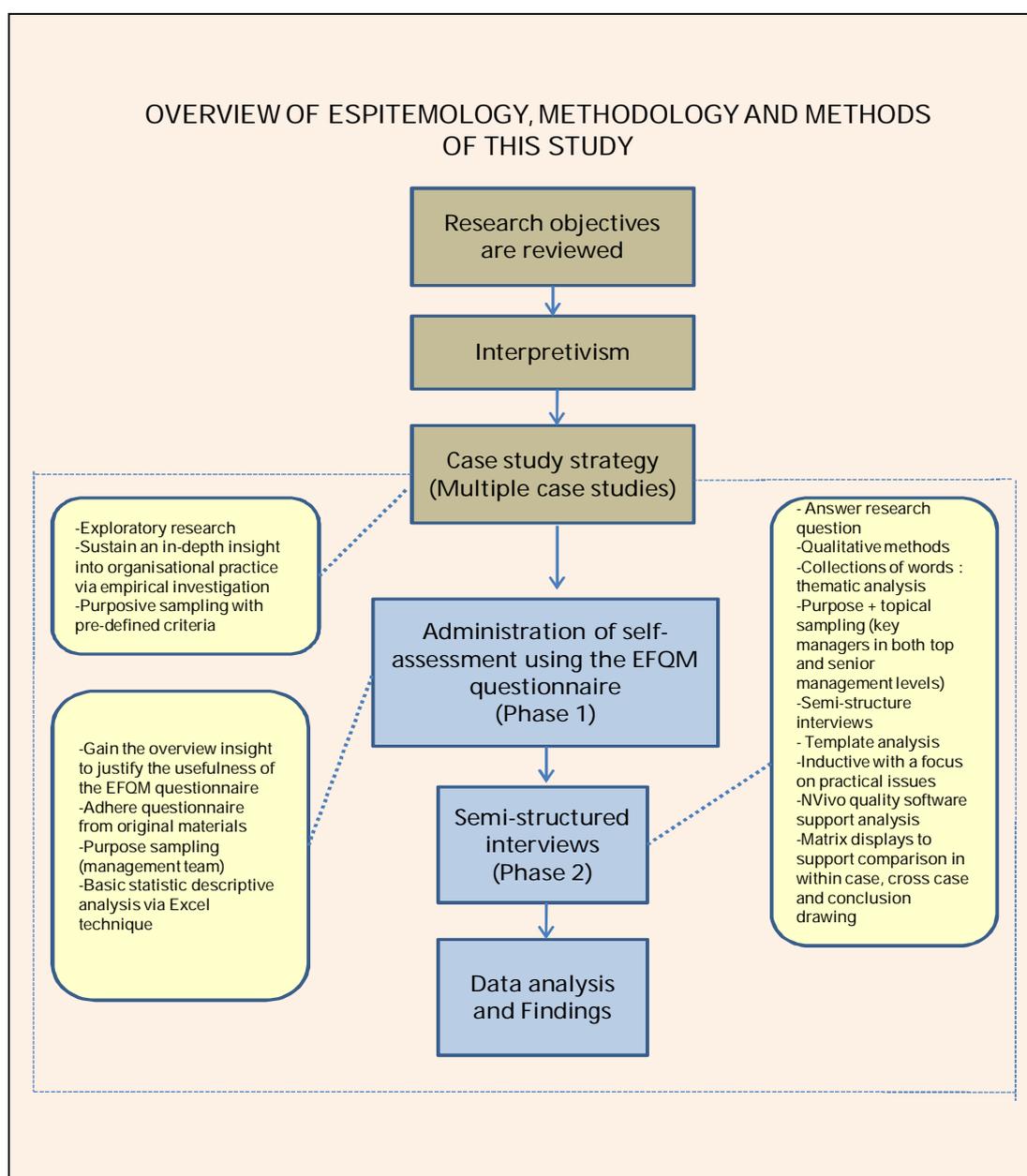
Table 3-1. Elements of the research strategy

Term	Explanation	Approach adopted
Epistemology	The nature of knowledge has been created by the view of the researcher and her object (Crotty, 2003)	Subjectivism
Theoretical perspective	The rational philosophical stance is suitable to the context of this study based on his/her methodology (Crotty, 2003; Creswell, 2009)	Interpretivism/ Constructivism

Table 3-1(continued). Elements of the research strategy

Term	Explanation	Approach adopted
Methodology	The specific methods of the current study and its relevant reasons selected. (Yin, 2003; Creswell, 2009; Silverman, 2000)	Case study
Methods	Techniques and tools/procedures utilised for data collection and analysis (Crotty, 2003; Creswell, 2009; Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2006)	Semi-structured interviews + Template analysis + NVivo qualitative software

Figure 3-1. Graphical overview of this study's research strategy



3.2 Epistemology and philosophical underpinning

At the outset of the research it is important to address the philosophical stance to be adopted because it influences how the researcher understands and interprets data collection (Hopper and Powel, 1985; Creswell, 2007). This is also reflected in the relationship between her point of view and what she studied. Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Lowe (2002) emphasised that by understanding the philosophical issues, the research design could be framed in the most comprehensible manner.

To answer the research questions as presented in section 2.7, the appropriate philosophical paradigm underpinning the research has to be justified. Within the research framework two philosophical paradigms dominate: Positivism and Interpretivism/ Constructionism (Weber, 2004; Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2007). In order to help the researcher make her decision on the philosophical stance, the key elements of the nature of research in these three paradigms were considered and an overview of these is presented in Table 3-2.

Table 3-2. Overview of elements of three main research theoretical perspectives

Feature	Positivism	Interpretivism/ Constructivism
Ontology (nature of reality)	Researcher and reality are separate. The researcher must be independent.	Researcher and reality are inseparable (life-world). The researcher is part of what is being observed.
Epistemology (how to know)	Objective reality exists beyond the human mind.	Knowledge of the world is intentionally constituted through a person's lived experience.
Methods	Quantitative (statistical) methods	Qualitative (phenomenological) methods
Research Logic	Hypothesis and deductions	Gathering rich data from which ideas are induced

Sources: Tashakkori and Teddlie, 1998; Creswell, 2003; Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Jackson, 2002

Firstly, positivism adopts a clear quantitative approach to investigating larger-scale phenomena (Orlikowski and Baroudi, 1991; Travers, 2001). Positivists assume reality is unitary and it can be understood by empirical and analytical methods only (Smith, 2003). Simply put, the positivist view is that it is '*possible to describe the world objectively*' (Travers, 2001, p.51), consequently, the positivist researcher would generally play the role of an objective analyst (Creswell, 2007;

Guba and Lincoln, 2005), unworriedly making isolated explications within the application of deductive logic. There will be an emphasis on a highly-structured methodology to facilitate replication (Gill and Johnson, 2002) of the large amount of data. As to the results, the reliability and representativeness of research findings are created by retrieving and manipulating several statistical computer software packages.

Regarding the other perspective, the interpretivist/constructivist approach considers that phenomena in the social world exist internally and should be examined qualitatively based on subjective evaluation (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Lowe, 2002). Guba and Lincoln (1994) have argued by saying that the interpretivist researcher is not independent of the study, but a 'passionate participant' who interacts with the respondents to construct the outcome through the combined attempt of the researcher and the respondents in the research process. Along with this perception, there is no reason to work with larger-scale surveys, the interpretivist might perceive '*how people in a particular setting make comparison between 'insiders' and 'outsiders'*' (Travers, 2001, p.11). Typically, qualitative interviews and the like use inductive reasoning to emphasise the emergent themes involved.

Consistent with the focus of these two philosophical approaches, the two relevant approaches are reviewed: deductive research approach- *testing theory*, which is concerned with the development of a theoretical conceptual framework; and inductive research approach-*building theory*, which is related to interpreting empirical data.

The main focus of this study is theory building through the interpretation of the management views on the implementation of SA in Vietnam. An interpretivist approach seems to be the most suitable paradigm when a researcher intends to employ an inductive task with a theory-building theoretical research framework (Creswell, 2007). Clearly, the adoption of an inductive focus which reflects and provides interpretive justification of particular phenomena within a particular context, as recommended by Collis and Hussey (2009), fits well to a case-based study. With an interpretive approach, using a personal voice, the researcher accepts multiple realities which are based on a variety of "socially constructed" perspectives (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Lowe, 2008; Collis and Hussey, 2009). It can be noted that the principles and beliefs of interpretivism are totally aligned with those of the researcher. As an interpretivist, the author has sought to understand a small number of cases to find out what has gone on over a certain period of time in terms of similarities and differences. In order to clarify the research question in this study, the researcher chose a subjective approach with a view to gaining phenomenological understanding by adopting qualitative exploration to conduct this research.

In the current research, the EFQM questionnaires which was administered during phase 1 of the research process provides a supplementary guidance for the researcher in the final process of data

collection during phase 2 which is through semi-structured interviews. The primary data in this study comes from qualitative interview. This means that management views in the case studies have been captured in essence and help to build a rich and detailed explanation of the phenomenon that has occurred. The dialogue generated in the semi-structured interview process adds to the process of theory building (inductive) approach and fits with the Interpretivist paradigm.

Further, as this research adopts the case study method as presented in section 3.3, which again falls within the ambit of the Interpretivist paradigm.

3.3 Research design and relevant techniques used:

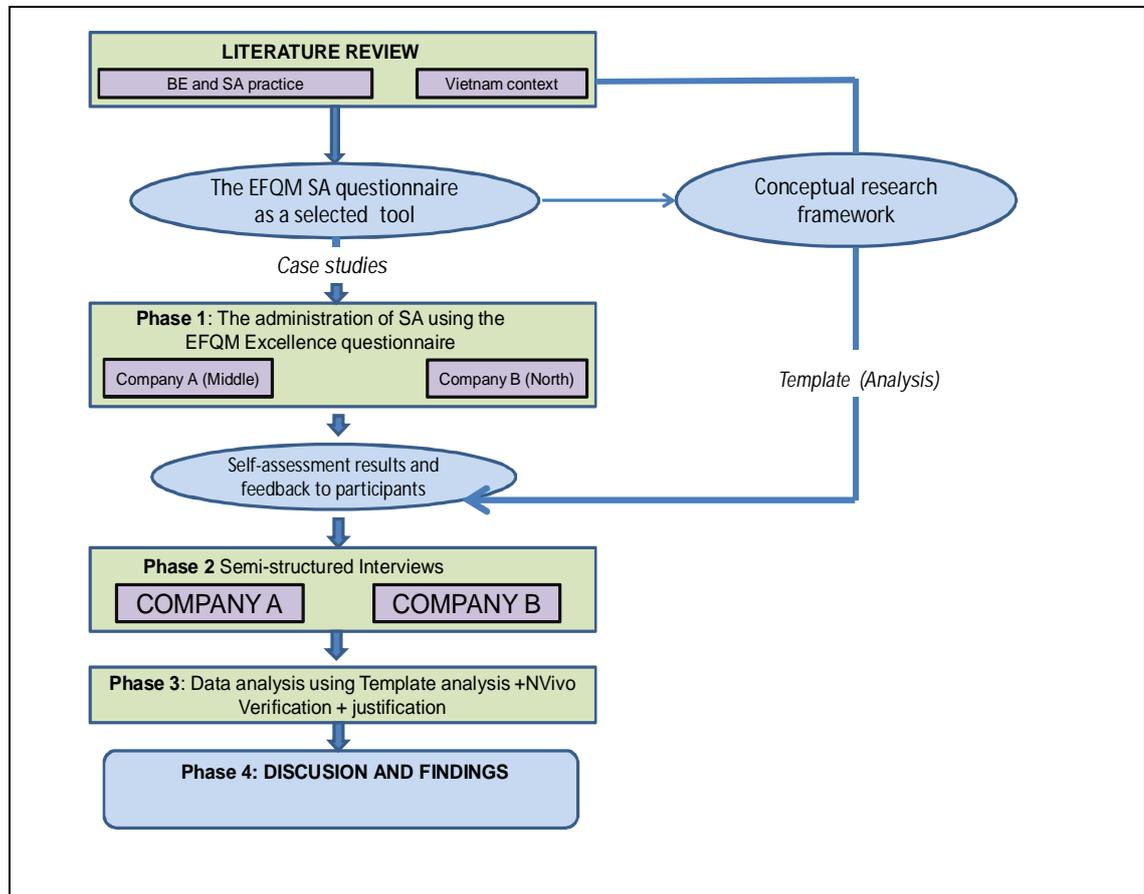
According to Zikmund (2003, p.65), “a research design is a master plan specifying the methods and procedures for collecting and analyzing the needed information”.

Regarding the chosen philosophical stance of this exploratory study as interpretism, data collection strategy was designed. This strategy was preferred for the following justifications:

- The usefulness of SA needs to be evaluated in the context which it takes place. Due to its circumstances, the phenomenon has to be understood from various management perspectives. Fundamentally, the nature of this research is exploratory and its outcomes may be unanticipated (Hammersley, 1996). Thus, the flexibility of the research strategy will contribute towards the success and credibility of the study.
- Academic research in Vietnam is a delicate task because there is a lack of independence and confidence (Adair, 1995, cited by Berwick, Ogle and Wright, 2003). Therefore, conducting surveys within organisations was not a secure approach for collecting diversified managerial opinions. Moreover, access to data for Vietnamese academics mostly depends on the corroboration of host organisations (Ashwill, 2005).
- Taking advice from Vietnamese quality experts when the author was interviewing for the initial purpose of undertaking the national survey using VQA experience to evaluate SA implementation seemed inappropriate, as there is a lack of proper SA knowledge among Vietnamese businesses.
- Other concerns were cost, time, access to data and the skill of the researcher (Remenyi *et al.*, 1998).
- Employing a case study approach seemed the best approach for investigating the SA discipline (Benavent, 2006).

Based on these arguments, it is believed that case study was the valid choice in this research. Subsequently, the research design consisted of four phases which have been allocated in case companies based on the exploratory purpose of this research (see Figure 3-2).

Figure 3-2. Research design



As can be seen in Figure 3-2, initially, the combination of SA and BE literature and the Vietnam context review helped to decide which SA techniques should be used for the case companies. Thus, the EFQM questionnaire was chosen because it seemed most suitable for the Vietnam context. Subsequently, both guidance on this particular questionnaire and the SA review have been explored to build the conceptual research framework. A template (King, 2004b) was developed based on this conceptual framework with the aim of addressing emergent themes.

In the two selected case companies, a research design consisting of 4 phases has been developed. SA using the EFQM questionnaire was conducted in the first phase. After obtaining the SA results and fed back to participants, the researcher investigated the usefulness of the SA technique and factors influencing SA implementation via semi-structured interviews in the second phase. Subsequently, descriptive data obtained from interviewing managers was analysed with the support of template analysis and NVivo qualitative data software in the third phase. Through rational justifications in the third phase, findings and lessons learnt were included in the fourth

phase to answer the research question; which involved SA using BEM implementation in Vietnam. In particular, basic numerical data of SA outcomes were used to add to the validity of the qualitative work.

In short, the major strategy employed consisted of case studies (Yin, 2003) and template analysis (King, 2004b).

3.3.1 Primary case study approach

Appropriateness of case study

As mentioned above, it is recognised that there was no academic literature on the use of the BE model and SA in the Vietnamese context. Therefore, the purpose of the current research was to explore SA experience based on a BE model in a different context. To fulfil this purpose and answer the research question, case studies seemed the most suitable approach.

Case studies are considered as the best tool for exploratory research (Eisenhardt, 1989; Yin, 2003; Bryman and Bell, 2007). Yin (2003, p.13) has confirmed that the case study is a method which would involve an empirical investigation of “a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context” and have been associated with process evaluation. In this thesis, the investigator attempted to collect information on a ‘live’ contemporary occurrence rather than on historical events. With its dynamic characteristics, case study provides a feasible approach to gather empirical and detailed data with a view to gaining an in-depth insight into organisational knowledge and practice. Additionally, case study is one of the most vigorous methods, not only in operation management, but also in the SA field (as analysed previously in section 4.1).

A case study also allows the use of multiple data collection methods and, thus, it enables the investigator to gain wider insight of a phenomenon and to increase the validity and reliability of the research findings (Robson, 2002; Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Lowe, 2002; Yin, 2003). Finally, the research question took a ‘How useful’ form, and this provided an important clue when deciding that the most appropriate approach would be that of case studies (Yin, 2003).

Taking into account all considerations, case studies were chosen as the most appropriate strategy for this project. They can help to explain both success and failure in carrying out SA in Vietnam, based on multiple management viewpoints.

Among four types of case study design (Yin, 2003), multiple-case (holistic) sampling was adopted in the present research in order ‘*to add confidence to findings*’ (Miles and Huberman, 1994, p.29). The repetition of research protocol applied in both cases would help to reduce the coincidence of

data collection (Yin, 2003), showing both the similarities and distinctions in different contexts (Silverman, 2000); and increase generic findings (Eisenhardt and Graebner, 2007).

This approach has certainly assisted the investigation of the specific SA tool, the EFQM questionnaire in the Vietnamese business environment. Both the similarities and distinctions of SA implementation in the selected cases have helped to generalise the explorative findings.

Selected case studies

In this study, selective sampling is particularly appropriate; it is based on two deliberations: the greater the number of cases, the more credible and the more complex and in-depth the study (Yin, 2003; Dyers and Wilkin, 1991). The number of valid multiple-cases depends on two issues: (i) how rich and complex the list of candidate cases is and (ii) how confident the researcher is about the number of cases which can be generalized. However, the major aim of the researcher in this study is not ambitious theory-building. Therefore, the suggestion that a study of between four and ten cases works well has not been followed (Eisenhardt, 1989).

According to Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2007) and Zikmund *et al.*, (2010), non-probability **purposive sampling** (judgement sampling) is suitable when selected cases were judged to fit certain criteria. This sampling helps the researcher to work with a small number of samples which provide the best informative data and to avoid bias (Barbour, 2001; Neuman, 2000).

In this study, the rationale for utilising SA in the context of the Vietnam T&G industry was referred in Chapter 1. To select the case study companies, the researcher decided to employ purposive sampling using some specific criteria, as follows:

- (a) The company has participated in and obtained VQA certification.
- (b) The company has experience in gaining achievements in quality development by obtaining several ISO 9000 and ISO 14000 certifications over the last 3 years. Moreover, it has reached between level 2 (Drifters) and level 4 (Improvers) of the 6-level TQM adoption of Lascelles and Dale (1997).
- (c) The company's size is medium or large scale.
- (d) The company's owner is not a foreign investor, with the best options being liability or joint stock enterprises owing to the important role of such ownership.

These criteria were developed based on the researcher's considerations from the review of SA literature. The following arguments support criteria (a) and (b):

- Brown and Van der Wiele (1996), as well as Coulambidou and Dale (1995) suggest that the quality management maturity of organisations should meet the requirements of the SA

tool. Organisations need to be able to gain a level of understanding of SA using BEM through their participation and training. How they interpret criteria will clearly affect their awareness and knowledge, particularly in continuous improvement. Moreover, to conduct any technique of SA effectively, Van der Wiele et al. (1996a, b) argue that 3 years of experience with TQM activities seems appropriate for SA implementation. Moreover, in terms of the 6-level TQM adoption grid which was developed by Lascelles and Dale (1997) (outlined in section 2.2.1), the case companies had to have reached a middle position. The starting point is level 1 (Uncommitted) and the winning level is level 5 (Award winners). Thus the middle levels are level 2 (Drifters), level 3 (Tool-pushers), and level 4 (Improvers).

- Over-scoring has been identified by a number of authors (Van der Wiele et al., 1996; Conti, 1997b; Teo and Dale, 2003, Porter and Tanner, 2004) and may limit the usefulness of SA.

Therefore, such companies which have experience of VQA participation and quality management implementations are potential candidates in this research.

In relation to criterion (c), according to Nadvi et al. (2004), 42 Vietnamese medium and large size enterprises²⁷ occupied about 40% of the national export volume and so by choosing medium and large companies the research findings should be of relevance to a wider audience.

In relation to criterion (d), companies with foreign investors may have already been influenced by Western practices in the area of quality management and so research findings based on such companies may not be of relevance to the majority of Vietnamese companies which do not have foreign investment.

Consistent with the first criterion, the sampling frame was constructed based on the list of 15 textile and garment VQA participants (see Appendix D).

Initially, the researcher attempted to contact the two world-class companies in the list: COAST TOTAL PHONG PHU and Garment 10. The first company refused to get involved for issues of confidentiality. As for Garment 10, in-depth interviews with the CEO and Quality Manager supported the first thought of the researcher — that the VQA actually benefited the company by recognising local and international aspects rather than creating impressive opportunities for improvement. However, the company lacked enthusiasm to take part in the study.

²⁷ Those companies are members of Vinatex, a domestic organisation which comprise many state-owned enterprises for strengthening their capacities.

Later on, with the support of the Chairman of VINATEX (Vietnam Textile and Garment Corporation), the other two large textile and garment companies showed their willingness to participate in the sense that they had already adopted the pre-defined criteria and expressed their interest in this research. The brief profiles of the two selected cases, made anonymous as Company A and Company B, are illustrated in Table 3-3.

Regarding the quality management level of Company A and Company B, they both meet the requirements of TQM maturity (criterion b above). It was discovered through the interviews that both Company A and Company B belong to the ‘Tool-pusher’ level (level 3), for the following reasons:

- The companies have operating experience of quality management of more than 5 years and are always looking for opportunities for continuous improvement.
- They have employed a selection of quality management tools, such as statistic process control, 5S, and internal and external audit, and they have obtained ISO 9000 management system series registration.
- A customer-driven approach is seemed dominantly in all of their operational activities.
- It is likely that not all senior managers fully understand the subject of quality.

Table 3-3. Case study summary profiles

Case study	Type of organisation	Number of employees	Annual Revenue	Structure	Location	Recognition
A ²⁸	Textile and garment joint-stock company	2 600	16 million GBP	6 department; 2 mills; 1 garment factory	Middle of Vietnam	ISO 9001 2000 (2003); SA8000 ²⁹ VQA – Silver (1997); VQA (2002)
B ³⁰	Garment joint-stock company	2 200	8 million GBP	8 functional department; 5 garment factories	Northern Vietnam	ISO 9001 2000 (2001); ISO 14001 (2003); VQA –Silver (1999, 2000), VQA 2006

²⁸ 56% stated-owned capital

²⁹ SA8000 is a global social accountability standard for decent working conditions, developed and overseen by Social Accountability International (SAI).

³⁰ 30% stated-owned capital

Although the duration of engaging in continuous improvement by the two case study companies had met the level of ‘Improvers’ of TQM adoption, there was no strong evidence of their achievements in several aspects of this stage; such as leadership commitment, TQM strategy in conjunction with other business strategies, a customer-focused culture and, significantly, impact on financial performance.

Obviously, the spotting of company level against the TQM adoption would help to make clear case company’s current position. This is meaningful for comparing between actual organisational performance and overall scores in SA using the EFQM questionnaire in the following step.

3.3.1.1 Designing the case study to implement self assessment approach

To evaluate the usefulness of SA, the two textiles and garment companies conducted SA and scored organisational performance following the instructions of the EFQM questionnaire. The research was carried out in two phases: internal assessment survey and review interviews (see Table 3-4).

Table 3-4. Case study approach

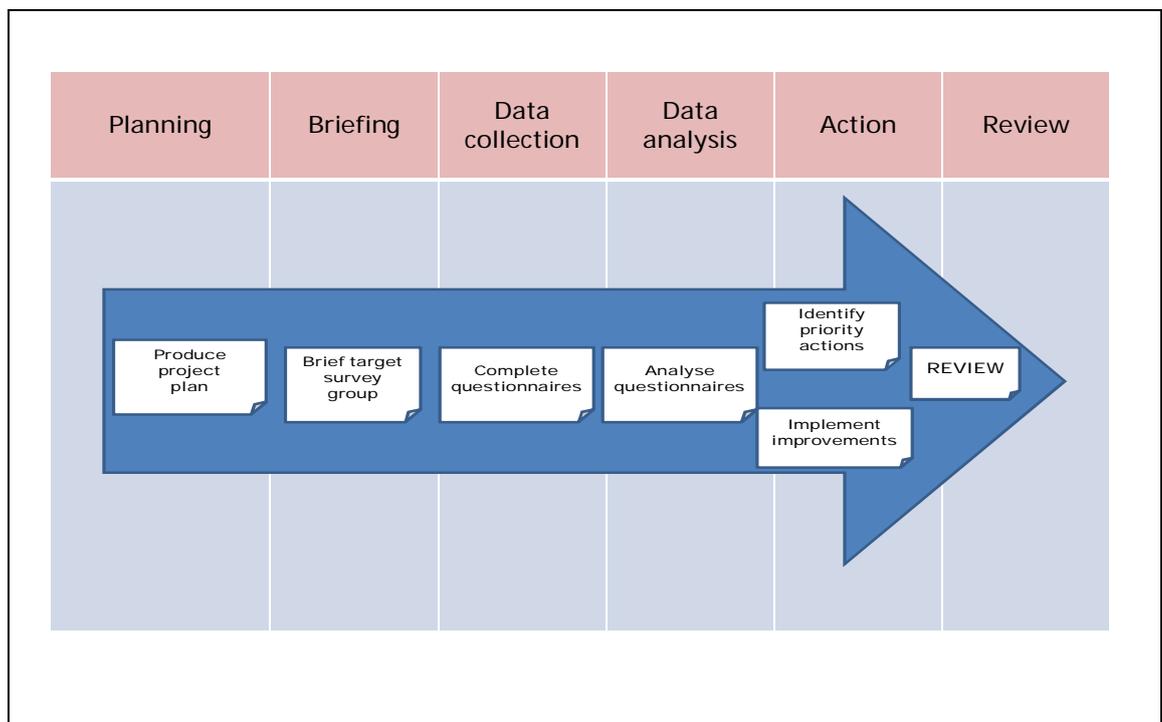
Phase	Date to undertake	Target respondent	Methods
Phase 1 Internal assessment	August 2008 (company A); November 2008 (company B)	All management group	Survey : Undertaking self assessment using the EFQM questionnaire
Phase 2 Review Interviews	June 2009 (company A); August 2009 (company B)	A representative of top leaders and key senior managers	Semi-structured interviews

In brief, the administration of SA using the EFQM questionnaire is undertaken among management group in Phase 1. After SA outcomes were returned to managers, interviews would be undertaken in Phase 2, asking participating managers to comment upon the accuracy of the data and about the SA process. These interviews were to be conducted in key functional areas for completion among SA respondents. The details of each phase are explored in the following sections.

3.3.1.2 Administration SA using the EFQM questionnaire (Phase 1)

The details of conducting the questionnaire referred in the EFQM guidance comprise of six steps, which can be found in Appendix K. However, this process is simple and it focuses on scoring requirements, rather than on several crucial factors of successful SA implementation which were depicted in Chapter 2, such as planning, training, and communication. Therefore, the generic excellence questionnaire blueprint suggested by Porter and Tanner (2004) was chosen to apply in each company. Figure 3-3 shows the questionnaire process of Porter and Tanner.

Figure 3-3. The excellence questionnaire blueprint



Source: Porter and Tanner, *Assessing Business Excellence* (2004, p.320)

The selected six-step process (Porter and Tanner, 2004) to utilise SA (Figure 3-3) in each company is described in greater detail in the following.

Step 1. Planning

Prior to the SA-EFQM implementation, the objectives of SA conduct have to be clear to participants. Next, an established plan converts SA objectives into actual actions for facilitating the SA process. It is vital that top commitment needs to be obtained in advance.

It can be seen that the literature reviewed has shown the crucial position of gaining and retaining management commitment in SA implementation (Lascelles and Peacock, 1996; Van der Wiele *et al.*, 1996a,b; Hides, Davis and Jackson, 2004). In both the two case companies, gaining the

agreement of the top leaders to execute the SA process was accomplished through the following tasks:

- Agreement on the implementation of the chosen EFQM SA tool: based on the researcher's intention illustrated in Chapter 2.
- Approval of the guidance material for training.
- Scheduling the time available for undertaking SA among the management group.

Application of the EFQM questionnaire to score the companies' excellence performance was conducted within the two organisations during September and November 2008. To undertake SA in Phase 1, a set of three documents consisting of a detailed plan, a list of preferred participants and an implementation schedule were submitted to the General Directors (CEOs) of each company. As one would expect, after a certain amount of time, fixed and appropriate timetables were offered back to the researcher. In each company, one key manager was appointed to be in charge of the SA project. After completing SA, individual managers' results would be fed back to participants.

The approach of using a key representative, as found in the case studies, is one widely accepted in business research. It is supposed to ensure reliability and success (Conant, Mokwa and Varadarajan, 1990; Rossomme, 2003). These people perform an extraordinary task of both encouraging other respondents and leading the way by example. In this study, the researcher contacted and maintained a relationship with the key representative managers of each company. They had the important role of setting up SA planning and also getting close to the CEO in order to represent the top leaders' opinions. While in Company A this person was the Administrative and Personnel Manager, in Company B it was the Quality Manager.

Step 2. Briefing

In forming an assessment team in Phase 1, it is recommended that senior managers should be the first group to conduct SA (EFQM 1999-2003b; Dale and Coulambidou, 1995; Porter and Tanner, 2004). The possible scenario suggested was SA team, including all senior managers, plus the facilitator (Hillman, 1994; Porter and Tanner, 2004). This is the easiest approach and best suited for this research owing to the low level of involvement and time constraint. The explanations identified include: (a) BE addresses a wide range of a company's area, covering human resources to processing and business; (b) no single executive has wide and in-depth management knowledge; and (c) the senior assessor plays a critical leader role in the SA process (Ford and Evan, 2006). Taking these into consideration, the researcher decided to be the administrator of SA in all functional management areas of the case companies.

Subsequently, Porter and Tanner (2004) suggested that prior communication is essential for gaining background understanding for SA implementation. In fact, the Administrative department of each firm established the communication plan, including the pool of scorers, venue and date. The prior training material was prepared by the researcher.

Moreover, based on the EFQM's recommendation, it was decided to carry out brief training. The reason for this decision was that the target assessment team, who had various backgrounds, might be unfamiliar with the SA and BE topic. Training for the management team lasted about one hour, the EFQM materials with Vietnamese version being sent to each participant 1- 2 days before the training day. The structure of the training course consists of three parts. While the first part focused on the objective of conducting SA; the second part emphasized a general overview of the EFQM Excellence Model and additional SA tool. A 4-level scoring scheme of this questionnaire was also provided and guided to participants. The last part of training is a seminar in order to encourage managers to ask details about business excellence criterion, the EFQM questionnaire and how to score.

Step 3: Data collection (scoring)

In 2008, all internal assessors/target managers undertook the scoring in the two companies. An assurance of confidentiality was given by the researcher. This was to avoid the risk of psychological problems, as suggested by EFQM (1999-2003b). This problem happens when internal assessors conduct SA; for instance, there may be punishment for the one with the lowest score or score disputes relating to a particular criterion which is the responsibility of a certain manager.

Following several materials of both the EFQM Excellence Model guidance and the Baldrige model, the researcher has developed the feedback report which consolidates all data gathered from all questionnaires. These two SA reports of both companies are presented in Appendix L and M.

Step 4. Data analysis

Microsoft Excel software was used to provide simple data analysis, mainly using graphical displays. It adopted the view of Porter and Tanner (2004), who stated that the matter of how to interpret meaningfully was decided by simply using tables, graphs, diagrams and few words to indicate various managerial levels. Furthermore, the other reasons for using this software are that the feedback of scoring in both Vietnamese cases required a quick response owing to limited time, lack of convenient IT support (such as using *Desktop everywhere*) and difficulties in transportation from the researcher.

The EFQM feedback was formulated by the researcher in two separate reports: individual and whole company. It should be noted that the confidentiality of each scorer was strictly respected. Both these reports included a brief overview of SA participation and demographic sections. The SA feedback was showed by two different structured graphs: the clustered bar and the RADAR framework. On the bar, the value of individual scores is simply compared to both business unit scores and the overall scores across nine criteria of the EFQM Excellence Model. Moreover, organisational outcomes are illustrated by a comprehensive performance report against the EFQM criteria.

In the organisation feedback, along with the overall results of each category, a table that specifies details of items (questions) and relevant scores was created (an example is given in Table 3-5).

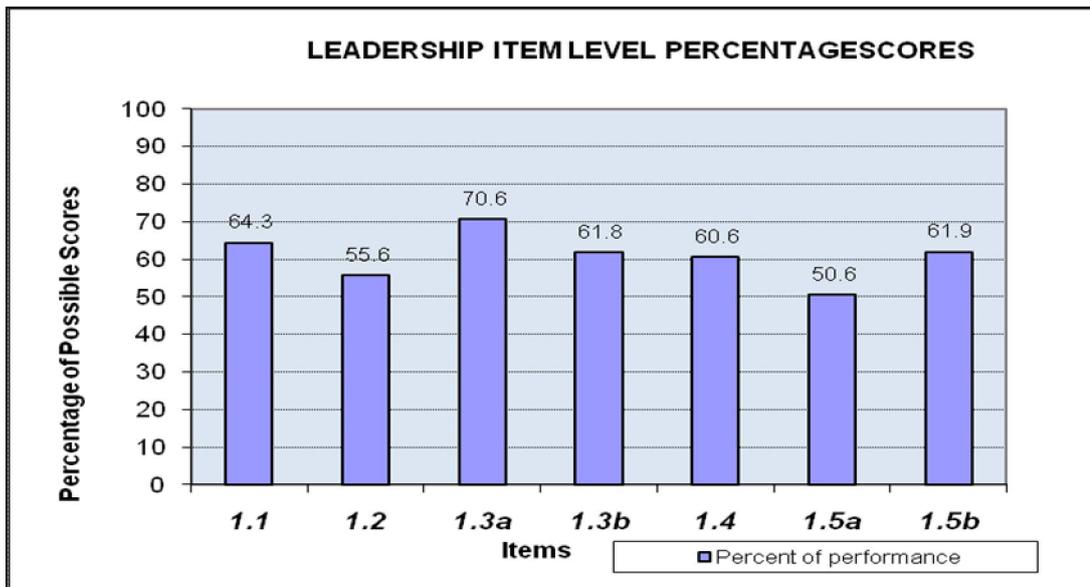
Table 3-5. The example of Leadership Item level percent scores when using the EFQM questionnaire

	Items	% percent
1.1	<i>Are all the senior managers personally involved and visible in generating and communicating a strategic statement for the purpose, direction and culture of the organisation (including its quality values and priorities)?</i>	64.33
1.2	<i>Have the senior managers ensured the implementation of an organisational structure and process management system that is respected and is effective in delivering consistent and improving results?</i>	55.63
1.3	<i>a. Do the senior managers, by example and action, demonstrate support and emphasise the values of their organisation</i>	70.56
	<i>b. and are these values widely accepted and practised throughout the organisation?</i>	61.78
1.4	<i>Do all managers make themselves available to staff and involve themselves in the positive and timely recognition of the efforts made by individuals and teams who generate improvement?</i>	60.63
1.5	<i>a. Are all the managers taking actions to meet with customers, suppliers and others outside the organisation,</i>	50.56
	<i>b. and be actively involved in promoting partnerships and improvement initiatives with them?</i>	61.85

SA outcomes were presented in four graphic diagrams representing each EFQM criterion. In the first diagram, whilst the overall results can be determined, at a glance, organisational strengths and weaknesses can be identified by the highest-score or lowest-score item (an example is in

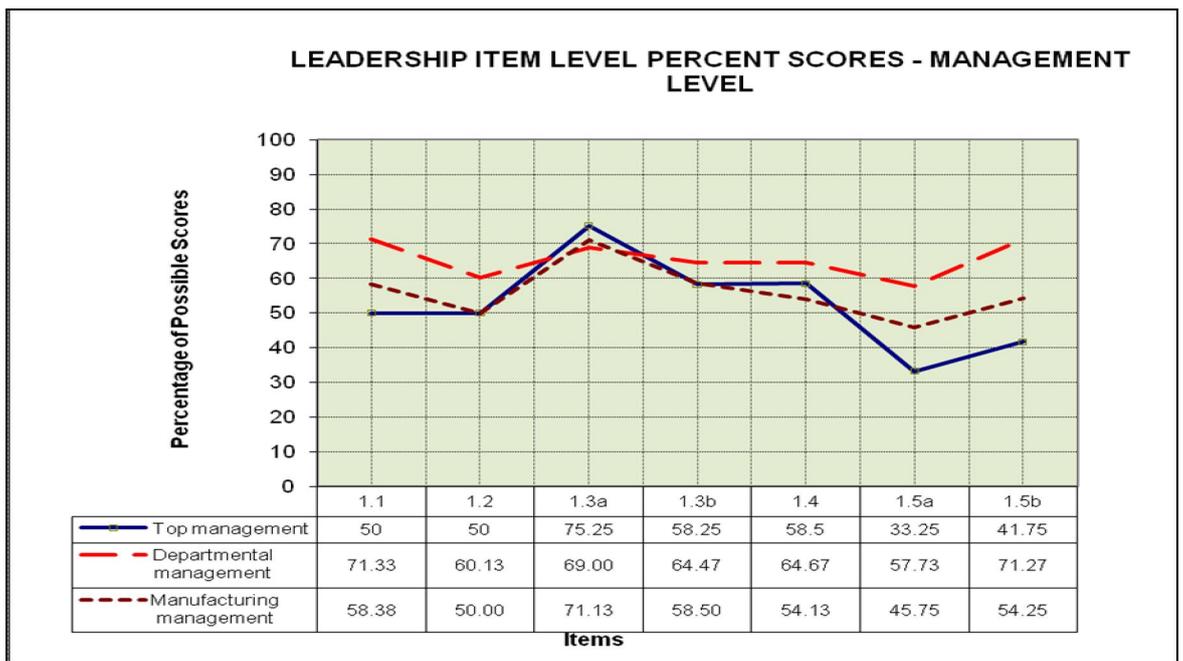
Figure 3-4). The other three results show the gap between performance assessment and the different views of management (an example is in Figure 3-5). In particular, distinctions between these three presentations occurred at management level (top managers and senior managers), in the functional segment (among different departments), and the manufacturing area (among different mills and factories).

Figure 3-4. The example of Leadership results by items



Source: The researcher

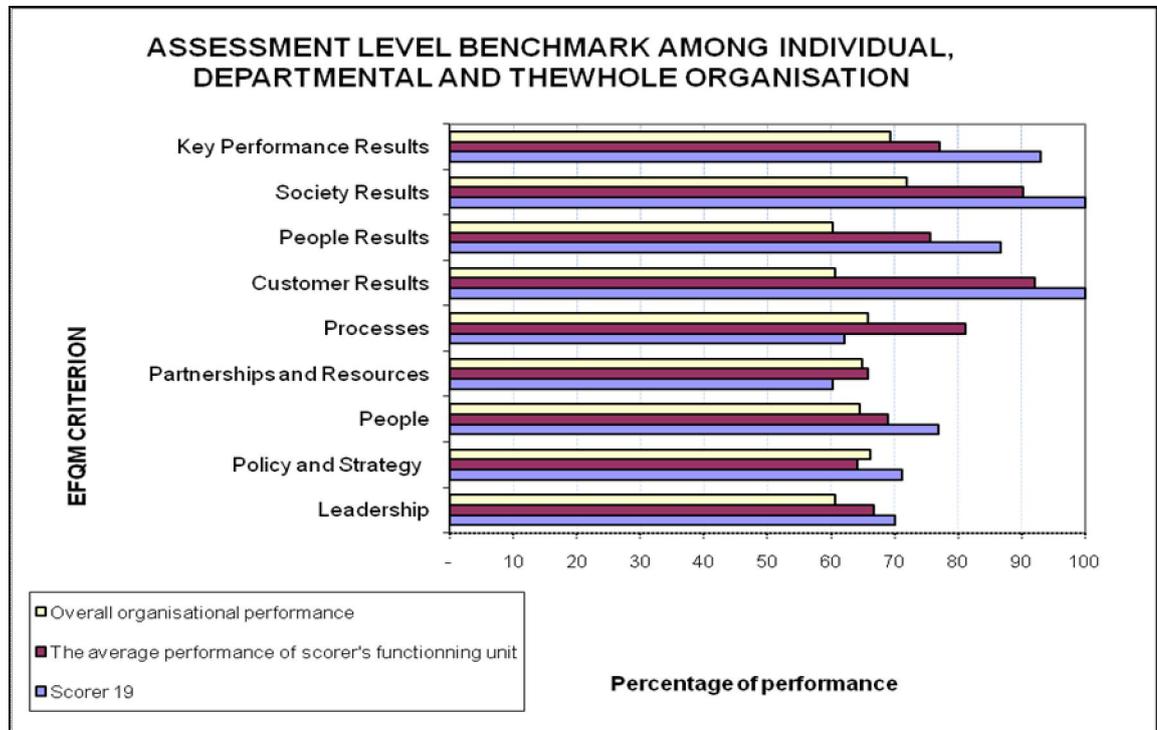
Figure 3-5. The example of Leadership results by management group



Source: The researcher

In individual feedback, individual results was illustrated the comparison among the assessment of particular scorer, his/her functioning unit and overall performance of his/her Company. Figure 3-6 shows a sample of individual results, particular Scorer (Manager) 19 in Company A.

Figure 3-6: The example of an assessment benchmarking of individual feedback



Source: The researcher

Step 5. Action

This step required managers to determine and produce an improvement plan for areas that needed it, based on weak points of performance. Based on the nature of the research, the management teams should decide which data is useful and use this for improvement within their companies.

Step 6. Review

Two company meetings took place with the attendance of the researcher. Discussion and clarification of results were undertaken with the executive group and key managers. The summary of key findings was showed to the management board by using charts, especially focusing on the gap between each criterion among various management and functional levels. Specific problems were addressed surrounding findings; however, the crucial points or the company weaknesses were focused on among the people taking part. There were huge surprises in the participants’ data, such as the big gaps in management views, in particular for some criteria. As regards the accuracy

level of the SA reflection of the company's performance, 'mostly accurate' was the consensus among the team. This was a crucial point to raise the question relating to the underlying explanation of 'mostly accurate' SA results in the next interview phase.

3.3.1.3 Semi-structured Interviews (Phase 2)

Justification of using semi-structured interviews

Interviews are one useful method for conducting exploratory research (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2007) and a most informative source in case studies (Yin, 2003). They enable the gathering of information from those thought to be knowledgeable on the issues relevant to the research problem (Burns and Bush, 2000).

From a variety of interview types, such as 'in-depth', 'semi-structured' and 'un-structured', a semi-structured (non-standardised) form was adopted as the key approach to be employed in this exploration study. It is worth mentioning the rationale behind conducting semi-structured interviews as the key data collection method:

- Interviews have kept their dominance in providing comprehensive qualitative knowledge (King, 2004a) and they are useful for "assessing individuals' attitudes and values" (Byrne, 2004, p.182).
- This technique is "the quickest way to learn about the perspective in particular topic" (Travers, 2001). It provides interactive and flexible chances for probing the meaning of the interviewee's responsiveness across different phenomena in order to formulate significant discussion and understanding (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2007). It is also efficient for exploring open opinions covered on a list of questions used during an interview (Bryman and Bell, 2007).
- As the topic was quite complex, the flexibility offered by a semi-structured interview enabled steering of the interview towards several key variables. In this regard, the semi-structured nature helped to shape the managers' perceptions in order for them to answer the research questions (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2007).

Therefore, the main purpose of the interview was to obtain deep and thorough views of the EFQM assessment outputs in order to confirm the usefulness and limitations of this tool in these case companies.

Focusing on the goal to see the research topic from the perspective of interviews, several characteristics of the qualitative research interview — such as a low-degree structure, predominance of open question and the interviewee's specific situation — should be addressed.

To obtain accuracy of information, the researcher needs to minimise his/her 'inter-personal' impact during the course of the interview and see the interviewee as a 'participant' in the research (King, 2004a).

Aside from the strengths of the semi-structures interview technique, ideally suited to this study, disadvantages need also to be recognised. The time consumed by the whole interview process was problematic. In fact, it required an extension to the author's PhD which was longer than expected. This also gives the researcher overload or a feeling of being lost.

Regarding the data quality issue in interviews, there are four identified issues reliability, bias, validity and generalisability that were considered carefully and which the researcher attempted to overcome through the research strategy. They will be clearly examined in section 3.5 in this chapter.

Selecting interviewee samples

According to Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2007, p.314), some factors associated with the selection of interviewee samples include "the purpose of the research; the significance of establishing personal contact; the nature of data collection questions; and length of time required and completeness of the process".

Initially, the most appropriate technique to address the research question is *purposive sampling*. Regarding this sampling, Morse (1991, p.129) stated that the selection of sample is "according to the needs of the research" and those selected informant who essentially have an intensive general knowledge or have such experience in the topic.

There is no certain rule for how many people need to be interviewed, it just depends on the time available to collect, transcribe and analyse (Travers, 2001). Nevertheless, it is suggested that sampling should continue until reaching the level of saturation or redundancy (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Strauss and Corbin, 1990). To increase the validity of research evaluation, the researcher intended to conduct as many interviews as possible.

With these points in mind, the researcher decided to undertake some intensive interviews with key senior managers who had participated in SA using the EFQM questionnaire and had gained SA experience before. It was proposed that the CEO and Quality Assurance Manager be interviewed because they could provide useful information about comparing between the Vietnam Quality Award and the EFQM, based on their experience. The remainder of the interviewee team should focus on representatives of key management areas, including manufacturing. The researcher

actually maintained an advantage from the preceding time by keeping a good relationship with each CEO in order to enable to interview selected managers.

Finally, twenty contacts in both case companies participated in the interviews. A detailed interviewee list of each case can be found at the beginning of Chapter 5 (Company A) and Chapter 6 (Company B). These interviewees had opportunities to comment on the preceding results accomplished by the EFQM SA questionnaire relied on the same template interview structure.

Semi-structured interview design

According to Richie and Lewis (2004), the interview design is needed to provide the direction for the interviews, such as what information is needed during the interviews, how to access data by using template and essential technical skills for the researcher to reach the target. The layout of the 5-stage semi-structured interview suggested by these two authors has been employed. These five stages consist of Introduction; Summary of research; Layout of interviewed questions; Instruction and Ending.

To obtain rich and original data, several guide questions are needed in the interviews strategy. During the interviews, several interview techniques, for instance how to start and end the interview smoothly, how to phrase the questions simply without confusion or how to steer the right direction without misinterpretation (King, 2004a), were considered as practical guidelines for qualitative data gathering. Interaction questions are sometimes given to encourage interviewees. Further, depending upon the responsiveness of managers, probing questions were given to gain insights relevant to topics. The underlying reason for this strategy is to enable the reaching of new themes or new elements which do not exist in the current literature (Curran and Blackburn, 2001).

Additionally, depending on the flow of 'quite open' conversation, which varied from interview to interview, the researcher may adjust the order of questions, or given additional questions focused on the research topic (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2007). The interviewer can use many various words or ideas that make the data obtained significantly meaningful. This enables expansion of the validity of the research question.

The time arranged for face-to-face interview ranged in length from 40 to 60 minutes. To be aware of the appropriateness of time and contents, a pilot interview was carried with the supervisor of the researcher beforehand. Actually, such a pilot benefited the researcher by enabling her to improve her interviewer skills and some crucial changes in the final structure of questions, as a result, have been made.

In fact, the venue arrangement was decided by negotiating with each particular interviewee. The technical procedure of recording on tape was well prepared in order to capture effectively and productively the natural expression of respondents.

In each interview, brief explanations, including the interview's purpose and the SA result feedback, were reiterated initially. For this purpose, information leaflets were provided to participants about these issues in advance before the interviews.

A template structure, described in more detail in section 3.4.3.1 was used for the interview content. In particular, themes and subthemes of the template which relied entirely on the conceptual research framework would help to establish the core questions of the interview. The main aim of the interview was to verify the intended benefits of SA implementation. A number of questions related to the usefulness and accuracy of SA results were asked in order to obtain a response from the interviewee. The second aim was to explore implementation factors influencing the usefulness mentioned. Finally, questions were asked about the VQA experience. In particular, details about the Vietnamese award participating process, the role of assessment inside the organisation, success and failure, and the overall effect on organisational performance. The full details of completed interview design can be seen in Appendix N.

Data collected in interviews

Objective interviewees in each organisation, including top management level and several senior key managers, agreed to take part interviews mentioned previously. According to the fixed schedule work on the interviewee list approved by the both company's CEOs, a total of 20 interviews were conducted intensively between 30th July and 6th August 2009 on two sites, Hue and Hung Yen cities. These interviews were broken down as follows:

- In Company A, the interviews were conducted with one top leader, 5 departmental managers and 3 manufacturing directors.
- In Company B, there were two interviews with top managers, 5 with departmental managers and 4 with manufacturing directors who represented 4 garment factories.

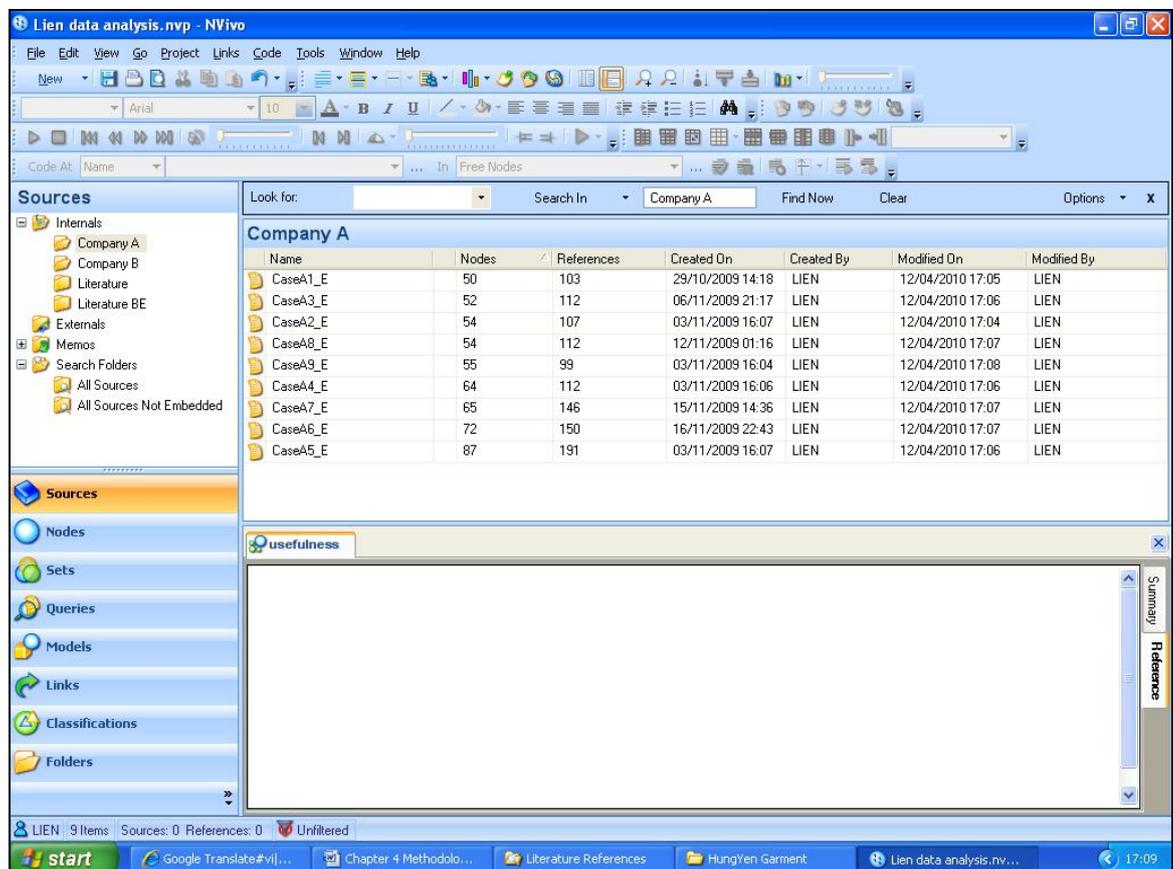
The actual length of time varied from 20 minutes to two and a half of hours. The sole shortest case which lasted 20 minutes was conducted with a Director of the garment factory of Company B. Nevertheless, some unexpected dialogues in Company A were longer because several managers positively were eager to provide descriptive stories in certain contexts.

For the data to be ready for analysis, transcribing was necessary to reproduce the audio-recorded interviews in written form. According to Bird (2005), a researcher should transcribe interviews himself/herself. Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2007) suggest alternative ways to reduce the time

needed for transcribing, such as paying a touch typist or using voice recognition software. In terms of the accuracy of transcribed interview notes, Colgate and Norris (2001) suggest the ‘eyeballing’ technique, which involves listening several times. This tool helps to highlight key phrases by examining reading transcription several times.

The researcher took the view of Bird (2005) and undertook transcription herself. Using this technique, transcriptions were translated into English from the original Vietnamese verbatim. To ensure the verification and consistency of transcript work, a review cycle consisting of 5 rows (Transcribe into Vietnamese – Review and Edit - Translate into English – Review and Edit – Proofread), was made using the ‘eyeballing’ technique again. At the end of this stage, the researcher felt the task of transcribing and translating had been extremely time consuming. In total, it took nearly 3 months to accomplish 20 interviews, from September 2009 until November 2009. The researcher took the view of Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2007) in that each transcript was saved in a separate formatted file and systematically titled in order to maintain anonymity and consistency. For example, ‘CaseA1-E’ file contains the interview English transcript of Interviewee A1 in Company A. Figure 3-7 shows a sample of available transcript files to be ready for coding.

Figure 3-7. The working screen in NVivo of case Company A



3.3.2 Secondary data supported

Along with the primary data obtained from the case studies, the researcher conducted an expert interview with the head of the VQA office twice, once in January 2008 and again in July 2008, in order to enrich the grounded research environment in Vietnam. This helped the researcher gain knowledge and an understanding of management practice, the perception of the managers and also other issues related to VQA. The content of the expert interview covered three main issues and can be considered secondary data. First was the benefit obtained and the difficulties faced because of the companies' application of exiting BEM, the VQA. Second concerned the lessons learned through the evaluation of the Vietnamese award itself. Finally, details about VQA implementation issues and the specific winning scores of those companies that obtained VQA were explored using evidential documents.

Appendices O and P show information regarding VQA winners, which includes the scores of the golden quality award winners in 2006 and 2008, and the score bands of VQA obtainers from 2005 to 2008. These supporting documents helped the researcher recognise that the winning scores of VQA achievers were high. It is noted that the average scores of all VQA winners during 3 continuous years (2006-2008) was 893 points³¹. Details of this gap and information obtained from the expert interview are examined in Chapter 6 when the impact of SA using the VQA is analysed. Specifically, the emergent themes of this interview are referred to when connecting primary data analysis of the case companies in order to shed light on the empirical experience of Vietnamese companies implementing SA using the VQA.

3.4 Method of Data Analysis and Conclusion of Phases 3 and 4

Data analysis is a crucial part of a study because it differentiates the findings, transforming the raw data materials (Patton, 2002). Analysis refers to the complex process which includes "examining, categorizing, tabulating, testing, or otherwise recombining evidences, to draw empirically based conclusions" (Yin, 2009, p.126). Using a huge amount of rich data collected from two case companies, data analysis in this study has helped to "reduce the volume of raw information" (Patton, 2002, p.432) and draw meaningful conclusions which are aligned with the research framework. In addition, Yin (2003) argues that theoretical propositions may assist in organizing case studies and examining them in their context.

As mentioned above in section 3.3.1.2, quantitative data from the EFQM questionnaire was analysed with the support of the Microsoft Excel programme. Part of the EFQM feedback was

³¹ This average score was measured by the final actual score of VQA winners during 2006-2008 (see Appendices O and P)

used to help better understand or to confirm the interview data analysis. The principal data in this research are qualitative in nature, derived from interviews. The main analysis tools used in this project include template analysis (King, 2004b) and the qualitative software NVivo (QSR, 2008). The reason for employing this complex approach was to gain credibility through the analysis of large quantities of rich data. Basically, a set of categories based on the template can be used to count the instances of each category, according to Silverman (2006). Furthermore, typical qualitative data analysis guidance by Miles and Huberman (1994) was applied to support template analysis in the current study. This use is effective in a within-case and cross-case analysed strategy, or with coding tactics based on the template of King (2004b).

To support the researcher's decision of using this analysis combination, a one-hour formal discussion took place with Professor Nigel King in 2009 at Newcastle Business School. The actual template applied in this research was discussed, including both the advantages and disadvantages of the combination strategy. Although this combination seems to be quite new in management research, the meeting gave the researcher confidence in the selected approach. The two analysis techniques used in this study will now be explained.

3.4.1 Template Analysis

Template analysis has been accepted extensively in the developed research community since the 1990s (Waring and Wainwright, 2008). This method has been widely applied in the context of healthcare qualitative research (Crabtree and Miller, 1999; King, 2004b), but is still not common in business and management studies. However, template analysis "can be used within a range of epistemological positions" (Waring and Wainwright, 2008, p.86). This analysis method can thus be seen as compatible with the interpretivist view of the present study.

In thematic analysis, template analysis is used in non-standardised interviews and defined as "a list of codes ('template') representing themes identified in the textual data" (King, 2004, p.256). The structure of pre-defined themes in the template is organised to show the relationship among themes and subthemes. The basic principle of thematic analysis relates to the researcher setting aside her own pre-suppositions, alignment being strictly with the structure of the template.

Suggested for use in phenomenologically oriented studies (Silverman, 2000; Flick, 2002), template analysis has been accepted as the fundamental approach in this research because of its highly flexible character. King (2004b, p.248) suggests that template analysis "works very well in studies which seek to examine the perspectives of different groups within an organisational context". Template analysis is thus certainly well-suited for the objectives of this research and their boundaries.

An initial list of themes was developed in the research framework in order to give a specific organisational context relating to the current research topic. King (2004b) recommends that the completed analysis roadmap should involve two main steps. While the first step involves developing the template consisting of four tasks, the second step involves interpreting and presenting template analysis. Details of using this technique with NVivo software will be given in the following section.

3.4.2 Using the quality software NVivo 8 for analysis

Strongly recommended by Miles and Huberman (1994), computer-assisted software application to analyse qualitative data has been recognised as supporting the research analysis process efficiently and systematically. In their study, three-quarters of respondents revealed that computer software was commonly used entirely for key functions of the data analysis process. Furthermore, Coffey and Atkinson (1996) state that the appropriate textual management software to use should be decided by the combination of data type and methodological approach.

When considering whether to apply cutting-edge and popular quality research software at this stage, the researcher noted that NVivo had received the attention of a number of methodological experts (Silverman, 2000; Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2007; Bryman and Bell, 2007; King, 2004b). This package appeared more than a decade ago and its use is extensive in qualitative analysis. The creator of NVivo, QRS International, offers a set of tools to answer 'why' and 'how' questions through an analysis process which consists of collecting and analyzing efficient references from the various formats of databases. Specifically, the five descriptive benefits of using NVivo in research are: managing data; managing ideas; querying from simple to complex questions; building a graphic model; and reporting qualitative data (Bazeley, 2007). These benefits are built on several computerized techniques, such as text and phase retrievers, code, and code-based theory builders. The latest version used, NVivo 8, provides a powerful tool to enable deep insights into multiple aspects of people's perceptions, behaviours, concerns and cultures. In fact, the wide use of NVivo to analyse qualitative data or to review literature is mentioned by many academics (di Gregorio, 2000; Bazeley, 2003; 2009; Bandara, 2006).

Limitations and other issues connected with employing this software for qualitative data analysis must be considered seriously (Fielding and Lee, 1998; Gibbs, 2002; Bazeley, 2007). Firstly, the danger of 'closeness and distance', which means being distant from the paper-based data, creates a problem for the researcher to manipulate the content of coded or retrieved text (Gibbs, 2002; Bazeley, 2007). The second issue is that the domination of the code and retrieve method will tend to focus rather more on the database and may neglect other data (Richards and Richards, 1998; Bazeley, 2007). Finally, the fear of a positivist approach (counting) leads to the misperception of

the purpose of interpretive paradigms. However, the researcher made her decision to use computer analysis based on the view that all people should build and improve their own skills.

The researcher was aware of these concerns and the use of this software was considered critically, examining the advantages and disadvantages mentioned earlier. In addition, the benefit of avoiding the time-consuming and labour intensive manual approach urged the researcher to apply the software.

3.4.3 The combination of Template Analysis and NVivo package

When considering the implications of using both template and quality data analysis software, the advantages of combining research methods were recognised (Gable, 1994; Kaplan and Duchon, 1988). According to Kaplan and Duchon, (1998, p.575), this marriage “provides a richer, contextual basis for interpreting and validation results”. As a consequence, it was decided to employ the multi-method pattern in this study. King (2004b, p.266) suggests that the assistance of computerization helps to resolve “complex coding schemes and large amount of text, facilitating depth and sophistication of analysis”.

The rationale behind this approach is based on the advantages of computerized tool NVivo in terms of flexible searching, storing and restructuring functions of information. For example, during the data analysis, the task of manually inserting a new theme in template analysis can be replaced by utilizing many functional options of NVivo packages, such as *Adding Nodes*, *Creating Nodes While Coding*, and *Let NVivo Create Notes for You*³² (which can be seen in detail in Appendix Q). A further use of ‘open codes’ (Shaw, 1999) was employed by using Free Nodes when new codes appeared during the data analysis. Most importantly, tracking the changes of code order when using a template is seen as the most difficult task, owing to the rich quality of interview data. Another advantage of this software is its support in creating the relationships between relevant themes; subsequently, these can be managed and used to verify the theoretical pre-assumptions.

As mentioned earlier, a template has been used as a key structure in the data analysis. The laborious task of manually performing the analysis, involving coding and ordering of a larger number of texts, was carried out with the aid of NVivo package’s capacity in order to identify key terms used in the two methods. Table 3-6 shows several principal terms, techniques or concepts used in the analysis process. This may help readers with the subsequent descriptions of the data analysis procedures given in this section.

³² Words in italics represent particular functions of NVivo software.

Table 3-6. A comparison of terms used in template analysis and NVivo 8 packages

	Template analysis	NVivo 8 glossary	Examples of the template in this research
Coding	The process of identifying themes in accounts and attaching labels (codes) to index them.	Selecting source content and defining it as belonging to a particular topic or theme	
Theme	Recurrent features of participant's accounts which characterize particular perceptions and/or experiences which the researcher sees as relevant to the research topic		Factors influencing the success of SA implementation (Theme 3)
Typology of codes	Code: an identified topic or label attached to a section of text to index it as relating to a theme or issue	Node: <i>A container for a theme or topic within the researchers' data</i>	
	Higher-order code (i.e. priori theme)	Tree nodes : <i>Nodes that are organized in a hierarchical structure moving from a general category at the top (the parent node) to more specific categories (child nodes)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Individual impacts ii. Organisational resources
	Lower-order code (i.e. second order code, third order code)	<p>Parent Node: <i>A top tree node or case which is above other nodes in a hierarchy.</i></p> <p>Child Node: <i>A node below a parent node</i></p>	<p>Individual impacts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Scoring b. Awareness/understanding c. Attitude and psychology

Table 3-6 (continued). A comparison of terms used in template analysis and NVivo 8 packages

	Template analysis	NVivo 8 glossary	Examples of the template in this research
	Theme and sub-theme	Free nodes: <i>A 'stand-alone' node that has no clear logical connection with other nodes and does not easily fit into a hierarchical structure.</i>	Time for training SA
		Relationship: <i>A node that defines the connection between two project items.</i>	The relationship between 2 nodes ('Lack of understanding' leads to 'Inaccuracy')
Transcript	Transcript of interviewee	Case: <i>A node with attributes such as gender or age. In this study, case refers to particular interviewee.</i>	
Others	The background of interviewee: age, position	Attributes: <i>A classification of case, such as gender, age, position or location.</i>	<i>Positional level=TOP MANAGEMENT</i>

Sources: King (2004); Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, (2007); Waring and Wainwright (2008), QSR Guideline 2010

Steps in the Interview Data Analysis:

As mentioned above, King (2004b) recommends that the complete analysis process should involve two main steps:

- Developing the template
- Interpreting and presenting the template analysis.

It is crucial to be aware that the two steps act separately and developing the template occurs in the analysis of texts (King, 2004b). However, they will be displayed here in a hierarchy for better presentation. In the following sections, two steps of the data analysis process are presented.

3.4.3.1 Step 1: Developing the template

King (2009) suggests that there are four tasks which need to be completed in this step. Table 3-7 summarises these four tasks, along with the work undertaken by the researcher.

Table 3-7. Developing the template

Task	King's suggested activities	Researcher's activities
(a) Creating preliminary coding which emphasis on priori themes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Read through text without coding - Highlight material of possible relevance - Err on side of inclusivity - May use some a priori themes (depending on methodological approach) 	<p><u>Step 1</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Employed the research framework with the emerged issues - Embedded all transcripts prepare coding
(b) Clustering codes helps in constructing meaningful relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meaningful, not 'logical' grouping of themes - Begin to define hierarchical relationships between clusters - May sometimes also be helpful to consider lateral relationships 	<p><u>Step 1</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identified key words used as codes - Defined and coded <i>Relationships</i> based on critical review of literature

Table 3-7 (continued). Developing the template

Task	King's suggested activities	Researcher's activities
(c) Producing an initial template as an aid for interpreting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - May be based on sub-set of transcripts - Need to balance inclusivity and clarify of template - Remember – template is an aid to the researcher's interpretation of data, not an end in itself 	<p><u>Step 1</u></p> <p>Issued a template to serve for interviews and data analysis</p>
(d) Modifying the template	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Iterations of modifying and applying template - Insert new themes - Delete unwanted themes - Change scope of themes - Change high-order classification of themes 	<p><u>Step 1 and 2</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Modified the initial template into the second and the final one - More details in Table 3-6 and Appendix Q of further advanced techniques in NVivo 8

Source: Adapted from Nigel King, Template analysis training, 2009

The initial template was developed based on the conceptual research framework outlined in section 2.6.3. The initial template was constructed with two-order contents (higher and lower with themes and subthemes), using contents mainly from literature and the researcher's knowledge. The initial template appeared simply to focus on the emergent issues of the research objectives. The simplicity of this template structure helped the researcher to become familiar with the key themes. Additional themes were added in the next step when approaching the actual transcripts.

Preliminary coding was conducted to attribute priorities for the template. The first order – priori themes were seen as concurrent with the objectives of the current research. For instance, parts 1 and 2 of the template answer the first research aim, *to evaluate the usefulness of the BEM using the self-assessment approach in Vietnamese enterprises*. Similarly, parts 3 and 4 of the template fulfil the two objectives of this study to explore implementation issues and the potential for application of BEM in Vietnamese organisations.

Figure 3-8. The initial template

- 1. THE BENEFITS OF SA USING THE EFQM QUESTIONNAIRE (Theme 1)**
 - a) Intended benefits of SA using the EFQM questionnaire (according to the EFQM)*
 - b) Other possible benefits (suggsted by general SA literature)*

- 2. THE USEFULNESS OF SA USING THE EFQM QUESTIONNAIRE IN HELPING TO IMPROVE THE COMPANY'S PERFORMANCE (Theme 2)**

- 3. FACTORS INFLUENCING THE SUCCESS OF SA IMPLEMENTATION (Theme 3)**
 - a) Individual impacts*
 - b) The influence of organisational management resources*
 - c) The influence of organisational management culture*
 - d) The influence of Vietnamese national culture*
 - e) Advantages/disadvantages of SA process*
 - f) Key success factors*

- 4. THE POTENTIAL OF IMPLEMENTING THE EFQM SA IN VIETNAM (Theme 4)**
 - a) SA-EFQM is useful for Vietnamese organisations*
 - b) Suggestion for implementing SA in Vietnam*

Source: Developed by the researcher

As can be seen in Figure 3-8, the initial template was refined using the contents of the conceptual research framework. As stated by academics, a theoretical framework helps to effectively identify predefined codes (King, 2004b) and potential major codes (Eisenhart, 1989; Miles and Huberman, 1994).

Regarding the defining and hierarchical coding in this study, Tables 3-8, 3-9, 3-10 and 3-11 summarise emerging themes and relevant NVivo nodes used for data analysis. In the adoption of the research framework, features of the template were easily adhered to in higher and lower-order levels of the nodes scheme.

Table 3-8. Subthemes and NVivo nodes for analysing Theme 1 (The usefulness of SA using the EFQM questionnaire)

Theme 1	Subtheme	Nodes in NVivo
The benefits of SA using the EFQM questionnaire	(a) Confirm the intended benefits of SA using the EFQM questionnaire	1a-Intended-benefit³³
	<i>Benefit (a): Help the organisation identify its current position and determine future directions and priorities</i>	1a-a_help...
	<i>Benefit (b): Allow comparisons with the achievements of other organisations</i>	1a-b_allow...
	<i>Benefit (c): Encourage the organisation to monitor its progress on a regular basis</i>	1a-c_encourage...
	<i>Benefit (d): Assess whether all members of a management team have the same view of the organisation's achievements and weaknesses</i>	1a-d_assess...
	<i>Benefit (e): Create a focus for agreeing improvement priorities</i>	1a-e_create...
	<i>Benefit (f): Ensure that the organisation is not over-stressed by too many improvement actions</i>	1a-f_ensure...
	<i>Most important benefit</i>	1a_most ...
	(b) Confirm possible benefits supported by general SA literature	1b_other benefits

³³ Nodes in bold type represent parent nodes, otherwise child nodes are referred

Table 3-9. Subthemes and NVivo nodes for analysing Theme 2

Theme 2	Subtheme	Nodes in NVivo	Propositions
The usefulness of SA-EFQM in helping to improve the company's performance	<i>SA-EFQM helps to improve the company's performance(via management perception)</i>	2a-useful	The application of SA using the EFQM questionnaire helps to improve the case company's performance
	<i>SA-EFQM helps to improve the company's performance(via actual improvement actions)</i>	2b-evidence	
	<i>Not useful/Limitations</i>	2c-limitation	

The generic assumption of Theme 2 is that the application of a bespoke SA tool, the EFQM questionnaire, benefits organisational performance. In Tables 3-10 and 3-11, the details of themes and subthemes employed are provided in order to highlight theoretical propositions of the current study.

Table 3-10. Subthemes and NVivo nodes for analysing Theme 3

Theme 3	Subtheme	Nodes in NVivo
Factors influencing the success of SA implementation	(a) Individual impacts (effect on the degree of accuracy of SA outcome)	3a_Individual impacts
	<i>Scoring</i>	3a1_scoring
	<i>Understanding/Awareness</i>	3a2_understanding
	<i>Attitude and psychological impacts</i>	3a3_attitude 3a3_psychological impacts

Table 3-10 (continued): Subthemes and NVivo nodes for analysing Theme 3

Theme 3	Subtheme	Nodes in NVivo
Factors influencing the success of SA implementation	(b)The influences of organisational management resources	3b_organisational resources
	<i>Quality management experiences</i>	3b1_quality experience
	<i>Top commitment</i>	3b2_top commitment
	<i>Education and training</i>	3b3_training
	<i>Communication (information sharing)</i>	3b4_communication
	(c)The influences of organisational management culture	3c_organisational management culture
	(d)The influences of the Vietnamese culture	3d_Vietnamese cultural impacts
	(e) Advantages and difficulties of implementation	3e1_Advantage 3e2_Disadvantages
	(f)Key success factor	3f_key factor

Table 3-11. Subthemes and alternative nodes for analysing in Theme 4

Theme 4	Subtheme	Nodes in NVivo	Propositions
The potential of SA-EFQM in the context of Vietnamese organisations	(a)EFQM SA is useful for Vietnamese organisations		The application of SA using the EFQM questionnaire is supposed in helping to improve the Vietnamese enterprises' performance
	- In general	4a1_useful in VN in general	
	- In certain conditions	4a2_useful in certain conditions	
	(b)Suggestions for implementing SA in Vietnam	4b_suggestions	

The revision of the template continued along with data analysis until it reached a point of saturation, as suggested by King (2009). The data analysis across all transcripts contributed several new emergent themes (nodes) not mentioned in the academic fields of the research framework. As a result, systematic and logical chains of evidence were constructed, based on the template structure. It also affected the revision of the existing template.

In reality, the repetition of some key words may have occurred a certain number of times with a few different respondents (1 - 2 persons). The scenario supported the exclusion of irrelevant information and rearrangement of the later template. The review of twenty transcriptions was completed to confirm the final template, which can be found in Figure 3-9.

Figure 3-9. The final template

Theme 1. The usefulness of SA using the EFQM questionnaire

- a. Confirm the 6 intended benefits of SA-EFQM
 - a. *Help the organization identify its current position and determine future directions and priorities*
 - b. *Allow comparisons with the achievements of other organisations.*
 - c. *Encourage the organisation to monitor its progress on a regular basis.*
 - d. *Assess whether all members of a management team have the same view of the organisation's achievements and weaknesses*
 - e. *Create a focus for agreeing improvement priorities*
 - f. *Ensure that the organisation is not over-stressed by too many improvement actions*
- b. Confirm possible benefits (among 5 categories) supported by general SA literature
 - 1. *Improving business results and driving improvement focus.*
 - 2. *Benefiting organisational culture*
 - 3. *Improving process management*
 - 4. *Providing benchmarking opportunities*
 - 5. *Improving strategic planning*

Theme 2. The usefulness of SA-EFQM in helping to improve the company's performance

Confirming the usefulness of SA using the EFQM questionnaire in helping to improve the company's performance (through management perception or through improvement actions).

Theme 3. Factors influencing the success of SA implementation

- a. **Individual impacts** on the degree of accuracy of the SA outcome
 - 1. *Scoring*
 - 2. *Awareness/understanding*
 - 3. *Attitude and psychological impacts*
- b. The influences of **organisational resources**
 - 1. *Quality management experiences*
 - 2. *Top commitment*
 - 3. *Education and training*
 - 4. *Communication*
- c. The influences of organisational management culture
- d. The influences of the Vietnamese culture
- e. Advantages and difficulties of implementation the EFQM tool
- f. Key success factors

Theme 4. The potential of implementing EFQM self-assessment in Vietnam

- a. SA-EFQM is useful for Vietnamese organisations: in general; in certain conditions; difficult to deploy
- b. Suggestions for implementing SA in Vietnam

3.4.3.2 Step 2: Interpretation and Presentation

For this step, King (2009) suggests two tasks that need to be fulfilled: *interpreting findings* and *writing up* sets of cases. This is in addition to *quality checks* made by peers to increase validity and reliability. In line with the quality data analysis method (Miles and Huberman, 1994), three major steps including data reduction, data display and conclusion drawing/verification were employed to connect with the two tasks mentioned by King (2009). To provide details of what the researcher did in this step, each step will be explored in the subsequent sections.

Data reduction

According to Miles and Huberman (1994, p.10), data reduction is “the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying and transforming the data that appears in written up field notes or transcriptions”. In this study, this step actually occurred continually when the researcher selected the case studies, transcribed interviews, coded the text, confirmed the agreement/disagreement, and decided on adding or reducing. For example, under the *understanding* node/code of the key factor *Individual impacts*, there were several possible emerging themes, including *easy understanding*; *lacking of understanding/not easy to understand*; and *fully understood*. Data reduction still occurred until relatively strong topics and themes emerged in order to explain the research question.

In this step, the coding of data, which refers to the process of spotting relevant themes and putting together labels to index them (King, 2004b), was carried out with the support of the qualitative software package NVivo 8. With NVivo, instead of coding by hand and using highlighting for template analysis, it is easy to code directly, line by line, phrase by phrase, referring regularly to the constituted template and key codes/nodes. Coding of this kind is stored in the nodes system in the filing cabinet of the text. Furthermore, parallel coding (King, 2004b), implemented by coding the same chunk of text with two or more nodes, and is easily with the software.

Appendix Q shows a list of the main functions used in the process of coding text-based material. The table in this appendix goes on to describe the equivalent functions in NVivo software.

Using the node list in four tables, Tables 3-8 to 3-11, plus a combination of listening over and over to the tapes and reading and re-reading the respective transcripts as mentioned by Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Lowe (2002), King (2004b) and Colgate and Norris (2001), enabled the researcher to undertake reliable data reduction analysis. Data reduction continued until all data had been coded and allocated into the separate four major themes of the study. The summarised findings of the four themes were displayed with the support of many matrices, as described in the next step.

Figure 3-10. Sample of transcript of manager A9 in Company A to illustrate coding

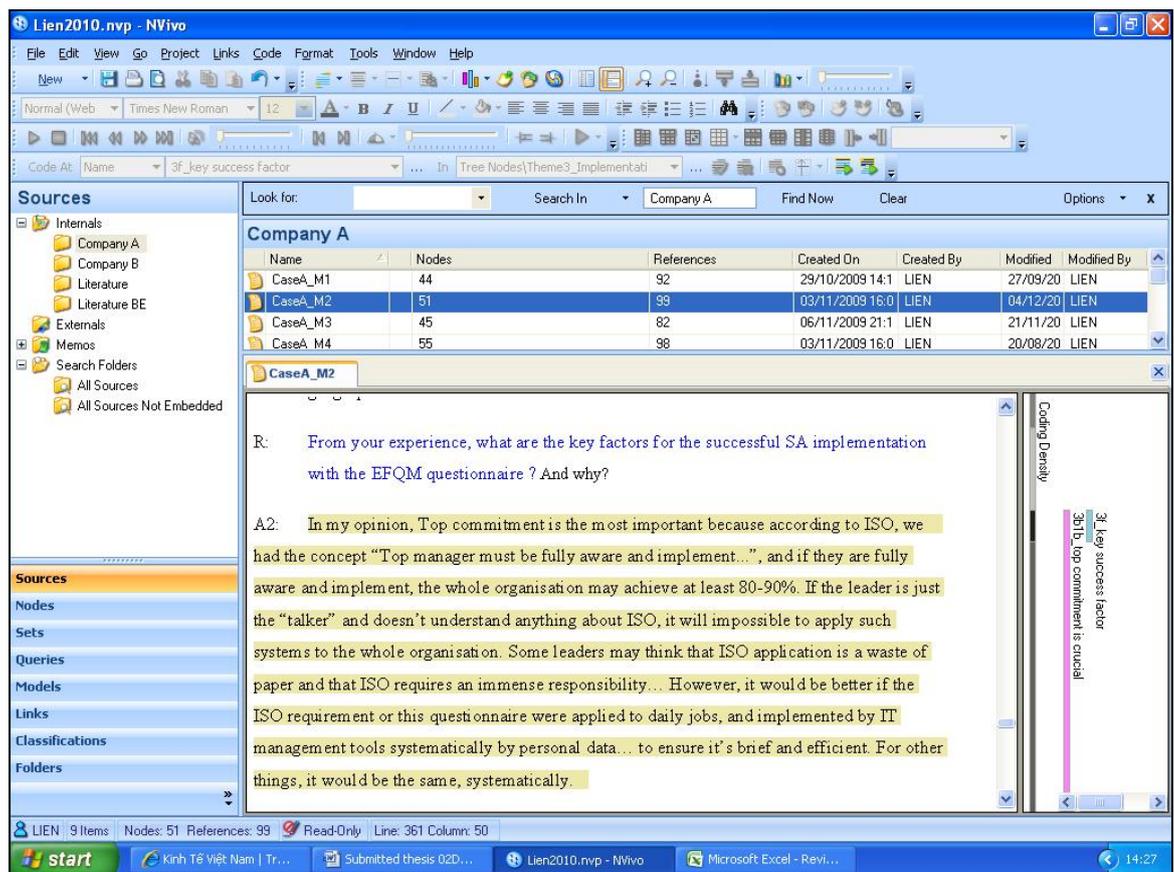


Figure 3-10 illustrates the coding and striping (presentation of coding stripes) of several nodes of a sample from transcript manager A9 in Company A. Appendix S shows the final tree node report.

Data display

The second step of the data analysis is “an organized, compressed assembly of information that permits conclusion drawing and action” (Miles and Huberman, 1994, p.11). To put it another way, this is a middle step which uses the output data and displays them visually or diagrammatically in a range of matrices, flow charts, networks or diagrams. The purpose of this middle step is to display data to assist with drawing conclusions in the final step of the process (Miles and Huberman, 1994) and to enhance the understanding of the phenomenon (Punch, 2005). The advantage of these matrices is that they potentially reduce poorly-ordered ‘extended text’ which is obtained from qualitative interviews, in order to develop analytical thoughts easily (Miles and Huberman, 1994).

To achieve the data display, a range of matrices was used to allow recognition of emergent themes/subthemes. Table 3-12 is an example of a matrix used for analysing Theme 1.

Table 3-12. An example of generic matrix of Themes 1 in departmental group in Company A

The confirmation of the benefits of the EFQM questionnaire SA	Total confirmed interviewees	Number of references					Total
		Manager A2	Manager A3	Manager A4	Manager A5	Manager A9	
<i>Confirm the intended benefits</i>							
Benefit (a) <i>Help the organisation identify its current position and determine future directions and priorities</i>	3/5	0	2	1	0	3	6
Benefit (b) <i>Allow comparisons with the achievements of other organisations.</i>	2/5		1		1		2
Benefit (c) <i>Encourage the organisation to monitor its progress on a regular basis</i>	1/5				1		1
Benefit (d) <i>Assess whether all members of a management team have the same view of the organisation's achievements and weaknesses</i>	3/5		2		2	1	5
Benefit (e) <i>Create a focus for agreeing improvement priorities</i>	1/5	2					2
Benefit (f) <i>Ensure that the organisation is not over-stressed by too many improvement actions</i>	0						0

As illustrated in Table 3-12, the data of each transcript that reflected specific benefits of SA against the EFQM Excellence Model were identified and clustered into certain group, such as benefit (a). Subsequently, the quantity of selected evidence was counted and exhibited in the matrix by 'number of evidences'. Table 3-13 shows how the emergent themes among different management levels in the case companies can be displayed. Such matrix displays as seen in Tables 3-12 and 3-13 constitute major components of the research framework and allow for further analysis in subsequent steps.

Table 3-13. A matrix of combination of key findings among different management group in case company

	Top management	Department management	Manufacturing management
Theme 1: <i>The benefits of SA using the EFQM questionnaire</i>			
Theme 2: <i>Confirming the usefulness of SA-EFQM in helping to improve the company's performance</i>			
Theme 3: <i>Factors influencing the success of SA implementation</i> +Individual impact +Organisational resource impact +Organisational cultural impact + National cultural impact			
Theme 4: <i>The potential of implementing EFQM SA in Vietnam</i>			

Conclusion Drawing and Verification

The final step of the analysis framework, conclusion drawing (Miles and Huberman, 1994, p.11) “describes the meanings that emerge from the data which have to be tested for their validity”. Within-case and cross-case strategies (Miles and Hubermans, 1994) have been employed to compare manager perspectives from within the same management group, within the same company and also between companies. By comparing the results of the matrix displays, similarities, differences and causal explanations have emerged and assisted in establishing thematic relationships (Shaw, 1999). It has also helped with drawing conclusions inductively along with developing the related theoretical model. Whilst interview transcripts were primary data, some of the quantitative SA results were used to help better understand or to confirm the interview data. Key findings of the within-case and cross-case strategies are displayed in matrices in subsequent chapters.

3.5 Credibility of Research Methods

In line with the research strategy, credibility issues need to be addressed. Raimond (1993, p.35) summarises this issue in a simple question: “How can I know?” To answer this, the two following sections will explore reliability and validity.

3.5.1 Reliability

As part of the research design, in order to achieve consistency and reliability, appropriate methods were employed that matched with selected phases of the study. Table 3-14 summarises the methods used to ensure the quality of the current research findings.

Table 3-14. The methods of reliability of research design

Major methods selected	Tactics used	Descriptions	Phase of research in which methods is used
Case study	EFQM SA feedback	Used a primary input for semi-structured interview	SA-EFQM
Interviews	Avoiding bias (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2007; Healey and Rawlinson, 1994; Flick, 2009) in several issues (sensitive themes, the authenticity of narrative transcripts, misunderstanding)	Interviews were conducted based on both individual results of SA-EFQM separately and the whole company. The sensitive questions, normally related to financial situation or confidentiality of company were ignored in the interview. Moreover, the questions mentioned about the concept/terminology definition/meaning were given during the interviews to evaluate the adequacy of the interpretation. The combination of template and NVivo package was applied to enhance the validity of data analysis	Semi-structured interviews Interviews and Data transcribing Data analysis

Table 3-14 (continued). The methods of reliability of research design

Major methods selected	Tactics used	Descriptions	Phase of research in which methods is used
Interviews	Eyeballing (Colgate and Norris, 2001)	To be improve the validity of data analysis through the quality of final template and matrices.	Data analysis
Template analysis	The initial and final template	Create consistency from the beginning of the project by relying on the research framework, until drawing conclusions.	Data collection Data analysis

3.5.2 Validity

Since the primary source of this research was qualitative interview data, generalisability (external validity) is a concern. This issue refers to the generalisable characteristic of the research findings — can they be applied to other settings (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2007). This study employed a case study strategy, which is not that good for generating theories. However, to achieve validity the researcher focussed on ensuring there was a strong and robust research design; consistency in the data analysis process through the support of powerful software; purposive sampling for the interviews; and the confirmation of interviewees about the accuracy of transcript. The validity of each technique used in the study is explored briefly in Table 3-15 below.

Table 3-15. The methods used to ensure the validity of the research design

	Methods used	Description	Phase of research in which method was used
Case studies	Interview sampling	Purposive sampling (Neuman, 2000; Barbour, 2001; Zinkmund <i>et al.</i> , 2010) was employed with top and senior managers in each case company.	Data collection
Interviews	NVivo qualitative analysis software	List of free nodes and tree nodes were reviewed several times by both the researcher and the supervisor.	Data analysis (Coding – Conclusion drawing)
		Enhance the validity of analysis and findings in general.	Data analysis

3.6 Ethical considerations

Ethical issues arise whenever data has to be collected from organisations and human beings. Punch (2005) states that revealing the names and other information about subjects and organisations without obtaining informed consent may give rise to ethical problems. Principal ethical issues, such as consent, the study's voluntary nature, confidentiality and anonymity arose during different phases of the current study. During the research process, ethical concerns were addressed as follows:

Conducting the SA-EFQM

The researcher obtained official approvals from the CEOs of the case study organisations. This was achieved by sending an introductory letter from the researcher's supervisor, and a letter from the sponsor of the researcher, the Committee of Ho Chi Minh City.

Confidentiality and anonymity were stressed, and the top management of the two case study organisations were assured that the findings of the research would be used merely for academic objectives. At the beginning of the research, all participants were assured of the confidential nature of the research. Furthermore, feedback about the EFQM SA results was sent directly to each respondent. The CEOs were not provided with individual results. All participants and each company as a whole were fully informed about confidential issues.

Conducting the interviews

According to Miles and Huberman (1994), all personal and organisational information should be anonymous and confidential. Hence, both *Participant* and *Organisation Research Informed Consent* forms were signed by interviewees and the CEOs of the companies, or their representatives.

The researcher adhered to the Northumbria University Ethical Policy and Guidelines throughout the entire research. This includes a guarantee of anonymity (with no identification of participants or organisations) in both the publication of the thesis and any subsequent articles. Also, all materials have been secured in a safe place.

3.7 Limitations of the Research Strategy and Methods

Parkhe (1993) argues that the limitations of the major methods used in a study should be addressed. Although the researcher made every effort to maintain reliability and credibility, a few

limitations exist. Firstly, the research is based on two case organisations, so the results cannot be generalised (Eisenhardt and Graebner, 2007). Secondly, translating the questionnaire from the original EFQM BEM materials into the Vietnamese language possibly created some difficulties. As this research required the use of two languages (English and Vietnamese), the researcher spent huge amounts of time translating the SA questionnaire, as well transcribing and translating the interview data.

3.8 Summary

This chapter has explored the research strategy and attempted to justify its appropriateness. The interpretivist view adopted in this study is quite appropriate for the chosen research question. Fundamentally, an interpretivist approach is well-suited for flexibility. Additionally, detailed explanations have been made to justify the techniques used in the methodological approach, comprising case studies, semi-structured interviews and template analysis. The primary data used for this study came from interviews after completing SA using the EFQM questionnaire in two Vietnamese textile and garment companies.

In the data analysis section, the combination of template analysis and qualitative software NVivo 8 to assist in drawing conclusions has been justified. In particular, detailed descriptions of constructing, developing and using the template, based on the conceptual framework described in Chapter 2, have been mentioned.

CHAPTER 4. THE DATA ANALYSIS OF CASE COMPANY A

4.0 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to present the analysis and findings of the first case study with respect to Company A. An in-depth discussion of the application of the SA in Company A is considered in answering the research question.

This chapter starts with an overview of company's profile in section 4.1. The examination of results collected from SA using the EFQM questionnaire in this company are shown briefly in section 4.2. In the following sections, the analysis and comparison of interview data are presented following by different management groups: top, senior departmental and manufacturing. The purpose of this is to illustrate the various perspectives of management groups. For each group, four dominant themes (see section 3.4.3.1) are used to structure the analysis. They are:

- The benefits of SA using the EFQM questionnaire (theme 1)
- The usefulness of SA using the EFQM questionnaire in helping to improve organisational performance (theme 2)
- Factors influencing the success of SA implementation (theme 3)
- The potential of implementing EFQM SA in Vietnam (theme 4)

At the end of this chapter, a brief summary of the key findings in Company A is presented in the form of a diagram and matrix. This diagram and matrix also enable cross-case comparison of the two companies in Chapter 6.

4.1 Company A profile

Company A is a textile and garment joint-stock company which is a member of the Vietnam National Textile Garment Corporation (VINATEX). This company was established in 2004 with the re-structuring of the original company founded in 1988. Currently, the stated-owned capital of A is 56.62%. The company's head office and all its manufacturing sites are located south of Hue, the central city of Vietnam's middle region. Company A has a staff of approximately 2,600 who are supervised by 28 executive managers. Only 8 % of the staff are educated to college level or above. By 31 October 2009, Company A comprised primary production factory-members as follows: the knitting - dyeing mill, the spinning mill and the garment factory.

More details of Company A, including the company structure, can be found in Appendix R.

4.2 The brief analysis of the EFQM questionnaire results in Phase 1

The EFQM questionnaire was undertaken in Company A. The summary of the respondents of the EFQM SA questionnaire in Company A can be found in Table 4-1.

Table 4-1. The response of questionnaire undertaking in Company A

<i>POSITIONAL LEVEL</i>	<i>RESPONDENTS</i>	Number of distributions	Number of participants	% response	% contribute to the total
TOP	Board of Directors (BOD)	4	4	100%	14.8%
SENIOR	Departmental Managers	15	15	100%	55.6%
	Manufacturing Directors	8	8	100%	29.6%
TOTAL		<i>27</i>	<i>27</i>	100%	100%

Three key results of SA using the EFQM questionnaire (SA-EFQM), which were used as the basis for interviewing participants in the second phase, are described below. Full details of the questionnaire results can found in Appendix L.

4.2.1 Overall organisational performance

Table 4-2 shows the overall organisational performance is 64.88%.

Table 4-2. Overall performance of Company A against EFQM SA approach

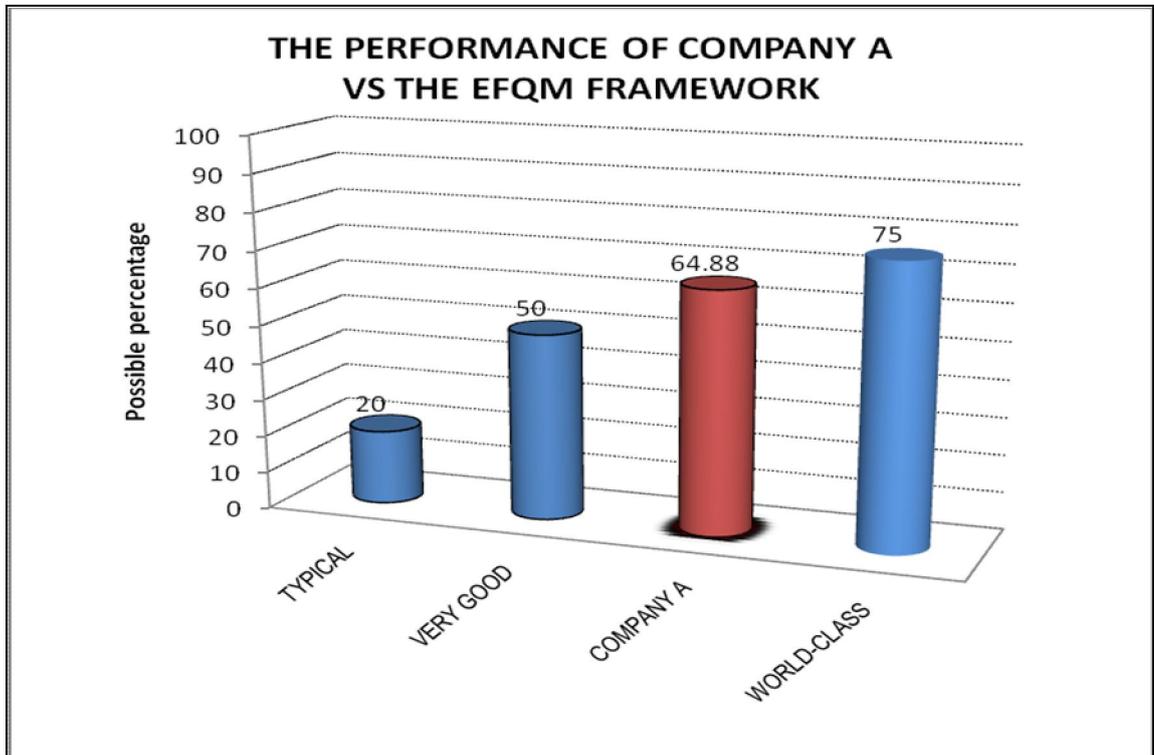
Category	Total scores	Scores	% of Total scores
Leadership	50	30.3	60.59
Policy and Strategy	40	26.5	66.19
People	50	32.2	64.44
Partnerships and Resources	50	32.4	64.81

Table 4-2 (continued). Overall performance of Company A against EFQM SA approach

Category	Total scores	Scores	% of Total scores
Processes	70	46.1	65.86
Customer Results	90	54.5	60.55
People Results	50	30.1	60.18
Society Results	30	21.6	71.90
Key Performance Results	70	48.6	69.39
Overall performance scores	500		64.88

As presented in Figure 4-1, the EFQM framework has three levels for performance, which include: Typical organisation (20%); Very good organisation (50%); and World-class organisation (75%). Company A's performance falls between Very good and World-class performance.

Figure 4-1. Overall percent score of Company A benchmarking the EFQM ranking framework



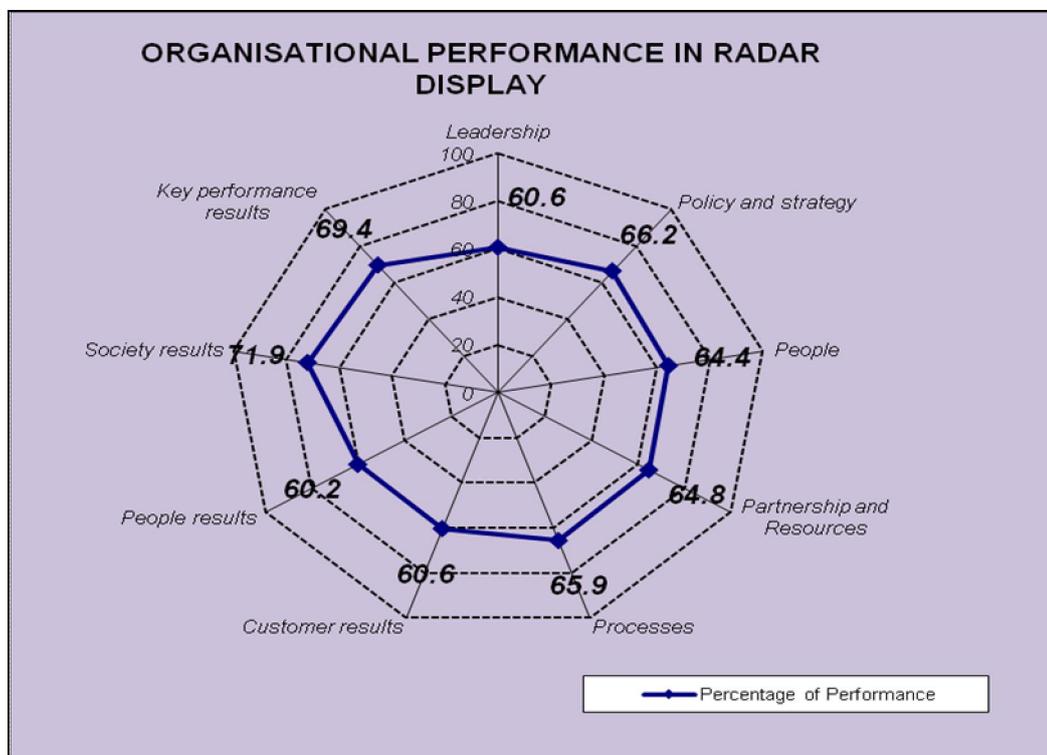
Source: Adapted by EFQM, *Determining Excellence: A questionnaire approach*.

4.2.2 Organisational performance based on SA-EFQM

To illustrate the strongest and weakest areas in terms of company's performance, performance scores are plotted to obtain a RADAR³⁴ display, as presented in Figure 4-2. According to the EFQM guidelines, the category which is close to the core area in the RADAR framework is suggested as the weak category and vice versa.

As presented in Figure 4-2, Society Results (71.9%) and Key Performance (69.4%) categories were potentially assessed as Company A's strengths, whilst People Results (60.2%); Leadership (60.6%) and Customer Results (60.6%) criteria might be company weaknesses.

Figure 4-2. Organisational performance of Company A in RADAR display



Source: Adapted by EFQM - *Determining Excellence: A questionnaire approach*.

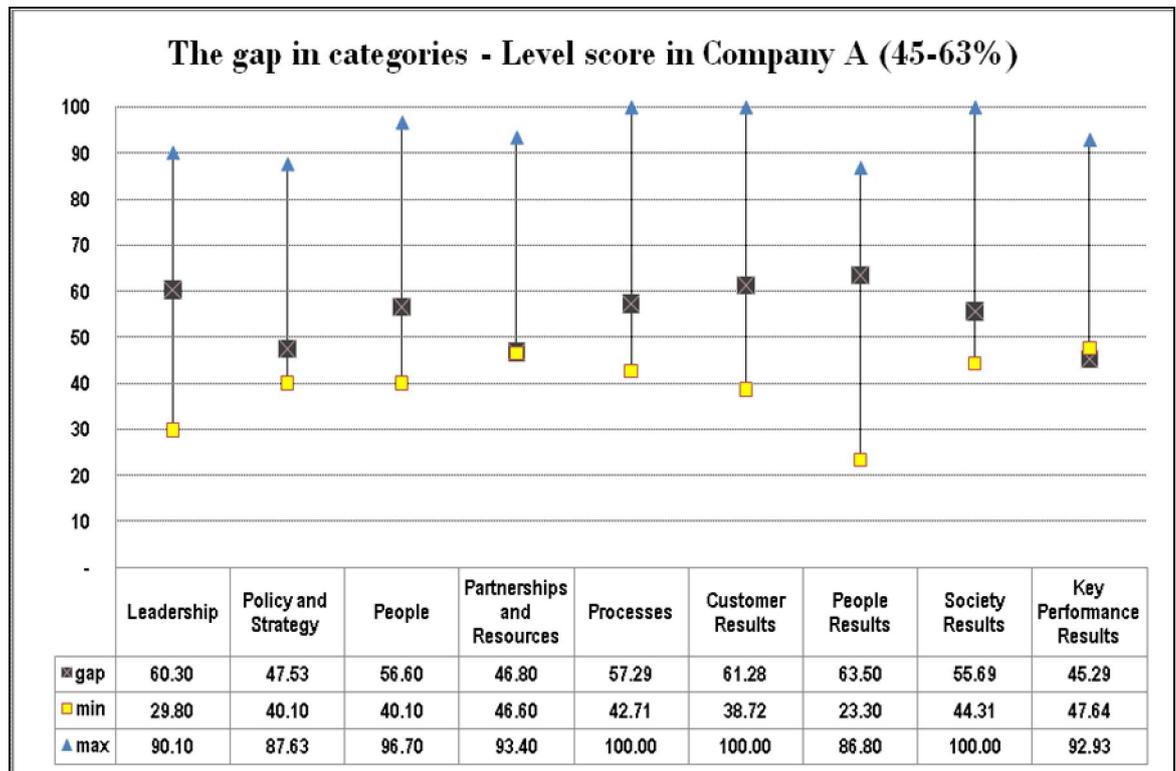
4.2.3 Variation in organisational performance

The third main finding from the outcome of SA-EFQM was the gap in scores among individual scores and overall score, and the tendency of different management groups.

³⁴ RADAR: Results-Approach- Deployment-Assessment and Review (EFQM, 1999-2003)

Figure 4-3 illustrates the assessment gap among participants in each EFQM criterion. There were two issues, firstly, the score gap between the minimum and maximum score e.g. the lowest gap (45%) occurred in Criterion 9 – Key Performance Results, and the highest (63%) occurred in Criterion 7 – People Results.

Figure 4-3. The scoring gap in organisational performance of Company A

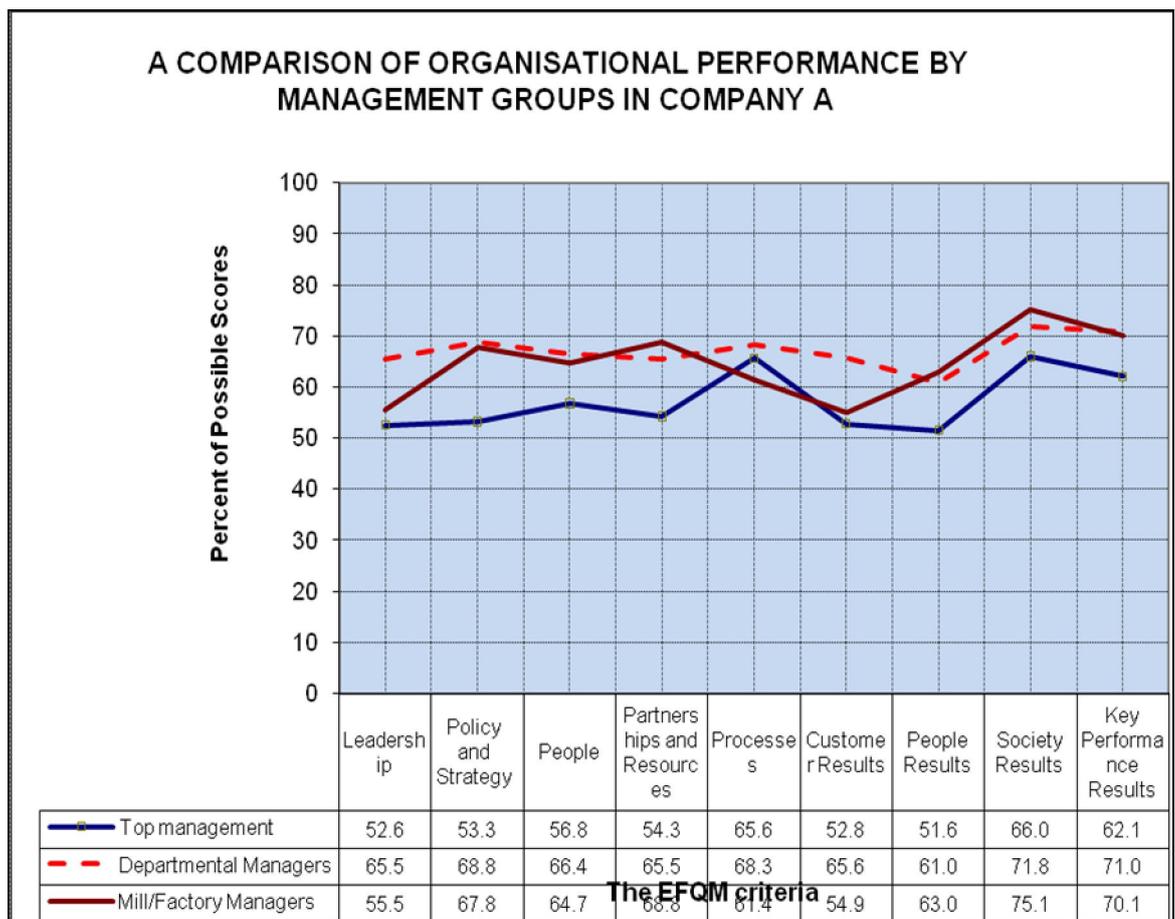


The huge gaps shown would suggest a scoring problem in Company A. For example, a score of 29.8% was the lowest in criterion Leadership is equivalent to ‘typical’ performance, while the highest score of 90.10% is recognised as ‘world class’.

Secondly, the maximum possible score of 100% was achieved in three categories: Processes, Customer Results and Society Results. It could be argued that there was over-scoring or unrealistic assessment of performance.

When comparing the average scores of management groups, which can be seen in Figure 4-4, there is no consistent view of performance. However, top management tends to score lower than other managers

Figure 4-4. Organisational performance by management groups



4.3 Interview Data Analysis (in Phase 2)

In this interview phase, the results of the EFQM questionnaire and the experience of managers who took part were used as the basis for interviews.

One person from top management (Board of Directors) took part in the interview phase. Five out of six departmental managers took part, with the exclusion of the Accounting department, and all manufacturing managers participated. Table 4-3 provides a summary of interview participants.

Table 4-3. Summary of interview participants in Company A

No	Interview no.	Position	Units	Number of participants	% contribute to the total (n=9)
TOP MANAGEMENT				1	11%
1	A1	Executive Director	<i>Deputy General Director and Executive Director</i>		
SENIOR DEPARTMENTAL MANAGEMENT				5	56%
2	A3	Deputy Manager	<i>Quality Assurance</i>		
3	A5	Manager	<i>Planning, Import and Export Dept.³⁵</i>		
4	A2	Manager	<i>Engineering Dept.</i>		
5	A4	Manager	<i>Trading (Sales) Dept.</i>		
6	A9	Manager	<i>Personnel - Administration Dept.</i>		
SENIOR MANUFACTURING MANAGEMENT				3	33%
7	A6	Deputy Director	<i>Spinning Mill</i>		
8	A7	Director	<i>Knitting- Dyeing Mill</i>		
9	A8	Director	<i>Garment Factory</i>		

4.3.1 The evaluation by top management

In the top management level, Deputy General Director (A1) participated in the interviews; he is responsible for ISO 9000, SA8000 and administrative issues within Company A. So, the data is based on the response of one top manager.

Theme 1: The benefits of SA using the EFQM questionnaire

(i) Confirmation of the intended benefits of SA-EFQM

Based on the six original benefits provided by the EFQM questionnaire which are mentioned in Chapter 3, **benefit a** and **benefit d** were mainly recognised by this respondent.

³⁵ Dept. is shorted for Department

Benefit a: Help the organisation identify its current position and determine future directions and priorities.

In the first recognised benefit, this top leader admitted the usefulness of SA in identifying the current company's situation. This respondent commented:

In fact, after the company's SA, we knew our company's situation, and how well we assessed ourselves... and we tried to seek detailed solutions to improve the situation

Benefit d: Assess all members of a management team have the same view of the organisation's achievements and weaknesses

This interviewee believed that there was an unexpected gap in assessing organisational performance among different managers in the company.

(ii) Confirmation of possible benefits suggested by the literature review

The interviewee reinforced in the following statements the benefit of highlighting the company strength, for instance Society Result criterion, truthfully:

Generally speaking, Society Results [criterion] is obvious. This is one of the strengths of our company...

...for socially oriented impacts in Society Results criterion, people score the same. It is obvious because many people score ... the same... in such points, and such a score presents the truth.

Furthermore, this director confirmed that Customer Results category was his company's weakness:

Yes, that's true! ... Identifying customers is not yet [accomplished]... It is still vague.

Theme 2 Confirming the usefulness of SA-EFQM in helping to improve the company's performance

This respondent confirmed that the EFQM implementation results were 'quite good' and 'meaningful'. However, this interviewee showed his disappointment that SA-EFQM did not continue: "... I suppose that after previous assessment, ... such self assessment...was very

meaningful... I knew for sure ... But it turns out that it is no longer being implemented and nothing remains of the assessment”.

With respect to the general usefulness of the SA-EFQM in his company, Director A1 responded positively:

Although the assessment has not drawn a totally accurate picture, we still have some useful information. That’s why in spite of the inaccurate assessment of some people... we still know our weaknesses which need to be improved.

... this is just the point of views of the Board of Directors; we know that SA-EQFM will be perfect to apply..

This EFQM tool is obviously a novelty to our company, but when we put it into practice... it’s simple and accurate ...

Well, according to the Board of Directors, the idea is good. I mean the idea of continuously implementing such a questionnaire. And in fact, implementing it is quite easy ... not very difficult.

However, whilst this interviewee agreed the usefulness of SA-EFQM, he did not report any improvement actions.

Theme 3 Factors influencing the success of SA implementation

(i) *Individual impacts on the degree of accuracy of SA*

In the following sections, the elements of individual impact on the SA-EFQM results are analysed.

Scoring: Respondent A1 stated that results were ‘*mostly accurate*’ and ‘*acceptable*’.

His personal assessment score of organisational performance was the lowest of all participants, 47% compared to the 64% overall organisational score. The interviewee expresses dissatisfaction with high scores, even his own score. In his view, this inaccuracy was due to a lack of understanding by assessors. A1 commented:

People here haven’t completely understood the EFQM scoring standard...that’s why people scored highly. ...I myself in some cases scored a little bit highly too...they couldn’t allocate right points the criteria, and therefore they scored high.

this score cannot be my organisational [score]’it is too high!

Moreover, A1 stated that there was a relationship between a high score and the relevant accountability of the scorer:

... Those who are in certain positions tending to assess their position highly ... That's what I mentioned before! They always scored high in criteria which are close to their responsibilities.

According to this respondent, senior managers tended to score 'Emotionally' and 'They pay very cursory attention to the evidence'.

Awareness/understanding: During the interview, A1 thought that there existed difficulty in understanding SA concepts and principles. Mentioning why the final score of the company was too high, this interviewee presumed:

Why? Because of [lack of] awareness ... it is basically down to the individual's awareness.

The lack of awareness of respondents may lead to an incorrect organisational score:

Otherwise ... Suppose that people understood very well ... their assessment would be different ... If people had fully understood the concepts, they would have judged things differently.

One more time, A1 stressed that understanding for Vietnamese managers was not easy.

I think the advantage 'easy to implement' is true ... because as I've told you before basically this EFQM instrument is simple, but it is not totally easy to understand. It's true that there are some points which are easy to understand, but this doesn't mean that it is understood thoroughly! For instance, when I read through each question, I can tell you that they are all easy to understand, but in fact... not easy to understand them thoroughly

Attitude and psychological impacts: A1 argued that the participants' decisions were not made carefully enough: "I saw some people score hastily. They just had a glance then marked C or B emotionally". However, A1 suggested that his assessment was faithful: "But I am different. I scored Leadership [criterion] low".

Regarding psychological concerns, A1 indicated that there was a different perception in scoring, which was influenced by the Vietnamese educational system. For instance, a score of 7 out of 10 scores (70%) is believed as 'pretty good':

In people's perception a mark of 7 is considered 'pretty good'. So a 'pretty good' company should be scored 70%. Similarly 80% means 'good' and 90-100% means 'Excellent'

This explanation may support over-scoring phenomenon in Company A.

(ii) The influences of organisational management resources

A1 was very clear that company's resources contributed to the success of SA.

Quality management experience: A1 was responsible for quality implementation in the company. Though the company had possessed ISO certificates since 2003, there was much evidence of massive implementation obstacles:

Recently, there have been times when our company's ISO procedure has been ... ignored ... It was re-started a month ago: we've just reviewed it, and just finished the internal self assessment. We did almost nothing with it for the whole of the year 2008, and just kicked off at the beginning of 2009. We've just issued the adjusted objectives of the company quality policy.

An ineffective and formal quality management system:

Once we thought that the system was running well, we neglected it. Then, when we checked it over again, all the documentation was out-of-date, and the system was followed just by some people, and even such followers were just formalists. It is therefore obvious that such a system is meaningless...

It would be better if our company had a more careful person who was in operation rather than Mr. B [current ISO Secretary] who is often careless. Instead of consulting the Board of Directors, that guy couldn't make it ..., He should have investigated the matter and made a recommendation to the Directors. Meanwhile, the top management members are too busy to remind him all the time to follow the ISO procedures.

A comparison based on personal perception ... yes, we did compare. But a comparison with other competing organisations has not been done.

Based on his SA experience, the advantage of this SA tool for A1 was its simplicity. A1 stated that the EFQM questionnaire was "...quite simple, not too complicated while in the ISO system, the documentation is... a little bit lengthy".

Regarding experience of the VQA and other similar Vietnamese awards, A1 suggested that they resulted in negative feelings, easy to win:

.. in Vietnam, many awards are set up but in the end bring no benefit to companies.....

Of course it [the award] has some meaning here and there... But we were really tired of receiving requests for company introduction advertising from magazines, and newspapers... To sum up, joining such awards is costly and annoying.

These experiences were like to be obstacles to successful SA-EFQM in the company, and

potentially for SA in general.

Top commitment: With respect to the crucial factor affecting the success of SA, A1 reconfirmed that top commitment is vital:

In conclusion, the leaders' decision is very important.

In his view, top leaders support not only determines to the success of SA implementation but also the effectiveness of all the company's processes:

Basically it depends on the people at the top. That's why the Leadership category is very important, not only in an organisation, but also in all aspects of life

Education and training: Interviewee suggested there was a requirement for more time in training.

Communication: According to A1, internal communication was a major problem in the company.

In my opinion, these people have limited information.... They are not provided with sufficient data; therefore, they always think that the company is 'Good' in general.

Finally, regarding the adoption of the EFQM SA, although A1 indicated his company's "management competence is ok", he appeared to believe that it would be difficult to fully implements.

In conclusion, it's not easy... it's difficult to put the enhancement actions into practice. Even though sometimes we know, we can't do anything...

(iii) The influences of organisational management culture

One of the problems in management culture was related to resistance to change from the manager group, which already existed in this company.

Now,... our Directors are very strict about the implementation... they carried out the idea... very seriously... but when implementing at lower levels, there were some obstacles... This time, the General Director who is directly responsible for the Improvement Committee has also assigned Head of Administration and Personnel Department, to be the Secretary to collect all the documents and papers..

... it's not because people don't know, it's because people know but do not implement, or get stuck in the middle when implementing...

In reality, sometimes... we've thought of rotation, and such idea took too long to turn into reality

This interviewee also emphasised that there was a willingness to change from the Board of Directors relating to innovation and better behaviour among staff.

The idea is that a new manager means a new method of management. It remains for sometime only, then things will return to being inert as they used to be. Moreover, changes bring positive and innovative things such as the staff's behaviour towards a new boss. It is common sense that if there is a new boss in room, staff will try their best to be 'good' to gain good comments from their boss. They therefore change and improve themselves.

(iv) The influences of Vietnamese culture

A negative view was found in A1's conversation where a connection was made between the over-scoring tendency and national cultural characteristics. This interviewee stated that:

As I mentioned before, Vietnamese people are easy-going, and always give a good judgement when it comes to their own case.....it may be due to Vietnamese characteristics. They don't care about things that are not directly relevant to them, but for those things relevant, they will act differently...

This interviewee explained this problem by affirming the correlation between the over-score trend and relevant accountability of assessors:

that's what I mentioned before! They always scored high in criteria which are close to their responsibilities

Theme 4. The potential of implementing EFQM SA in Vietnam

Discussing the potential of using the EFQM self assessment in other Vietnamese organisations, this top leader definitely confirmed its usefulness with certain implementation conditions, such as focusing on training.

Actually... my first impression is that... it's very meaningful indeed... If we know how... it's very meaningful....I'd like to emphasise that if such assessment is applied more regularly in Vietnam, it would be good!

If it is implemented as it's primarily designed, it will surely help. In fact, to make the assessment more accurate, the company should organise efficient training, and the leaders have to ensure that the staff understand and understand thoroughly the entire questionnaire

And obviously, “based on such close-to-accurate results, we can point out the weaknesses which need to be improved. Surely this will bring advantages”. Once again, the usefulness of SA was highlighted “We have to know such things for adjustment in the future”.

To resolve scoring issues, A1 suggested: “Increasing the numbers may fit Vietnamese psychology’, ‘say 50-70-90% instead of the current standard 20-50-75%”, which may be “more suitable to the Vietnamese way of judging”.

4.3.2 The evaluation by departmental management

Participating managers included: Quality Manager (A3); Manager of Planning – Import and Export Department (A5); Sales Manager (A4); Engineering Manager (A2) and Manager of Personnel — Administration Department (A9).

Unlike a typical management structure, in which the Sales department deals with both international and regional customers, the Sales Department is responsible for domestic sales in textile commodities and the Planning – Import and Export Department is responsible for garment products.

Theme 1: The benefits of SA using the EFQM questionnaire

(i) Confirmation of the intended benefits of SA-EFQM

Among the pre-defined benefits provided by the EFQM SA questionnaire, respondents reported a number of benefits obtained with emphasis on improvement opportunities, including ‘Help the organisation identify its current position and determine future directions and priorities’ (benefit a); and ‘Assess whether all members of a management team have the same view of the organisation’s achievements and weaknesses’ (benefit d). These benefits were recognised by over 50 % of participants.

Benefit a: Help the organisation identify its current position and determine future directions and priorities. The data analysis in this section has been divided into 2 segments: (a1) *Helping the organisation identify its current position* and (a2) *Determining future directions and priorities.*

(a1) Helping the organisation identify its current position

Scoring revealed disagreement among the participants. The overall organisational score (64.88%) suggested a position halfway between the 50% performance of ‘Very good’ and the 75% ‘World-class’ level.

Sales Manager A4 considered this to be accurate:

I think that the overall outcome was accurate for my company. ... and it was ranked a 'Pretty Good' organisation. I thought that this rank quite accurately reflected my company's position ... My company ... is not really good, not very bad... it is in the middle – in the group of good companies. Therefore, that overall outcome was correct ... That final score reflects the situation quite accurately ... (A4)

Quality Manager (A3) and the Planning – Import and Export Department Manager (A5) agreed the assessment:

..., I thought that this score was quite suitable to my company's position (A3)

In answering the question relating to my company's position, I scored 'Pretty good' (A5)

When comparing with the EFQM scale, there appears to be a recognition gap. The company ranked itself 'Pretty good', whilst the actual score, according to the EFQM, was 'Very good'. This suggests that SA-EFQM may not be useful in determining the company's position.

On further discussion, some participants admitted that their overall score was not accurate:

According to the European scoring standards, the fact that our company belongs to the world class group isn't reasonable (A2)

So the final scores were not an accurate reflection of their actual scores... (A3)

... our company should be lower; (A5)

Yet alternative views were expressed:

In my opinion, the results are 'mostly accurate' firstly because all the managers in H. have a long working experience. ... The second reason is the management competency... Because of these two reasons, based on their understanding of the Company and their awareness; I think that the results were 'mostly accurate'. (A5)

And ... the people involved in the assessment process were those who had remained in the company for quite a long time, so their awareness of the company activities was therefore quite accurate. (A4)

Yet, A2 assumed that the final score of the whole company was accurate, yet low at 64.88%:

I would say they are accurate because they are low. I am sure that many people would think the same... (A2)

(a2) Determining future directions and priorities

The benefit of SA-EFQM in ‘determining future directions and priorities’ received 80% agreement, with the exception of the Planning – Import and Export Department:

After we had reached a clear understanding of the SA’s criteria, we were provided with the overall outcome and then we could figure out improvement priorities... then development and action would follow. (A3)

So, we should base them on the nine criteria’s results of the EFQM questionnaire ... therefore, a better systematic improvement plan could be made. (A9)

Benefit b: Allow comparisons with the achievements of other organisations;

There were few responses from the management group. Opinions were raised as to whether or not SA-EFQM could be used for benchmarking:

... because thanks to knowing our weaknesses and our position, we can compare our results with the results of other companies ... (A3)

It’s good to compare, but if we can’t do anything with it, it would be a waste of time to compare. We just strive to compete ... (A5)

Benefit c: Encourage the organisation to monitor its progress on a regular basis.

Only the Manager of the Planning, Import and Export Department (A5) agreed to this benefit and encouraged use of the SA “once a year” so as to avoid “boring people”.

Benefit d: Assess whether all members of a management team have the same view of the organisation’s achievements and weaknesses

There was agreement in three departments in regards to this benefit. The evaluations and feedback of other departments which “helped people to recognise their own viewpoints more clearly” (A3) were considered, and sometimes woke up managers in terms of their accountabilities and achievements.

Through the results of the questionnaire, I had the information about how others assessed the activities concerning my department and what is the difference in scores between us, what statements I and those from other departments disagreed about. That’s the way I use these results. Through these results, I learned about the assessment of my department. Without the results, I wouldn’t have had any idea about that. It helped me review my assessment in comparison with assessments of other departments in other groups (such as the manufacturing group). I saw the average score of the company about manufacturing group, then considered my scores to see if I was being subjective or not. (A5)

And there was a common voice among company units. They had an opportunity to express their ideas about a specific field. For example, people from one department expressed their ideas about other departments, and received feedback from other departments about theirs at the same time. Then they suddenly woke up and realised that they still had many things which needed to be improved. (A3)

This benefit received positive reactions from participants. Clearly, the benefit of the EFQM questionnaire in assessing the viewpoint of the management group was affirmed.

Benefit e. Create a focus for agreeing improvement priorities:

This benefit to “*create a focus for agreeing improving priorities*” was not strongly supported. There was only one positive agreement from A2:

We pay attention to the improvement rather than scores. ... We also focused on some weaknesses to improve..... These things stay at the end (of the The EFQM Excellence Model) but in fact they are the priority in the system that can be improved. (A2)

Benefit f. Ensure that the organisation is not over-stressed by too many improvement actions

There was no response in this benefit.

(ii) Confirmation of possible benefits suggested by the literature review

Two additional benefits of SA-EFQM arose from this group include identifying strengths and weaknesses — and improving the company competitiveness.

Pinpointing strong and weak areas was accepted by four out of five managers:

It is quite interesting to receive feedback through the results which are being shown on a RADAR diagram. People, therefore, could have an organisation's holistic picture and then make a comparison with their colleagues' awareness. These are some of the satisfactory points.... (A9)

A3 and A4, in particular, have affirmed that advantage of SA in recognising potential strengths and weaknesses in the company:

I felt most satisfied with the results review to reconfirm our company strengths and weaknesses ... After we had reached a clear understanding of those criteria, we were provided with the overall outcome and then we could figure out the improvement priorities ... then development and action would follow... Leadership [category] is our company's weakness. (A3)

I am most satisfied with the scoring stage because it presents the company's

breakthrough, strengths and weaknesses (A4)

A3 also provided the following reasoned comments based on her knowledge:

I think that in any company, Leadership plays a very important role in the company's strategic direction. In my company, leaders are not very good at dealing with information gathered; the quality of the top management team is not very high; and the quality of middle managers is not the same. That's why I think that Leadership is a weak criterion in my company. In the top management team, there are 4-5 people and one might think he is very competent, but not all of them are of the same capacity. It's the same with middle management team ...like me. We are different in terms of personal competence, dedication, enthusiasm, background...(A3)

Regarding another company's weakness, Customer Results criterion, has been acknowledged by Managers A3, A9, and A5.

Another weakness of the organisation is in Customer Results category. Actually, not everyone knows about this, so only some staff who spends most of their working time with customers might evaluate precisely. (A9)

Customer Results is also one of the primary responsibilities of the Sales department and department of Planning and Import - Export. But I think that the way people in those departments gather information, and analyse the competitors' capacity is neither reasonable nor useful. It is not up to date and doesn't resolve relevant problems ... [the way the company undertakes customer surveys]...kind of formal, and not at the right time ... (A3)

By contrast, Society Results and Key Performance Results criteria were assessed as organisational strengths:

Society Results is also accurate as everyone knows and takes interest in this subject. Firstly, for example, if there is any problem about the environment, everyone knows, there would be solutions to invest and upgrade our operational system to achieve environmental improvements. Secondly, other social activities that everyone knows are taking care of Heroic Vietnamese Mothers, sponsoring far away district, says A Luoi, and so on. Or other social activities could also be environmental prevention and social environmental considerations. (A9)

I thought our company was doing well in terms of Key Performance Results. It might be my personal perception. But there was a time when everyone thought that our company couldn't overcome it, but it did get through this time in the end. Our company still survived in difficult times. (A5)

The second potential benefit 'improving the company competitiveness' was confirmed by A9:

that's a tool to help enhance companies' competitive capacity basically and sustainably in the market oriented economy. (A9)

To sum up, an overview of responses is provided in Table 4-4.

Table 4-4. Overview of the benefits of SA-EFQM by departmental manager's responses

The confirmation of the benefits of the EFQM questionnaire SA	Total confirmed interviewees	Number of references					Total
		Manager A2	Manager A3	Manager A4	Manager A5	Manager A9	
<i>Confirm the intended benefits</i>							
Benefit (a) <i>Help the organisation identify its current position and determine future directions and priorities</i>	3/5	0	2	1	0	3	6
Benefit (b) <i>Allow comparisons with the achievements of other organisations.</i>	2/5		1		1		2
Benefit (c) <i>Encourage the organisation to monitor its progress on a regular basis</i>	1/5				1		1
Benefit (d) <i>Assess whether all members of a management team have the same view of the organisation's achievements and weaknesses</i>	3/5		2		2	1	5
Benefit (e) <i>Create a focus for agreeing improvement priorities</i>	1/5	2					2
Benefit (f) <i>Ensure that the organisation is not over-stressed by too many improvement actions</i>	0						0
<i>Confirm possible benefits suggested by literature review</i>							
<i>-Identify strengths and weaknesses</i>	4/5	0	6	3	2	1	10
<i>- Improve the company competitiveness</i>	1/5	0	0	0	0	1	0

Theme 2 Confirming the usefulness of SA-EFQM in helping to improve the company's performance

Two out of five of interviewees (40%) expressed a consensus on the usefulness of SA-EFQM in general.

... the company was assessed by a person outside the company, everyone considered the results objective ... companies can position themselves by scoring, and after scoring, they know their exact position ... thanks to the ranks (A2)

... implementation of improvement [after SA] helps the organisation to change and improve inefficient activities and then give direction in making a better key performance for the organisation (A9)

The potential of this questionnaire to contribute to the company' improvement, according these managers, existed through many benefits. They stated:

via this questionnaire, we know our strengths and weaknesses to improve. That's important ... (A5)

One more time, I have to say that the EFQM questionnaire is a very logical tool. The 9 criteria generalise all activities of the company. In each criterion, there are many good questions. It's a cause and effect principle. A good questionnaire leads to good results, and then brings a good outcome for the company ... (A4)

After the assessment process ... from the benefits it brought ... the company's leaders recognised that when joining an award model [the EFQM] ... That's the assessment's results: the important benefits would create successes . .when the company had become aware of this...If I were asked for a recommendation ... company's leaders should choose the SA-EFQM because it brings more benefits and it's easier to implement. (A3)

Certain conditions to implement successful SA in the future were suggested by three of the respondents. Two of them stated:

we can integrate your questionnaire into quality management activities... Both of them support one another. One is assessed based on 'Compliance' or 'Incompliance' responsiveness [quality audit], and the other is assessed based on the scores [the EFQM questionnaire]... (A2)

If applied, the EFQM questionnaire will work, and will help improve the whole company's performance. ... These questionnaires are good only if people take the company's strengths and weaknesses seriously, and try to work out the improvement solutions (A4)

Nevertheless, the Manager of Planning – Import and Export Department (A5) seemed to hesitate about the success of SA-EFQM. He emphasised that the usefulness of questionnaire tool would

depend on top management commitment:

This questionnaire is definitely beneficial, but whether it helps or not depends on the will of our leaders about how to implement it ... Whether or not its results help to improve the whole organisational performance depends on the will of the leaders. ... I mean whether its results help or not depends on the will and the implementation of the leaders (A5)

Evidence of performance enhancement was supplied by managers A2, A3 and A9.

Upon completion of the SA-EFQM, the company leaders had a meeting based on the assessment results that you provided. After that meeting, they figured out the direction for improvement orientation for each individual operational unit, and the management teams in each unit were also made aware of the problems and worked out improvement actions... Thanks to the overall outcome, illustrated at different managerial levels, they saw things more clearly... (A3)

Specifically, relating to improving customer relations, improvement actions focused on customer strategy, including top managers' behaviours and implementation issues:

... Afterwards, Mr. Q – our CEO learned from the EFQM results and then took more time for those meetings with customers ... For example, in the past, our CEO just came to the customer meeting in the morning session only, because in other sessions there were other company leaders in the chair. He took the flight on that night or the following morning of the conference day. Later, he changed. He came one or two days in advance to greet customers, gave presents to customers and discussed the meeting ... (A2)

The organisation, however, has established a great customer service policy ... in training and customer policy. For instance, our current quality policy is improving the product's quality to meet customer needs. There are currently four levels of satisfaction: know and acquire to meet customer needs; meet customer satisfaction ; meet customer expectations; meet customer aspirations (for example, in which policy for VIP customers like Perry Lich, Supreme could bring more jobs and profit to organisation). Organisational policy, previously, was to meet customer needs now turns into level two of meet customer satisfactions (A9)

Moreover, improvement actions resulted from psychological behaviours;

For example, concerning customer care, after your survey, our leaders did accomplish some improvement actions. As a result, our company still has many customers despite the global recession. ... Instead we had to take responsibilities for the quality, timing, and progress seriously... (A2)

Focusing on improvement, managers developed strategies which empowered staff; for instance, training, recruitment and reward. This has helped to steer employees towards Excellence principles.

... in the current Customer policy, for any queries that customers make, we never say

'Never' or 'I don't know'. ... We also have training programmes for our staff to improve their communication skills (including skills in replying to customers via emails and face-to-face communication skills). Through such a training strategy, it improves from 'meeting customer needs' into 'meeting customer satisfaction'. Of course, we could not accomplish everything at one time and need to wait till the appropriate time to suggest changed strategies in order to ensure efficiency of the policy. (A9)

The improvement momentum expanded to the departmental level, as mentioned by the Quality Manager A3.

For example, the role of the Quality department was raised to a higher level ... many customer evaluation standards were updated. We had to enhance our standards to meet the standard of our important customers so that both sides had a common base ... That's about customer satisfaction. (A3)

Although having no hard evidences to link SA outcomes and organisational performance (such as cost saving or increased revenue), there were still significant evidence of improvement actions which may enhance the company's performance.

Theme 3 Factors influencing the success of SA implementation

Four elements of Theme 3 are examined below.

(i) Individual impacts on the degree of accuracy of SA outcome

In this management group, rich working experience was stated to influence the accuracy of the SA outcomes. In many interviews, departmental managers revealed details of their professional careers (combined 20+ years) which would enable them to be knowledgeable of operational activities. Respondent A4 stated:

... the people involved in the assessment process were those who had remained in the company for quite a long time, so their awareness of the company activities was therefore quite accurate. ... I think I could be sure about one criterion. ... I mean I could know that the Customer Results criterion was the company's strength. (A4)

Such remarks underline the risk of implementing SA-EFQM without any validation.

This was confirmed by A5:

... all the managers in Hue have a long working experience. That's why they have understood the company's situation well. I did, too. After graduating 25 years ago, I came here to work until now ... Other people have been working here for 20 years or so. A long time working has its own advantages and disadvantages. The disadvantage is that they might be subjective, and the advantage is that they know this company as well as

their own house ... They may not have enough authority, responsibility or thinking skills to figure out the solution, but they know the company's situation very well. (A5)

Scoring: There was a consensus among the management group about the over-emphasising high scores. Scores were described as 'generous' or 'less accurate'.

Because I was scoring my company, I might have assessed a little bit loosely. I think according to the world's standard, my company's score ... was quite high. (A3)

On second thoughts, I think that ticking 'A' [100%] was less accurate. ... About over-emphasis on the high scores, in fact it was partly true, not totally true. ... Among my assessment scores, some scores were quite generous, (A5)

... I am sure that our staffs assess themselves highly. They won't assess themselves low so that other people become higher. (A5)

In this situation, only one manager A4 declared that he: "scored truthfully and quite accurately" and 'wasn't pressured by the high score', but that the sickness of 'over-scoring' in the company existed.

Some reasons given for over-scoring related to an 'emotional' scoring approach:

Of course to some extent, people tended to say good things about others. People preferred good comments rather than bad comments (A2)

They should have left such emotions behind to do a more serious assessment. But not everyone can do that. ... So, such statements are assessed based on personal perception only .. Almost all people assessed emotionally (A5)

... they don't attach any degree of importance to the evidence request. They think it is no problem or there is no need for evidence ... Actually it should be C [grade-33%], but people give B [grade-67%]. (A9)

The nature of 'emotional scoring' was caused by inappropriate measurement of managers. Instead of sticking to the international standards addressed in the EFQM questionnaire, participants have scored relying on comparing organisational performance with other companies in the same industry, in the same region or the company itself at different periods.

I thought my scores were quite high because I compared my company with Vmac and some companies in the Central region of Vietnam at the time of conducting this survey such as ... the H city's Garment Company ... and moreover, according to the annual report of Vinatex it said that my company in Central Vietnam in comparison with companies in other regions of Vietnam ... paid our people at a quite high rate ... quite satisfactorily.. First, the income of our workers is much higher than that of others in the same region. Second, our working environment is democratic and open ... so is the ethical environment or (business) culture environment. (A2)

I had opportunities to visit many places and made comparisons. I found that my company cares for its people better and in a more professional way I assessed that my company was better in comparison with others in the region, not based on my own standard ... The Customer Results may not be very satisfactory ... Many people in our company's operational system still have no idea about how to serve customers and how to satisfy them. But they have their heart! That's why I gave absolute scores. (A5)

'Over emphasis on high score' was affected by the relationship between assessed areas and assessor's responsibilities. The nearer to the assessor's accountability, the higher the scores were.

When scoring something not related to their job, people tended to score with similar points. On the contrary, when scoring something related to their job and their responsibilities, people tended to pay much attention to... and somehow boasted about it... (A4)

Mr. Q (CEO) mentioned this in our previous meeting, you assessed what you are doing very well, but you always feel unsatisfied about what others are doing... This created a big gap in the results. (A5)

During interviews, a lack of consensus of actual performance was identified as another scoring dilemma. In addition, there was dissatisfaction among departments.

... I'd like to tell you one more reason why within a company there were different assessment results. First, the personal perceptions about problems are different. Maybe among the management team in the manufacturing department, there was little satisfaction. But if they could go out and communicate more often, they would assess that as good. And compared with the recommended scoring standard, sometimes the results can't always be perfect ... (A5)

There are still some problems without consensus, I mean some people are satisfied, some are dissatisfied. Therefore, perception of satisfaction varies differently according to each individual (A9)

On that day, the manufacturing group thought that the functional departmental (business) group would score higher in the criteria related to its job. And the business group also thought the same about the manufacturing group (A4)

Manager A4 gave details of his personal dissatisfaction:

The second problem I'd like to mention here was the matter of fair treatment. Let's compare the two departments: department of Planning and Import-Export and department of Sales. Both departments' duty was to serve our customers. The number of tasks done by both departments was the same. The only difference was that my department was in charge of spinning production while the other was in charge of garment products. Sometimes the time I devoted to my jobs was more than that of people in the department of Planning and Import-Export. However, the salary rank of that department's leaders was higher than mine. And the staff's salary in that department was higher than my staff, too. I think this was totally unfair. The assessment was wrong and

the staff motivation was lost ... The problem was that they didn't treat us the same way. I was... not comfortable about that. You [the top managers] set my salary at a lower rank. So, it's clear that you rate me at a lower level. This led to many other problems. (A4)

It is noted that although managers stated that the SA-EFQM results were 'mostly accurate', in interviews, they tended to express degrees of accuracy, such as "the accuracy is just about 70-80%. It's ok... not completely inaccurate" (A3); "these recent results were fairly accurate so using the words 'mostly accurate' is correct" (A9). It is clear that all respondents were less confident about the accuracy of the results. It can be said that these statements confirm one of the limitations of this SA tool. The literature warned about the lack of accuracy of questionnaire.

Awareness/understanding: Frequent comments made by respondents related to a lack of awareness (understanding). 80% of participants stated that understanding was a problem:

I think ... for some questions like '... benchmark...', sometimes scorers may not understand completely... (A2)

Based on the questions and their explanations for the 9 criteria, many people didn't have a thorough understanding ... In other words, they didn't completely understand what they were doing when they were doing the assessment... people didn't understand that part thoroughly and correctly... (A3)

There are still some problems without consensus, or ... with gaining a full understanding ... it depends on how thoroughly they could understand it. (A9)

According to respondent A3, the reasons that led to a 'lack of awareness' were the limited accountability of everyone and the difficulty of the application of the new management approach.

Everyone had to answer all 9 criteria while each of them was just in charge of one particular aspect of the company... They couldn't fully understand all aspects of the company to give a highly accurate score... we approach a new management system tool, at first we don't understand it thoroughly... (A3)

As a result of this problem, A5 referred to another 'sickness' of the SA implementation, attitude and psychological issues:

If we understood such words, it would be easier to score. They [the scorers] were... afraid of asking. (A5)

Two managers described a new 'inferiority' state which showed a lack of confidence in knowledge:

I feel an inferiority and complex about that (A4).

The low scores of executives seem meant they felt ... inferiority (A2)

Discussing the ease of SA understanding in terms of the EFQM SA questionnaire, two managers, who were Quality and Sales Managers, stated:

It's much easier (in comparison with ISO implementation). It's easy to understand and to implement. It helped people to recognise their own viewpoints more clearly (A3)

The language was understandable ... I don't know about other people, but I myself understood right after I read the 9 criteria. (A4)

However, two other opinions showed that it was difficult to understand.

The meanings of some specific terms were... a little bit difficult to understand. ... (A5)

Actually, these are quite difficult to understand..., as I said before; the content is quite difficult to understand. ... some are really difficult to understand, especially, the content of the tool's questions. (A9)

Attitude and psychological impacts: Interviewee A4 pointed out that the possibility of the success of using the EFQM questionnaire depended on the serious and respectful attitude of participants.

As I told you before with these 9 criteria alone, the company's face is exposed. This questionnaire is good only if people take the company's strengths and weaknesses seriously,... and try to work out the improvement solutions. (A4)

Considering this questionnaire alone, if you pay attention to it, respect it and you examine the results to propose improvement solutions... By identifying such things, the potential for improvement is... certain. The most important thing is that you recognise... awareness is the most important thing. If applied, the EFQM questionnaire will work, and will help improve the whole company's performance. (A4)

Almost all participants participating in the SA-EFQM seem to have expressed an array of positive attitudes, such as seriousness, rigour and interest; they believed that they were well-prepared and supportive:

... in terms of the degree of assessment, I had to consider very carefully and one by one to come to the conclusion what we didn't achieve. (A2)

I remember that I scored rather more strictly than others. ... I scored truthfully and quite accurately... I was very frank about that if my company didn't deserve any more. (A4)

... after reading the question, I have to think and consider how clear the question is, what is the main idea and the purpose of this question. Then I would apply it to the organisation's circumstances and think about its relationship. Based on the scoring scale, I would then assess it by myself. After all, I would test it again to make sure it is correct...

Individually, I could make a quantitative measurement in terms of content relevant to the specific division and individual. Based on quantitative techniques, I would make a score of it. ... I think we have to read very carefully and evaluate our organisational operation with a highly logical degree of analysis. (A9)

Further views mentioned that the entire group was serious and objective. *'Their attitudes are serious since the board of director's thinks that it is an important matter.... So it is a serious working attitude from the board of directors to every manager in the organisation...'* (A9)

However, there was one participant who claimed about other assessors' attitudes in terms of accomplishing SA in a hurried and careless manner.

Others scored very fast, but I was nearly the last to submit the work because I had to think of the questions carefully. ... Quick scoring wasn't good at all! (A5)

Additionally, 'wrong' individual attitudes affecting the accuracy of SA were stated, which include: subjective view (three responses from managers A2, A4 and A5) and lack of seriousness (A5):

The overall outcome... I don't know how to say... I thought somehow there was a lack of objective assessment in people's awareness. (A4)

But as I told you before, I gave absolute scores to some statements because the scoring scale didn't allow me other options. It seemed to be unfair if I scored B, but scoring A was a little bit high and subjective. ... Sometimes people assessed... not very objectively. (A5)

Again, inappropriate behaviour was implied in conducting SA.

For quickness, there were two ways of scoring that people normally followed. One of them was that people didn't come up with the final score by scoring each detailed statement. They tended to give the overall score first. ... For example, the total points for this questionnaire were 100, right? Almost everyone thought of the overall score in mind first, often about 70-75 because it would be weird to give too high or too low score... (A2)

I think the top group must score around 70-80%. I mean an excellent company must score about 80% and a good company must score about 70%. (A4)

When assessors stated that it was clear that there existed a preconception of the scoring scale for a company's rank, or for a particular operational area, this restricted the scoring of the company's

performance and the final self evaluation output.

With respect to the seriousness of participants, there were some situations which involved little care or rigour:

...As for this questionnaire, after you sent the results to each person, almost all of them just had a quick look, and only a few read more carefully. That's the situation ... I would have much more time to consider carefully. If people are given a chance to take the questionnaire for the second time, I am sure the results will be better... In fact, reading is a headache and requires you to have a reading hobby. Otherwise, people just glance at the figures of just a few statements ... Some people were lazy... It wasn't that they were not thinking seriously, but they found it tiring to think. ... They ignored it without asking... that was quicker. (A5)

We couldn't be too strict when assessing our leaders... (A2)

Because I was scoring my company, I might have assessed a little bit loosely (A3)

With regard to the psychological influence of assessors on the results of SA, A4 demonstrated that the feeling of being out of line with others existed.

It's lucky that my score was not very different from that of the company (A4)

Finally, the connection between a respondent's attitude and the accuracy of SA results was recognised by two managers. One of them, A4, responded:

In my opinion, if you have a positive attitude towards this questionnaire... it's true that it's very useful... through the assessment results... These questionnaires are good only if people take the company's strengths and weaknesses seriously, and try to work out the improvement solutions. (A4)

This interviewee also affirmed the role of a respectful attitude to the success of SA-EFQM:

The most important thing is our respectful attitude ... As I've just mentioned, it depends on the attitude towards the results....Considering this questionnaire alone, if you pay attention to it, respect it and you examine the results to propose improvement solutions... By identifying such thing, the potential for improvement is... certain ... The most important thing is our attitude to ensure such a good outcome. (A4)

The importance of this relationship was endorsed totally by the Manager in Planning, Import and Export Department (A5):

... Those who care about the management tasks will like this SA-EFQM and may apply for their company to perfect it ... Any achievement depends on the SA implementation. It must be done seriously and strictly, and we must stick to the suggested requirements. Once one company has a result, we can expand to others. (A5)

(ii) *The influences of organisational management resources*

Two emerging issues were indicated: the crucial role of all top commitment/leadership, training and communication (80% agreement); and existing problems in sharing communication (80% agreement). Four organisational resource factors are addressed below.

Quality management experience: According to interviewees, there existed issues relating to practical quality implementation.

The problem was that... for example, implementation of the ISO process is very professional. We hired a consultant... the longer time with ISO, the more difficult it is... but that's not the problem. The leaders must start with durability and train hard. At the moment, we have to start over again the ISO implementation process because we have neglected it for quite a long time. That's a fact in my company... (A5)

... Among our people, some of them disagreed with ISO. Some people didn't understand. They asked to leave out some criteria. I found it so ironic. I told them that like the terms and conditions bound in a contract, we have to follow all the criteria specified by ISO. ISO is about such regulations, and if you want to satisfy your customers, you have to have your internal regulations. ... That's unacceptable. (A5)

... Some leaders may think that ISO application is a waste of paper and that ISO requires an immense responsibility... However, it would be better if the ISO requirement or this questionnaire were applied to daily jobs, and implemented by IT management tools systematically ... to ensure it's brief and efficient. (A2)

On this basis, it is likely this would lead managers to resist SA.

In terms of existing SA experience, there were mixed views on whether the VQA was useful for the company in this group. The Quality Manager (A3) stated that some improvement actions combined with business direction were deployed after the Vietnamese assessment. Additionally, other benefits were described, such as "*public advertisement and enhanced company image*", or "*obtained cutting-edge information from the Quality and Productivity Centre about new quality issues in similar organisations or sectors*". (A9).

Nevertheless, three out of five interviewees thought that "*This award is a kind of achievement 'disease'*" (A5); in this implementation, "*not many people were involved in such actions*" (A3), and "*even those people who were involved in that award hadn't got any idea about it*" (A4). Surprisingly, many managers mentioned that they have not engaged with the assessment process.

More importantly, one confession from A3, who was directly involved in the VQA application, stated:

My company also bore in mind that we had to join this award to create improvement opportunities. But when we actually joined the VQA, our company did not join it positively... I mean actively

In describing SA experience against the VQA, Quality Manager (A3) indicated that:

... mainly in my department. I categorised the VQA criterion into small items which corresponded to particular functional departments, then collected figures and evidence, or interviews with various managers. ... In 2002, I wrote assessment reports which addressed figures from all related departments/divisions. At first, we did the self assessment by reports only, not giving any score... we didn't score ourselves.

After that, during the VQA process, they (the externals) conducted site-visits for general assessment in accordance with my reports. ... At the time of the Vietnamese assessment, some improvement actions were made, but not many people were involved in such actions. They [external] assessed on the basis of our report, then against the award framework, then they assessed whether the organisational reality is accurate or not... then discussed the scores with us based on our report ... and I sometimes agreed sometimes didn't agree with the scores. We discussed and finally agreed with the scores for the 7 criteria.

My department was in charge of the combination of the ... pretty subjective assessments by the examiners' team with recommendation of company's leaders (A3)

Regarding the overall score of company when conducting SA, this manager stated:

I think my company's score was more than average, about 650-670 points or something like that.

Relating to the feedback from the external examiner, this respondent stated:

... only oral feedback. Their comments have been ... focused on which parts to be updated, which parts to be rewritten, and which parts to be added to perfect the reports ...

SA using the VQA, as her confirmation, “mainly just ... provides information, not sort of self assessment”, and she also admitted that “We haven't conducted such assessment [EFQM questionnaire] before”.

The Planning, Import and Export Manager argued that such above Vietnamese awards are “more of superficial value than real content” (A5).

In short, little evidence suggested a poor level of quality management.

Top commitment: There was huge degree of agreement that ‘Leader commitment is a success factor’. Four of out five senior managers all gave that confirmation.

In my opinion, Top commitment is the most important because we had the concept ‘Top manager must be fully aware and implement...’, and if they are fully aware and implement, the whole organisation may achieve at least 80-90%. (A2)

The improvement of organitional performance depends on the will of the leaders ... The degree of application especially depends on the company's leaders. (A5)

Whether such self assessment succeeds or not, it depends on Top commitment ... Firstly, there is high degree of consensus among the board of directors – Top commitment ... (A9)

Education and training: Four out of five respondents mentioned that training was crucial.

The first key thing is Training, giving materials, instructions... to make the SA successful. Training is the first thing to do. We have to explain and train so that scorers fully understand the self assessment process and its criteria. From these criteria, people can have an overview of the company's picture (A4)

... Secondly, training is helping to assist people understand ... Training is crucial ... Through training sessions, people have thoroughly understood the contents of the EFQM questionnaires. It could be said that it has given us satisfaction. (A5)

Despite the fact that there was satisfaction with the EFQM seminar and training by a manager:

The second pretty satisfactory thing is the arrangements of seminar and training sessions for all assessors as our senior managers. Through training sessions, people have thoroughly understood the contents of the EFQM questionnaires. It could be said that it has given us satisfaction. Although, as I said before, the content is quite difficult to understand. However thanks to your seminar and training, people could comprehend more precisely. (A9)

However, there were a number of suggestions that the level of training should more intensive. The Quality Manager (A3) argued: “*More training is needed... the question's explanations should be more detailed...*”. The Planning Manager (A5) expressed the same views:

If the words [contents] were more detailed, it would be easier for us to assess. If the contents of the question were more detailed as the scoring scale, it would be more effective. ... there should be more training. ... In conclusion, the process was good, but the training should be more focused. ... The main reason wasBecause we didn't have enough resulting in a lack of relevant causes or proof to support the scoring (A5)

Communication: Communication was identified as being important factor in SA success by 80 % of this group. Sales Manager (A4) emphasised the significance of information sharing across the company's units.

The second key thing is Communication. It's more than sharing information to serve the SA from the top to the second management. Thanks to the communication, people know the company's situation, and then they may have some suggestions. This will form the basis of the scoring. If the information were not communicated thoroughly, people would

fall into a vicious circle of personal perceptions. I do feel that Information communication is important. (A4)

According to respondent A4, although the company was maintaining a 'pretty-open' communication policy focused on financial performance, there was a lack of data which was needed for a comprehensive assessment. The key manager (A9), who was in charge of sharing information in the company, admitted:

...We reconfirm information has been transferred insufficiently from the board of directors to the labour force (A9)

Similar agreement was expressed by interviewee A3:

the internal information in my company was not communicated well to everyone... (A3)

Management competence: Concerns about the competence of managers, even top leaders, was raised by several respondents. Two managers stated:

... the competence of the top management team is not very high ... It's the same with middle management team ... like me. We are different in terms of personal competence, dedication, enthusiasm, background... (A3)

...we didn't know the way, but we did have a heart to do so. (A5).

However, A5 commented that the management group was well educated and quite comparative with other company in the same region.

(iii) The influences of organisational management culture

There was recognition by two managers that successful SA depends on the company's management culture; the Manager in Planning, Import and Export (A5) stated: "*The success of application more or less relies on each company's conditions*". His view was also accepted by Administration and Human Resource Manager (A9).

Despite the fact that respondent A3 agreed that SA-EFQM certainly brought benefits in assisting in the identification of company strengths and areas for improvement, this manager stated:

At the moment, applying such SA is quite difficult because of the corporate culture... (A3)

Resistance to change was affirmed in the earlier by top leader analysis. Department managers did not raise this as an issue.

(iv) The influences of Vietnamese culture

One out of the five respondents was of the opinion that Vietnamese culture influenced the SA. According to A5, national culture had a minor impact:

... in my opinion, cultural factors also play a role, but not much. The problem is the way Asians implement it... We haven't got used to the teamwork manner and self assessment. When doing self assessment, people tend to hide their weaknesses (A5)

Several Vietnamese characteristics described, for instance self-satisfaction or hiding weakness, may decrease the rigour of SA.

... Vietnamese people have an old saying 'bad cover, showing good'. That's how the cultural impact limits the SA process. It's true that this is not very good, because when we self assess, we are often afraid something unreal... (A5)

There exists an 'encouraging score' in Vietnamese cultural style. Hence, it is easy to understand why high scoring existed.

Instead of giving 5 (points), Vietnamese people give a little bit higher because they don't think it is a problem. (A9)

It could be said ... my score was encouraging. (A5)

Theme 4 The potential of implementing EFQM SA in Vietnam

The issue emerging in this section is that although departmental managers believe SA using the EFQM questionnaire is 'really meaningful and useful' for Vietnamese enterprises in general, there are certain conditions to be met, such as 'respectful attitude' (A4), company's leaders and communication:

The degree of application especially depends on the company's leaders ... We communicate about this award, about these assessment criteria so that people can see its benefits. ... It must be done seriously and strictly, and we must stick to the suggested requirements. Once one company has a result, we can expand to others. (A5)

According to Human Resource Manager (A9), the Western model was useful due to the benefits given to Vietnamese companies:

In conclusion, SA could bring huge benefits to the organisation in order to recognise weaknesses, strengths and so that, we can make adjustments for greater improvement

(A9)

Suggestions about adjusting scoring were given, e.g. ‘*to fit the context*’ and ‘*help scorers score more accurately*’ (A2), or breaking down questions into many smaller ones (A5).

Further, a realistic proposal of Manager A5 emphasised the role of external SA experts. With their support, it would be possible to apply SA-EFQM in Vietnamese companies:

There are 2 advantages. One is that they are more professional. They invest in studying the SA model and therefore have deeper and wider practical knowledge when presenting it. Second is that they are more objective. ... If this SA is done by the company itself, I am sure that nobody listens to anyone. Outsiders are always more objective and are not affected by personal benefits. (A5)

This manager also suggested that companies should undertake SA, for instance, once annually, in order to keep people away from being ‘*subjective and bored*’ and encourage them to ‘*answer [question] more accurately*’. (A5).

On the other hand, respondent A2 expressed an opinion that to deploy the EFQM tool to workers would be impossible:

What if this questionnaire were taken by the workers? The workers are the same in any company and in any market scales... Workers are workers only; they are not therefore very thoughtful when assessing some criteria that need a comparison with other companies... just casual. (A2)

Lastly, regarding the potential of using the SA questionnaire to strengthen the company’s competitiveness, only manager A9 confirmed this:

... it would be very useful. We also should gather information about the competitive advantage of other organisations in order to be able to adjust ourselves- benchmarking. (A9)

4.3.3 The evaluation by manufacturing management

Three representatives of the manufacturing management group participated in interviews. They are: Deputy Director of the Spinning Mill (A6), Director of the Knitting - Dyeing Mill (A7) and Director of the Garment Factory (A8). In this section, a similar analytical approach to that used with the departmental managers was employed.

Theme 1: The benefits of SA using the EFQM questionnaire

(i) Confirmation of the intended benefits of SA-EFQM

Benefit a: Help the organisation identify its current position and determine future directions and priorities.

There were two out of three managers who recognised this benefit.

(a1) Help the organisation identify its current position

There was little confirmation of this benefit. Manager A6 argues:

I don't think that my company is either an excellent or good one. A good company should have the score of more than 75%. ... I think my company is at a pretty good level only.
(A6)

In his view, the unexpected 'Very good' position of the company suggests that the final organisational score was inaccurate.

(a2) Determine future directions and priorities

This was confirmed by two respondents:

I found that the contents of the questionnaire also suggest things that companies should aim for ... Thanks to these criteria, our company knows the direction to achieve such things ... Knowing the standards, the direction, the implementation process... These things are good for our company. (A6)

We know from the EFQM questionnaire what to prioritise for improvement. (A7)

Benefit b: Allow comparisons with the achievements of other organisations.

There was no statement confirming this benefit.

Benefit c: Encourage the organisation to monitor its progress on a regular basis.

There was no statement confirming this benefit.

Benefit d: Assess whether all members of a management team have the same view of the organisation's achievements and weaknesses

Only the Spinning Manager confirmed this benefit. This respondent stated:

The gaps among the answers were not as large as I thought ... They assessed the company not too differently from others. (A6)

Benefit e. Create a focus for agreeing improvement priorities;

There was consensus amongst three managers of this group on the benefit of agreeing improvement priorities. Manager A6 describes it thus:

The point e -“Creating priority in improvement focus” is the benefit ... Because the company has to improve continuously in order to survive, whether your company is large or small ... From the SA results, we know from the EFQM questionnaire what to prioritise for improvement. (A7)

Benefit f: Ensure that the organisation is not over-stressed by too many improvement actions

There was no response concerning this benefit in the manufacturing group.

(i) Confirmation of possible benefits suggested by the literature review

Three additional benefits were identified by the group: identifying organisation's strengths and weaknesses, improving organisation's learning and involvement enhancement.

The advantage of SA in identifying potential company strengths and weaknesses was agreed by the whole group. Much evidence was provided to confirm the company strengths in the two categories, *Society Results* and *Key Performance Results*, as follows:

I'd like to explain why I scored these criteria [as strengths] so high... because my company also cares for society... In difficult times, our company was still responsible towards society, so I think we're good. That's why I scored 100% ... That's why you can see that all the statements related to social policy I scored quite high. (A6)

Regarding the scores of Society Results and Key Performance Results, at the time of assessment, my actual company's business situation was quite good... Although we faced hard times, the company's business was still quite good ... in the Society Results category, our company was financially good in comparison with other companies in Ho Chi Minh City, Ha Noi and the same regions. Our company was one of those companies who contributed a lot to the province's budget. Besides, our company employed other social policies such as caring for Vietnam Heroine Mother... in Society Results, my company and the Phu Bai Fabric Company were granted a Certificate of Merit by Province Authority. This is the best piece of evidence for our social results. (A7)

Subsequently, all three managers gave evidence to prove their consensus in confirming the organisational weakness of the Customer category.

The Customer Results is also the weakest. (A7)

I'd like to mention the awareness: the awareness of Customer Satisfaction in the garment sector was... really bad ...There was no strategy to satisfy customers' needs and wants... Basically, we should never let our customers come to us by themselves... Generally; the situation is the same, in a spinning factory, and in a garment factory...so passive... As if we feel we are good enough, therefore we need not bother to seek new customers... As an example of bad customer satisfaction... the company itself... the advertising for our company is not good. I score Customer Results as the company's weakness (A8)

Although there were different views in recognising the company' weakness; for example, in People Results criterion, it is almost certain that such a variety of viewpoints was due to subjective judgements of the assessors.

Two additional benefits of SA-EFQM in benefiting organisational culture were suggested by the Deputy Director of the Spinning Mill (A6) and the Director of the Knitting – Dyeing Mill (A7). They consist of increasing management learning and enhancing involvement. The benefit of SA implementation in benefiting the company's learning was agreed by all three respondents, while the benefit of involvement improvement received only one agreement.

I think the SA-EFQM did help ... in increasing our awareness as members of the management team. The criteria given are very useful ...Yes, it makes a useful contribution to both awareness and planning and to the management process as well. Knowing the standards, the direction, the implementation process... These things are good for our company ... Thanks to that, I found this questionnaire very interesting because from the results, we could draw out a whole picture of the company (A6)

...We did learn something from that. (A7)

Yes, I agree [with the questionnaire benefit to the company's learning] ... from the questionnaire, we could see the assessment results of the whole management team (A8)

Clearly, a holistic picture which summarised activities across the organisation was of benefit for enhancing management awareness and learning.

To sum up, slightly different from views expressed by the departmental managers, the two benefits obtained are confirmed by the manufacturing managers: 'Help the organisation identify its current position and determine future directions and priorities' (**benefit a**) and 'Create a focus for agreeing improvement priorities' (**benefit e**). In addition, the benefit of SA-EFQM in identifying company's strengths and weaknesses, and in improving organisational learning was identified strongly.

Lastly, Table 4-5 shows a comparison of confirmed benefits in this group.

Table 4-5. Overview of the benefits of SA-EFQM by manufacturing manager's responses

The confirmation of the benefits of the EFQM questionnaire SA	Total confirmed interviewees	Number of references			Total
		Manager A6	Manager A7	Manager A8	
<i>Confirm the intended benefits</i>					
Benefit (a) <i>Help the organisation identify its current position and determine future directions and priorities</i>	2/3	3	1	0	4
Benefit (b) <i>Allow comparisons with the achievements of other organisations.</i>	0	0	0	0	0
Benefit (c) <i>Encourage the organisation to monitor its progress on a regular basis</i>	0				0
Benefit (d) <i>Assess whether all members of a management team have the same view of the organisation's achievements and weaknesses</i>	1/3	2	0	0	2
Benefit (e) <i>Create a focus for agreeing improvement priorities</i>	3/3	1	2	1	4
Benefit (f) <i>Ensure that the organisation is not over-stressed by too many improvement actions</i>	0				0
<i>Confirm possible benefits suggested by literature review</i>					
<i>-Identify strengths and weaknesses</i>	3/3	2	2	4	8
<i>- Improving organisation's learning</i>	3/3	4	1	2	7
<i>- Involvement enhancement</i>	1/3	1	0	0	1

Theme 2 Confirming the usefulness of SA-EFQM in helping to improve the company's performance

With regard to the usefulness of the EFQM SA questionnaire generally, respondent A6 commented impressively:

Some issues in the questionnaire made me think over again and see if our company could do it and practice it, if it is applicable ... For example, this SA still considers Key Performance Results as the main criterion when assessing effectiveness. We therefore can take a closer look and apply it to enhance the company's Key Performance Results. When our company is strong enough, we can continue caring for other criteria, such as People Results or Society Results... (A6)

His idea of concentrating on certain key areas, such as the Key Performance Results category, suggests action for improvement

Nevertheless, manager A8 was dissatisfied with the results of SA-EFQM implementation:

... the results are good but it isn't possible to apply such results to the current organisational situation yet... because of many reasons... First time, first try ... a bit of ... lack of serious commitment. I still haven't seen anything useful so far... This is just one assessment, it doesn't tell us anything (A8)

Though there were two managers who agreed that the SA outcomes potentially lead to improvement in the company's effectiveness, unfortunately, they did not provide any evidence of improvement actions implemented in the company.

Theme 3 Factors influencing the success of SA implementation

(i) Individual impacts on the degree of accuracy of SA

The role of individuals is seemed to contribute significantly to the success of SA-EFQM in the manufacturing group.

Scoring: In a finding, similar to the departmental managers, this group assessed that the SA outcomes were mostly accurate in reflecting organisational performance.

Discussed earlier, the tendency for high scoring and emotional scoring was emphasised as having an adverse impact on the usefulness of SA – EFQM. Over-emphasis on a high score was described as happening in many situations. It can easily be seen that this tendency is due to emotional attitudes, or a lack of evidence in assessing.

... I would also like to confirm one thing. Although my assessment is higher than the overall results of the company, I want to confirm that it is accurate ... Yes, I do also think that I am quite subjective. That's why my score is quite high...I just thought quite emotionally, so the scores were not very accurate. For example ... the scoring part of the survey. There were some people who were only concerned about the score. They were so eager to know the score... I just relied on my personal viewpoints ... My assessment was subjective in certain parts. Due to other factors, i.e. the scoring gap is significant, my

final score lacks accuracy... (A7)

The average scores of these departments (Planning and Import-Export, Technical Dept. and Sales Dept.) are too high. They should have been lower; I mean the degree of satisfaction should have been lower... To tell the truth, it related to personal and subjective perception. (A8)

There was one opposite opinion, from the Knitting - Dyeing Manager, regarding not paying attention to the score. He argued:

When I did it, my answers were based on the nature of the questions not the final results in the ranking ... I didn't do them according to my own perception... (A7)

Once again, the 'encourage score' was confirmed by the Spinning Deputy Director. Surprisingly, scores were generous, in some cases aiming to motivate people to 'work harder'.

At the [SA] workshop, when discussing the company's Leadership, the Technical Department thought that people should score generously- about 80-90%. They thought that Leadership was always good, so many people scored up to 100%. ... Some people said that when assessing their 'boss', they should give a good assessment, and shouldn't give low scores....That's why when assessing, I scored at an average score of 70-72% to motivate myself to work harder to get higher results. In fact we haven't been able to reach that score ... We couldn't score our leaders 40-50% unless they were problematic.. And when assessing leadership at the level of the company's leaders, we had to look at the company's top managers... (A6)

Awareness/understanding: Regarding the impact of personal understanding on the SA results, all these managers confirmed that there was lack of awareness among participants including themselves:

These people don't understand and neither do I, was it because the company's score was low itself, or because they personally scored themselves low..Moreover, I didn't understand the meanings and objectives of the questions thoroughly. (A7)

...there was insufficient time to fully understand the questionnaire... Because I couldn't understand, I just assessed 'mostly accurately', I couldn't assess accurately. How could I fully understand all translated words? (A8)

Interviewees revealed a lack of management awareness and confusion, such as:

The objectives of the Leadership assessment were the Board of Directors, who were in charge of leading others... not the heads or deputy heads of departments and directors of factories' ... (A6)

Meeting with the customers... this mentions the role of the leader... (A8)

Attitude and psychological impacts: Interviews with members of the manufacturing group tended to reflect negative attitudes rather than positive behaviour. These attitudes included: Lack of seriousness/interest (3 out of 3 managers); Over-optimistic (2 managers); subjective views (2 managers); and Lack of rigour (2 managers).

... I thought that if I had had more time to consider the questionnaire more carefully, and its criteria, I would think differently and the results would also be different...some people took part in the survey without thinking carefully (A6)

... But they didn't like their score to be low. They liked to see their score to be... good... The survey was limited in this point. (A7)

... maybe I was not really interested in this questionnaire. If I took the survey again after talking with you, the results may be different. ... I was not very serious about this.... Of course, if this score was below 50%, this company would be in big trouble... I think that there is optimistic thinking... (A8)

Additionally, the psychological impact was illustrated: being afraid of a 'low score' or of 'being out of line with others'.

... A fear of giving low scores. This is also the problem. People will tick higher ranks if there is an emphasis on scores. Because the higher the scores are, the better your company is assessed, so why don't we score high? ...Truly, people also over-emphasised the scores. (A6)

In my opinion, the overall outcome somehow lacks accuracy because when assessing, some people are afraid of a low score... But they didn't like their score to be low. They liked to see their score to be... good... The survey was limited in this point (A7)

They are afraid if their assessment falls into ... a kind of state...different. They'll feel weird... (A8)

On the other hand, there were some positive statements supporting SA, e.g. care, seriousness.

I have reviewed the results from time to time. I wanted to discuss and to compare between my assessment and the European one. (A6)

Actually, I am quite frank ... I was different. I assessed based on my perception... I didn't pay much attention to the score... I just responded based on what I knew.. (A7)

From this analysis, it is evident that 'right' attitudes — respect, seriousness and rigorousness — are essential personal attitudes in order to assess an organisation.

(ii) *The influences of organisational management resources*

Quality management experience: Manager A3 indicated about a difficulty when his company implement ISO:

[SA] ... like[s] ISO. ISO is a good one. But when implementing in Vietnamese companies with 'Vietnamese style', people are confused between the ISO implementation method and the basic routine... and this led to the application inefficiently (A7)

With regard to the VQA, this group demonstrated that all were not involved in such processes.

Top commitment: According to this manufacturing group, top commitment or leadership was regarded as crucial for successful SA.

The most important [for the success of SA] is Leadership... I think leaders must apply it fully or according to certain principles depending on the situation of each company. (A6)

Top leaders decide all... The most important factor is Leadership. As in the case of a country, the leaders are vital for that country's development. It's the same in a company, in a factory, and even in a group. (A8)

Education and training: Manager A6 pointed out the training was important, he stated: "*I think the most important thing is Training*".

Communication: This group described intersectional communication as inefficient. It seems that these managers were only really knowledgeable about their own areas. The following statements reflect this view and also explain the inaccuracy of the final scores.

Because when we assessed the company, we had to be in the company leaders' shoes to have an overall view. We were not able to know and analyse the company's financial statements... (A6)

There are several reasons for 'Mostly accurate' results. For example... for the questions concerning the factory where I am working, I knew the cases very clearly whereas for those concerning other factories, I just learnt from executive meetings. I am concerned about the validity and precision of some figures (data). It turns out that the results concerning my job are quite accurate, while those concerning other departments... (A7)

Management competence: in company was indicated by manager A6 was inconsistency.

(iii) *The influences of organisational management culture*

Organisational management culture did not receive much attention from the manufacturing group.

Although there existed in this group ‘optimistic thinking’ about the need to change, or the need to innovate, the reality was that this was very difficult to achieve.

I myself think that the Vietnamese really want to innovate. But innovation needs slow and gradual integrating steps. ... the working practice turns into routine daily. We can't change our habits in one day. In my case, I would like to, but others don't... (A7)

We talked a lot! It's true that everyone knows it, but how to do something about it is the problem. We need a specific strategy... (A8)

Resistance to change was indicated indirectly by the manufacturing group, in line with the departmental manager's view.

(v) *The influences of Vietnamese culture*

According to this group, the role of national culture was not significant in affecting the final SA-EFQM result.

Of course it [Vietnamese cultural impact] plays a certain role... but just a little. (A8)

Pre-perception in scoring mentioned previously was influenced by Vietnamese thinking way.

.. In Europe, their scores accurately reflect the reality in their company while in Vietnam; we are likely to give encouraging scores. We sometimes give an average score of 5 to motivate others to try harder. We actually aren't strict on ourselves. When taking this questionnaire, it is obvious that the results are less strict than those of the European SA. (A6)

Theme 4. The potential of implementing EFQM SA in Vietnam

There was a high agreement among all members of this group that SA-EFQM is applicable for Vietnamese organisations owing to the benefits it brings, for example, the recognition of the company's strengths and weaknesses.

Generally, it is useful for Vietnamese companies. The degree of usefulness depends on

each company, and the SA itself helped improve the effectiveness of the... process. For example, this SA still considers Key Performance Results as the main criterion when assessing the effectiveness. We therefore can take a closer look and apply it to enhance the company's Key Performance Results. When our company is strong enough, we can continue caring for other criteria such as People Results or Society Results... (A6)

However, the Knitting – Dyeing Director (A7) still wondered about the chances of success of the application of such an advanced BE model as the EFQM in Vietnam:

Although this [questionnaire] tool doing well, it doesn't mean it will penetrate successfully. In order to integrate such tools into companies, time is necessary. Besides, the trainers must be very patient because they have to try to devise several indicators and to make them more accurate. People therefore should be less loose when scoring... .Like ISO. ISO is a good one. But when implementing in Vietnamese companies with Vietnamese style, people are confused between the ISO implementation method and the basic routine. (A7)

4.4 Summary of key findings from the case Company A

4.4.1 The benefits of SA using the EFQM questionnaire (theme 1)

Among the six intended benefits of the EFQM SA, its use in *helping the organisation identify its current position and determine future directions and priorities (benefit a)* was primarily demonstrated (6/9 agreements with 67% agreement). This usefulness is the most important benefit of the SA tool. However, there were some concerns with the 'Very good' ranking of the company.

Another benefit which received 56% agreement (5/9 managers) is **benefit d** (*Assess whether all members of a management team have the same view of the organisation's achievements and weaknesses*). Whilst the top and departmental managers focused on **benefit a** and **benefit d**, the manufacturing group put the attention on **benefit e**.

Some suggestions made in regards to other SA benefits, which were offered by the literature, concerned identification of the company's strengths and weaknesses. This benefit received 89% agreement.

4.4.2 Confirming the usefulness of SA-EFQM in helping to improve the company's performance (theme 2)

Whilst 44,4% of participants agreed that SA is useful in helping to improve performance in general, the other 33% of participant confirmed that some conditions needed to be concerned.

Some improvement actions were described by three department managers (33%) as evidence to answer this research question and related to improving customer relations, customer strategy and empowered staff.

One manager suggested that this SA tool could assist the company to strengthen its competitiveness. However, no empirical data was provided to support this statement.

4.4.3 Factors influencing the success of SA implementation (theme 3)

Regarding individual impacts on the success of SA-EFQM; the phenomenon of 'over-emphasis on high score' (100% agreement) is possibly due to: *lack of understanding* (89% agreement) and a *lack of evidence* when scoring (78%).

Seven out of nine interviewees (78%) stated that they provided serious assessments; however, there was the suggestion that negative attitudes of others occurred in the SA process, such as lack of serious (56%) and subjectivity (56%). There also existed psychological problems, for instance, a fear of being out of line with others, or pre-perception about score scale with few agreements.

With respect to organisational resources, top leadership was the most important element in the Vietnamese business environment, and also crucial for successful SA (78%). Four out of nine managers expressed that training and communication, are crucial factors in implementing the SA activity. There were some claims that the training should be extended with more details. A lack of efficient communication across the company appeared (78% agreement) leading to a decrease of the usefulness of this SA tool. The view of inefficient quality system existed in the company was stated by three out of nine managers. Four managers provided some evidence of difficulties the company cope with its system. Quality experience of Vietnamese award application, unfortunately, brought a negative and suspicious attitude mostly. Moreover, inefficient management competence was expressed to be challenged for successful SA as well.

In terms of organisational management culture, resistance to change emerged as a potential barrier of organisational culture when applying such advanced knowledge as the EFQM Excellence Model with 33% agreement.

Finally, the impact of national culture was not strongly evident. Several typical Vietnamese characteristics (such as being easy-going, self-satisfied, encourage attitude or over-optimistic) were recognised as potential challenges to successful SA with 44% agreement.

4.4.4 The potential of implementing EFQM SA in Vietnam (theme 4)

It is welcome that 56% of the respondents in Company A responded that the EFQM-SA questionnaire was useful for Vietnamese companies in general. However, a certain number of conditions needed to be considered in the execution of the SA process (such as management commitment, training).

4.4.5 Further discussion on advantages and difficulties of SA implementation

Regarding the list of the advantages and disadvantages of a SA questionnaire tool, which is given by literature review, Table 4-6 briefly showed the confirmation of respondents in Company A.

Table 4-6. Overview of confirmation of SA-EFQM advantages and disadvantages in Company A

	Total confirmed managers (n=9)	Number of references										
		Top	Department						Manufacturing			% agreement
		A1	A2	A3	A4	A5	A9	A6	A7	A8		
ADVANTAGES												
<i>Easy to implement/use</i>	5	1		4	1		4	2				56
<i>Clearly defined goals</i>	2				1					1		22
<i>It is a simple tool</i>	2	3				1						22
<i>Quick/ not time-consuming</i>	1							1				11
<i>Low efforts/ Low resources requirements</i>	1					1						11

Table 4-6 (continued). Overview of confirmation of SA-EFQM advantages and disadvantages in Company A

	Total confirmed managers (n=9)	Number of references									% agreement
		Top	Department					Manufacturing			
		A1	A2	A3	A4	A5	A9	A6	A7	A8	
DISADVANTAGES											
<i>Lack of accuracy of overall outcome/ difficult to score</i>	8		5	4	2	7	1	3	9	5	89
<i>The outputs represent perception and require validation</i>	7		2	1		4	2	1	2	3	78
<i>Difficult to identify the causal factors</i>	4			1	1	2			1		44
<i>Lack of the need to provide evidence</i>	3			1	4		1				33
<i>Other (hard to conduct SA regularly)</i>	3	5		1						1	33
<i>Other (Unfamiliar language /difficult to understand)</i>	6	1				1	3	1	3	1	66
<i>Other (Difficulty in implementation in general)</i>	3	3						1	2		33

As shown in this table, the ease of implementation tends to be defined as the predominant advantage of the EFQM questionnaire technique with 56% agreement. Other advantages (such as simple, low efforts) received less attention from the participants. In fact, there were several confused views about advantages and benefits of SA-EFQM.

Conversely, many options of pre-defined difficulties were chosen by majority managers. These disadvantages were stated include: ‘*Lack of accuracy of overall outcome*’; ‘*The outputs represent perception and requires validation*’; and ‘*Unfamiliar language/difficult to understand*’. Undoubtedly, almost all challenges of applying SA mentioned in literature existed in case Company A.

To sum up, the most important matter was adopting a simple SA tool such as the EFQM questionnaire; the company would accept both its potential benefits and difficulties. Along with gaining from the fundamental benefits of SA tool for instance identifying the company’s position

and areas for improvement, relevant disadvantages would be highlighted through the SA process in order to minimise the negative effects.

The manufacturing managers seemed to focus on the adverse points rather than the advantages of SA-EFQM. Three disadvantages highlighted in this table include: *Lack of accuracy of overall outcome/ difficult to score*; *The outputs represent perception and require validation*; and *Unfamiliar language*, all received 100% agreement in this group. It seems these managers had many difficulties during the SA implementation process and these things led to the limitation of SA-EFQM to benefit to their company.

4.5 Conclusion

Figure 4-5 summarises a number of key findings identified by interview data within case Company A. Using the same template approach, the emergent themes in the case will be highlighted in order to help to examine empirical data parallel with the literature reviewed in Chapter 6. In addition, Table 4-7 contained key results associated with agreement percentage of each management level and it can be used for further cross-case analysis.

It is plausible to demonstrate that the usefulness of using self assessment in case Company A was analysed in connection with the template analysis used. The benefit of SA to identify the strongest and weakest areas within the company and associated improvement priorities, based on its weaknesses, was recognised to be beneficial in improving the company's business results. Many managers are confident that the dominant impact of the individual role, which includes understanding, attitude and experience, affected the accuracy of the SA outcomes. This means, the higher the accuracy of results, the more benefit the company will gain. However, many problematic issues involving to organisational resources, organisational culture and Vietnamese culture contributed to ineffective SA implementation.

It was also shown, with several pieces of evidence, that there had been improvement of the company's performance to some degree, owing to the SA outcomes given. The extent of the potential of the application of SA- EFQM in particular, and quality management SA in general is quite useful for Vietnamese businesses. In the next chapter, using the same analysis strategy, the findings of Company B's data will be presented.

Figure 4-5. Summary of key findings of the application of SA using the EFQM questionnaire in Company A

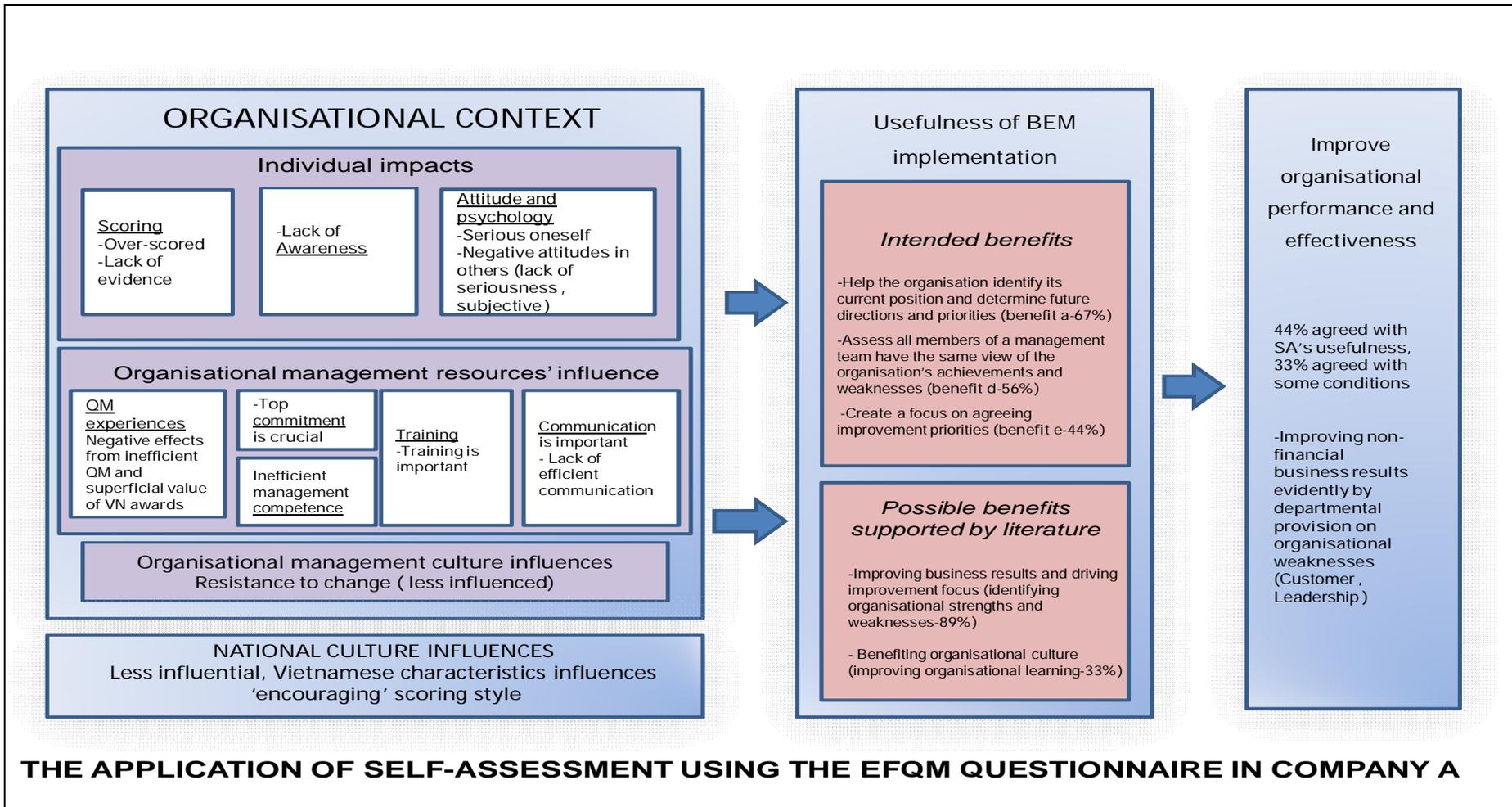


Table 4-7. A comparison of key findings among 3 different management groups of Company A

	Top management (1 respondent)	Department management (5 respondents)	Manufacturing management (3 respondents)
Theme 1: <i>The benefits of SA using the EFQM questionnaire</i>	<p>-Confirmed benefit a and benefit d</p> <p>-Suggestion on additional benefit of identifying the company' strengths and weaknesses</p>	<p>-A consensus in benefit a (60%) and d (60%)</p> <p>- In terms of the benefit to help the organisation identify its current status, a suggestion was made as 'pretty good' ranking (60%)</p> <p>-Suggested benefits in improving business performance by being aware of organisational strengths and weaknesses (80%)</p>	<p>- Benefit a and benefit e received 100% confirmation</p> <p>- The possible use of the EFQM questionnaire supported by literature is benefiting organisation's culture, especially in learning and involvement enhancement.</p>
Theme 2: <i>Confirming the usefulness of SA-EFQM in helping to improve the company's performance</i>	<p>SA is useful in general, potentially for continuous improvement</p> <p>Not reported actual improvement</p>	<p>- One view was that SA is useful generally (40%); another view (60%) was that SA could successful with some conditions</p> <p>- Evidence of actual improvement actions as the result of SA implementation was provided by 3 respondents (60%). - These actions occurred in the company's weak areas, such as Leadership, and Customer Results. (i.e. improvement in customer strategy, top manager's attitude)</p>	<p>-Agreement (60%) on the usefulness of SA-EFQM led to improvement in the company's performance, but no evidence of actual action was shown.</p>

Table 4-7 (continued). A comparison of key findings 3 different management groups of Company A

	Top management (1 participant)	Department management (5 participants)	Manufacturing management (3 participants)
Theme 3: <i>Factors influencing the success of SA implementation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Based on ‘close-to-accurate’ result -Scored most rigorously 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The results had ‘about 70-80%’ accuracy of reflection. - Scored quite tighter than manufacturing group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The SA outcomes were mostly accurate in reflecting organisational performance. - Most loose scoring
+Individual impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -‘Too high’ scoring problem - The connection between the scorer and his/her accountability -Lack of understanding -Difficult to understand - Lack of seriousness - Vietnamese psychological perception in scoring, which was influence by education scoring scale (emotional scoring) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Over-emphasis on high scores (100%) due to emotional scoring (60%) and lack of consensus of company’s performance (60%) - In scoring, there existed a relation between areas assessed and responsibility of assessors involved and internal conflicts are indicated to reduce the validity of SA usefulness (40%). - Lack of awareness (80% agreement) - There was dissension in assessing the role of personal attitude. Participants evaluated themselves as careful, strict and objective (100%) while claiming carelessness (60%) and subjective view (60%) from others. -Sensitive issues in psychological impacts received some evidence. Pre-perception in scoring was found with 60% agreement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A tendency of over-scoring (100% agreement) existed due to an emotional and subjective and ‘encouraging’ approach -Lack of awareness (100% concurrence) - Negative attitudes: Lack of seriousness/interest; (100%); subjective views (66%); lack of rigour (66%) -Psychological impact was illustrated: being afraid of a ‘low score’ (66%) or of ‘being out of line with others’ (66%).

Table 4-7 (continued). A comparison of key findings among 3 different management groups of Company A

	Top management (1 participant)	Department management (5 participants)	Manufacturing management (3 participants)
+Organisational management resource impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Ineffective quality management along with many obstacles -Impact of BE/QA was not wide and sometimes had a negative effect. -Top commitment is vital -Limited internal communication -Weak management competence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Some difficulties when the company implementing quality management were described (40%) -Some benefits and disadvantages of the application of the VQA, mostly centred on disappointments -Crucial role of top commitment and leadership (100% agreement) -Education and Training is very important (80% concurrence) - A need to train more intensive - Lack of efficient information sharing (80% agreement) - Inefficient competence exited (60%) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Limited evidence of quality management impact. - Not involved in the VQA application -Top commitment and leadership are crucial for successful SA (67% agreement) - - Intersectional communication was inefficient (67% agreement) - Inefficient competence exited (33%)
+Organisational management cultural impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Resistance to change existed in daily activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -SA implementation depends on the company's management culture (40%) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Resistance to change was indicated by 67% of participants.

Table 4-7 (continued). A comparison of key findings among 2 different management levels of Company A

	Top management (1 participant)	Department management (5 participants)	Manufacturing management (3 participants)
+National cultural impact	-A connection between over-scoring and Vietnamese characteristics (be pleasant, always give good scores)	- A minor impact of Vietnamese culture (20%) negatively -‘encouraging scoring’ (40%)	- Not contributed significantly, high scoring was influenced by ‘ easy-going ’ Vietnamese characteristic (66%)
Theme 4: The potential of implementing EFQM SA in Vietnam	-Useful/advantageous with certain organisational conditions (training) -Proposed score scale (50-70-90% instead of the current standard 20-50-75%)	- Meaningful and useful for Vietnamese organisations in several considerations , such as respectfulness, leaders commitment, confidentiality (60% agreement) - Suggestions made, such as breaking down questions into smaller items, the scoring should have more levels to score (instead of 4 levels of 0-33%-67%-100%); Useful if using external expert; difficult to use among workers	- Applicable for Vietnamese organisation owing to the benefits it brings (60%) -Need to be patient for further SA implementation owing to aware of resistance for change in Vietnam

Note: The statements **in bold** are agreed upon by **above 50%** of participants each management level

CHAPTER 5. THE DATA ANALYSIS OF CASE COMPANY B

5.0 Introduction

This chapter analyses the usefulness of SA in Company B. Using the same analysis structure as used for Company A, themes relevant to the research objectives are explored.

5.1 Company B profile

Established initially in 1966 as a state-owned company, B Garment Company was re-established in joint-stock ownership in 2005 and is known as a leading processing garment manufacturer in Northern Vietnam.

Company B now has more than 2,200 highly skilled employees and has an annual output of 5 million high quality products. It has 8 functional departments, 5 manufacturing units (4 tailoring factories and 1 cutting one) with specialized production, and covers an area of 60.000 square metres. Its products have diversified from high-grade brand jackets, jeans, ladies' suits, ski wear and T-shirts, to normal kinds of swim wear, skirts, and pyjamas; and are exported to largely worldwide, mainly to the USA (65%), Japan (15%), and the EU (10%) (Hang, 2010). The array of its famous customers includes Mitsui, JJB Sport, Garnet and K mart.

Recently, the global recession affected the production and export of all textiles and garment leaders in Vietnam. However, in 2008, the company overcame these challenges and showed comprehensive achievements. Total turnover was 250 billion Vietnam Dong (£ 8 million), up 22% comparing to the previous year. Return on Equity of the company, putting it in the top three Vietnamese leaders of the textile made garment industry, with growth of above 100%. Profit before tax was 26.89 billion Dong, up 39%. Workers' income was up 11% comparing to the same previous period.

Starting on the quality journey with the principle '*The quality of the products decides the existence of the company*', Company B gained ISO 9001:2000 certificates in 2002 and the environment control system ISO 14000 in 2003. This company first entered the Vietnam Quality programme in 1999, and won the competition with the Silver award and equivalent awards in 1999, 2000 and 2006.

Consistent with maintaining the quality of its products, the company organises many training courses, including knowledge improvement and product quality control, throughout the company twice a year. The result of such activities is that the company won three Gold Medals for Vietnamese high quality products and quality trophies in 2007.

5.2 The brief analysis of the EFQM questionnaire results in Phase 1

The summary of the participant of the EFQM SA questionnaire in Company B is shown in Table 5-1.

Table 5-1. The response of questionnaire undertaking in Company B

<i>POSITION AL LEVEL</i>	<i>PARTICIPANTS</i>	Number of distributions	Number of participants	% response	% contribute to the total (n=30)
TOP	Board of Directors	2	2	100%	6.67%
SENIOR	Departmental Managers	18	16	89%	60%
	Manufacturing Directors	10	9	90%	33.33%
TOTAL		30	27	90%	

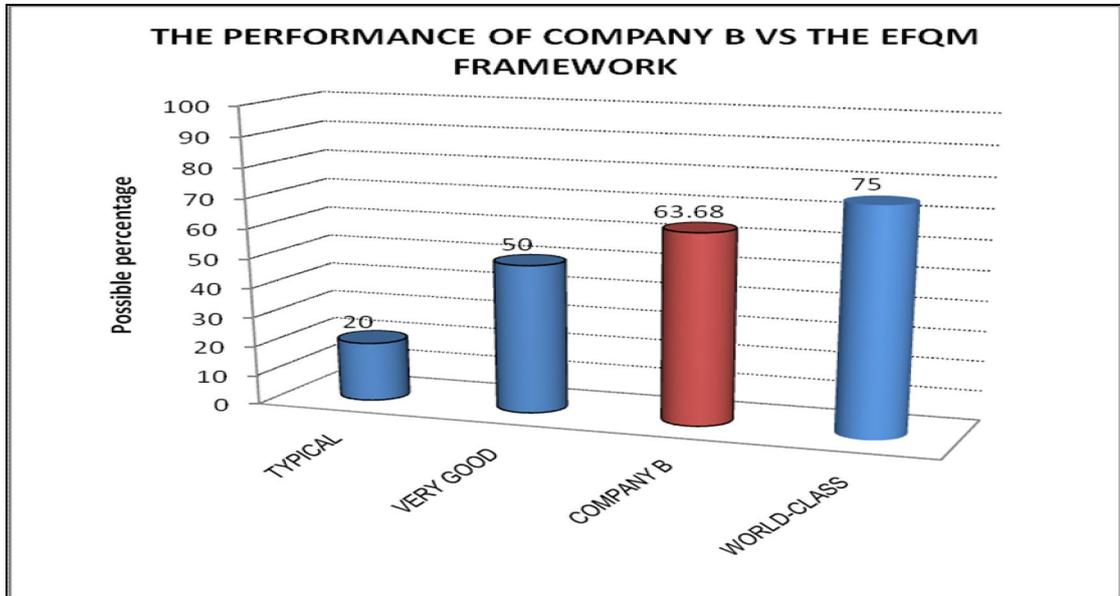
Using a similar display approach to Company A, Table 5-2 shows the overall scores with regards to individual criterion among nine criteria of the EFQM Excellence Model. The full details of Company B's results of each category of the EFQM Excellence Model can be found in Appendix M.

Table 5-2. Overall performance of Company B against EFQM SA approach

Category	Total scores	Scores scored	% of total scores
Leadership	50	30.49	60.98
Policy and Strategy	40	23.09	57.73
People	50	31.77	63.53
Partnerships and Resources	50	33.47	66.94
Processes	70	42.27	60.38
Customer Results	90	55.69	61.88
People Results	50	33.16	66.33
Society Results	30	20.96	69.88
Key performance Results	70	47.48	67.83
Overall performance scores	500		63.68

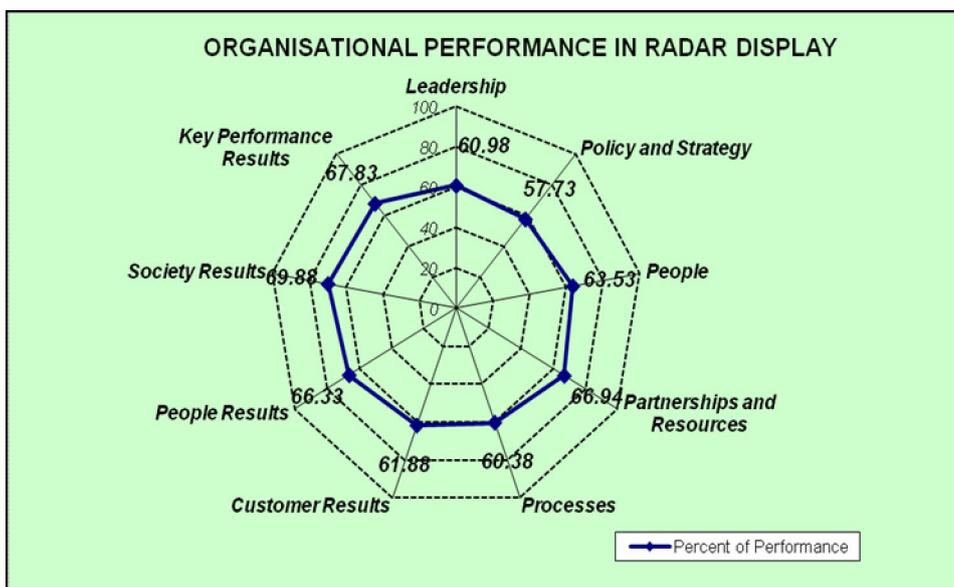
As can be seen, the overall scores of 63.68% of company B in this table displays a position halfway between ‘Very good’ and ‘World-Class’ rank with the scoring scheme provided by the EFQM (Figure 5-1). Surprisingly, this result is similar to Company A’s result (64.8%).

Figure 5-1. Overall percent score of Company B benchmarking the EFQM ranking framework



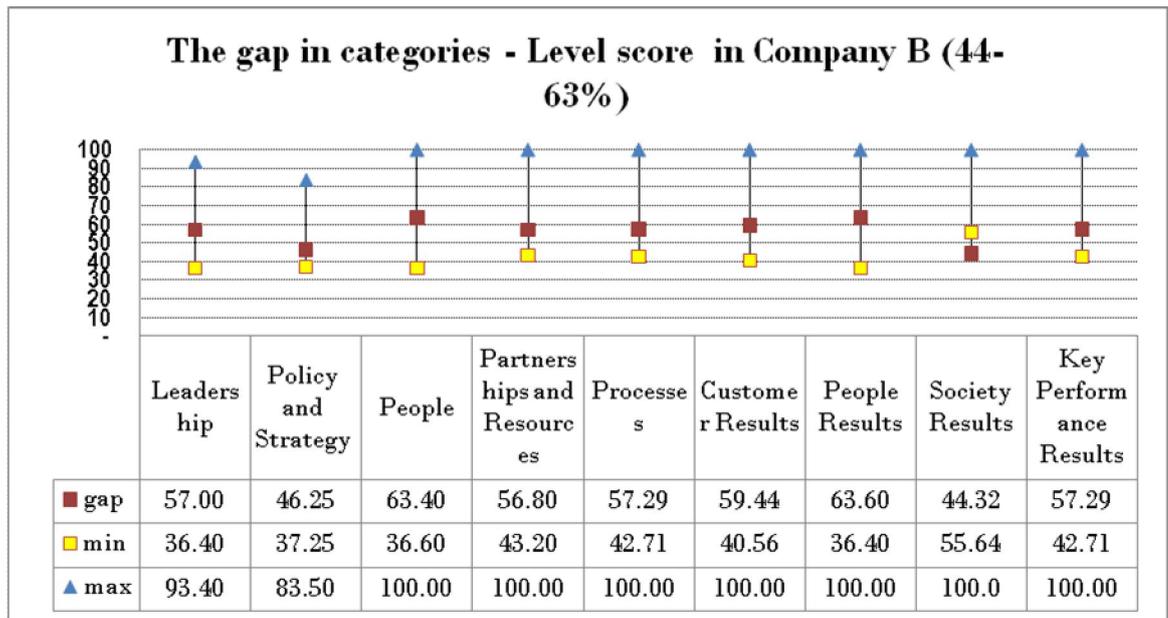
When the SA outcomes were displayed in RADAR format (Figure 5-2), the categories closest to the core — which include Policy and Strategy, Processes and Leadership — were the weaker areas of Company B. On the other hand, Society Results, Key Performance Results and Partnerships, and Resources were possible strengths.

Figure 5-2. Organisational performance of Company B in RADAR display



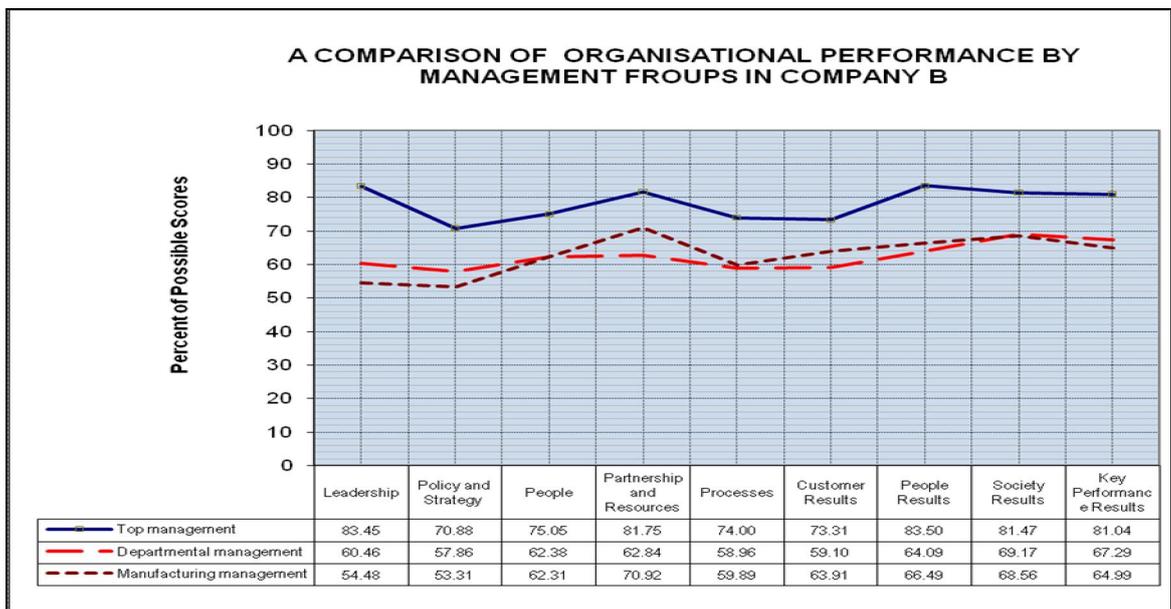
Whilst Figure 5-3 illustrates the gap between the highest and lowest scores of each category of the EFQM Excellence Model in Company B, Figure 5-4 shows the gap among three management groups: top, department and manufacturing. Over emphasis on high scores seemed to have occurred in this company with evidence of seven out of nine criteria with maximum scores of 100%. Unpredictably, the large score gap, in a range from 44% to 63%, is quite similar with the range from 45% to 63% in Company A (Figure 4-4). It is noted that 100% scores appeared in Company A in three criteria.

Figure 5-3. The scoring gap in organisational performance of Company B



Among three management groups, whilst the assessments of departmental and manufacturing groups are quite similar, top managers scored most highly.

Figure 5-4. Organisational performance by management groups



5.3 Interview Data analysis

A list of managers who took part in the interviews is shown in Table 5.3.

Table 5-3. Summary of interview participants in Company B

No	Interviewee	Position	Units	Number of participants	% contribute to the total (n=11)
POSITIONAL LEVEL 1 : TOP MANAGEMENT				2	18%
1	B1	Executive Director, Manager	<i>The Board of Directors, Quality Assurance Dept</i>		
2	B11	General Director	<i>The Board of Directors</i>		
SENIOR DEPARTMENTAL MANAGEMENT				5	46%
3	B2	Manager	<i>Import and Export Dept.</i>		
4	B3	Deputy Manager	<i>Planning Dept.</i>		
5	B4	Deputy Manager	<i>Quality Assurance Dept.</i>		
6	B9	Deputy Manager	<i>Sales Dept.</i>		
7	B10	Manager	<i>Administration Dept.</i>		
SENIOR MANUFACTURING MANAGEMENT					
8	B5	Director	<i>Garment factory no.2</i>	4	36%
9	B6	Director	<i>Garment factory no.1</i>		
10	B7	Director	<i>Garment factory no.4</i>		
11	B8	Director	<i>Garment factory no.5</i>		

Data analysis of the three management groups will be presented in the following sections.

5.3.1 The evaluation by top management

As can be seen in Table 5-3, there were two top directors involved in the interview stage. Apart from the CEO (B11) (or General Director), the Quality Manager (B1) is also a Director and the key contact in Company B.

Theme 1: The benefits of SA using the EFQM questionnaire

(i) *Confirmation of the intended benefits of SA-EFQM*

Benefit a: Help the organisation identify its current position and determine future directions and priorities.

There was 100% agreement in this group about this benefit.

(a1) Help the organisation identify its current position

Regarding the overall score of Company B (63.68%) and its associated position 'Very good' based on the EFQM scale, according to interviewee B1, this position was incorrect and rather higher than reflected in reality:

In terms of my company's current position, it is considered quite a good company in the Northern region. According to the EFQM scoring standard, I think my company's score should be about 50% rationally. The current outcome seems to be a little bit high (B1)

However, this interviewee also gave positive response about the usefulness of SA-EFQM to provide a comprehensive performance picture of her company:

I highly appreciated the final outcomes given from the survey because they helped to provide an evidential and specific conclusion of a comprehensive picture of my company (B1)

(a2) Determine future directions and priorities

B1 affirmed the benefit of this SA approach in identifying the company's strengths and areas for improvement:

...because in terms of the SA results, the company's Board of Directors (BOD) is capable of identifying where the company is; identifying which aspect needs to be improved; and trying to maintain the company's current strengths. (B1)

The company's CEO (B11) emphasised the evidential characteristic of SA outcomes:

The above results contributed to the improvement of overall business performance and provided the company leaders with detailed proofs to propose efficient improvement activities. (B11)

Benefit b: Allow comparisons with the achievements of other organisations

There was no response concerning this benefit in this group

Benefit c: Encourage the organisation to monitor its progress on a regular basis

No participants referred to this point.

Benefit d: Assess whether all members of a management team have the same view of the organisational achievements and weaknesses

Regarding the benefit of the SA tool in assessing the view of the management group, both directors showed their surprise. The top leaders recognised that there existed a big gap in their manager views in particular criteria:

It is a proof of the gap in assessing views among senior managers in terms of identifying the organisational strengths and weaknesses (B11)

I was quite surprised because of the different assessments from each person in the management team of the company. (B1)

With respect to this use, interviewee B1 explained more exhaustively why she thought that this benefit was important in her company.

... [benefit] (d) is also important because the viewpoint of each department towards the performance results of the company is clearly expressed. This is very meaningful for the company leaders' management accountability.

Having an opportunity to know the EFQM questionnaire with its systematic and scientific method of company SA helps the management team avoid confusion before bringing out the assessment about the strengths and weaknesses of the company.

About the SA's implementation within the middle managers, we find that it's an opportunity for us to see whether our viewpoint and those of the middle managers are the same or not. (B1)

Benefit e. Create a focus on agreeing improvement priorities

There was no response in this benefit from the top management.

Benefit f: Ensure that the organisation is not over-stressed by too many improvement actions.

Regarding this aspect, neither of the two interviewees had an opinion.

(i) Confirmation of possible benefits suggested by the literature review

Two other benefits of the SA approach suggested by the literature were indicated in this group: identifying the company's strengths and weaknesses, and improving organisational learning

Firstly, the identification of the company's strengths and weaknesses when using the EFQM questionnaire was recognised in the mixed view of two participants. Participant B1 showed her agreement in this identification as stated:

When implementing this SA-EFQM for the company, the results in my opinion are mostly accurate because they fit with the common characteristics, the strengths and weaknesses of all the companies in the garment industry, such as people management and satisfaction due to the specific labour characteristics, i.e. labour intensity and relatively low salary.
(B1)

Particularly focusing on one of the weaknesses of the company in the Strategy and Policy category, participant B1 confirmed:

The exact criterion is Policy and Strategy [as company's weakness]. I absolutely agree with the assessment that this is the weakest criterion for several reasons. To be more exact, it is very difficult to actively propose specific strategies for each period of time. Besides, the management competence of the management team is limited; therefore, the identification of the customers' needs and expectations is performed very poorly... At the moment, my company is just able to implement FOB³⁶ products, completely only processing only. Therefore, the market research, business strategy and relevant distribution in my opinion are all very weak. All the members in the management team have the same idea about that criterion. Hence, I think the above-mentioned criterion is completely accurate. (B1)

Disagreeing with the EFQM results, the CEO (B11) described other organisational weaknesses—which did not conform to the three lowest criteria in the SA results. Using his own experience, his view was expressed with several explanations:

According to the results of the questionnaire, the two weakest sides of our company were Policy and Strategy and Leadership. However, in my opinion, the weakest points of our company at the moment are market products (Customer Results) and human resources (People Results) ... About the second weakest point, the People Results, because of the big gap between the knowledge one person gets from the national education system and that required to apply in reality in Vietnam, in our company's recruitment from graduates, we need to pay more attention to re-training to adapt to our company's real situation ... Our company also had a strategic viewpoint in training competent staffs who were capable of direct interactions with foreign partners. However, the scope was still small (B11)

Regarding the scores, even Director B1, who had expressed many optimistic views, still had some doubts about of the SA results, such as the low scores which occurred in the Leadership category:

I am just confused about the scorers' evaluation in leadership (B1)

In the second confirmed use of the outcomes of SA implementation, organisational learning

³⁶ FOB: Free of Board.

through the awareness of ‘modern management knowledge in the world’ was learnt and practised, according to interviewee B11:

The results provided more information for our company’s management system. If the managers didn’t get it, it should be explained further. If they were incompetent, they had to study more. (B11)

All the mentioned results help to improve people’s thinking, and enhance people’s awareness, hence, improve the performance of the whole company ... I can say that all the knowledge of the SA-FEQM and its standards is the management knowledge that our people didn’t know before. I mean I am satisfied with the knowledge I’ve taken from the SA’s training ... Finally, I recognise that SA using the EFQM could improve the management views. (B1)

To illustrate the varied perceptions, Table 5-4 presents the responses of the top management group. Among the intended benefits provided by the EFQM questionnaire, this group agreed that **benefit a** (*Help the organisation its current position and determine future directions and priorities*) and **benefit d** (*Assess whether all members of a management team have the same view of the organisation’s achievements and weaknesses*) were confirmed.

Table 5-4: Overview of the benefits of SA-EFQM by top manager’s responses

The confirmation of the benefits of the EFQM questionnaire SA	Total confirmed interviewees	Number of references		
		Manager B1	Manager B11	Total
<i>Confirm the intended benefits</i>				
Benefit (a) <i>Help the organisation identify its current position and determine future directions and priorities</i>	2/2	1	1	2
Benefit (b) <i>Allow comparisons with the achievements of other organisations.</i>	0			0
Benefit (c) <i>Encourage the organisation to monitor its progress on a regular basis</i>	0			0
Benefit (d) <i>Assess whether all members of a management team have the same view of the organisation’s achievements and weaknesses</i>	2/2	5	2	7
Benefit (e) <i>Create a focus for agreeing improvement priorities</i>	0			0

Table 5.4 (continued). Overview of the benefits of SA-EFQM by top manager's responses

The confirmation of the benefits of the EFQM questionnaire SA	Total confirmed interviewees	Number of references		
		Manager B1	Manager B11	Total
Benefit (f) <i>Ensure that the organisation is not over-stressed by too many improvement actions</i>	0			0
<i>Confirm possible benefits suggested by literature review</i>				
- <i>Identify organisational strengths and weaknesses</i>	1/2	3		3
- <i>Improving organisation's learning</i>	2/2	5	2	7

Theme 2 Confirming the usefulness of SA-EFQM in helping to improve the company's performance

The top leaders definitely showed a clear interest in the potential to bring improvement to the company:

Technically, the overall results could contribute to improve the company's performance ... As my thought; the EFQM questionnaire is close to real business environment. It is scientific in terms of bringing the comprehensive picture and collected frankly by the key management team... (B1)

The results of the assessment based on each criterion revealed many interesting things about the company. (B11)

Unfortunately, they did not provide any evidence of improvement actions, which supposedly took place owing to SA implementation in the company.

Theme 3 Factors influencing the success of SA implementation

In terms of the accuracy of SA outcomes, top management agreed 'mostly accurate' in general, but regarding some elements, they showed some disagreements on certain aspects of their company: "It just reflected most of the activities in the company", according to the CEO.

Factors influencing the SA results and its usefulness are examined in the following sections.

(i) *Individual impacts on the degree of accuracy of the SA outcome*

Scoring: Initially, the CEO (B11) expressed slightly disappointed with the accuracy of overall score:

The result of SA using EFQM didn't reflect accurately 100%. It just reflected most of the activities in the company ... The overview didn't meet the expectation of the company's leaders. (B11)

There was no comment from the CEO (B11) on scoring issue. Participant B1 revealed an 'over-scoring' tendency: "the current outcome seems to be a little bit high". Besides, this participant also showed her impression to the ease of scoring method of the EFQM questionnaire in assessing.

Awareness/understanding: Interviewee B1 expressed a mixed view of the evaluation. She stated that the EFQM SA "is as simple and uncomplicated to comprehend as others yes-no questions", however, "in general, this questionnaire is still not easy to understand. The technical terms, especially in quality management, challenge participants". (B1)

Attitude and psychological impacts: Interviewee B1 emphasised that a 'serious' attitude was needed in assessing; without it, "the differences among the scores of the management team are caused by quite a loose assessment perception which leads to large gaps within each criterion". (B1)

(ii) *The influences of organisational management resources*

There was little comment from top management about the impact of organisational resources from this.

Quality management experience: Although quality management profile of Company B was rich, participant B1 mentioned that the current situation of her company was described as having product emphasis rather than TQM or an all-system emphasis.

Just managed the quality system which emphasizing in products, not been achieved the total quality management. (B1)

Although both leaders indicated that were not involve directly in the VQA application in their company, some positive and negative comments were given:

... we benefited from the LAN³⁷ application and IT application to the management process. Finally, another benefit was that our company's productivity was improved and we were in the Top 5 companies in the country who had the best productivity. (B11)

Concerning the VQA, there have been some comments about its 'negative' points in relation to the prize awarding process. Therefore, our common idea about this award is that it's not very good. (B1)

Particularly, the CEO gave his explanations concerning the limitation of the VQA's process:

In my opinion, the SA process using the Vietnam Quality Award was not detailed and didn't closely reflect the reality because this SA just relied on reports and we considered the company's key performance results were based on the statistics provided by the company itself and subjective judgments from the Assessment board. Therefore, the SA had a limited effect on the identification of the company's improvement opportunities. (B11)

According to the CEO, despite this, there is a willingness to re-enter the VQA in the following two years.

Top commitment: Surprisingly, there was no response concerning the role of top commitment in this group.

Education and training: Regarding education and training issues, interviewee B11 highlighted the essentialness of SA expertise skill and external facilitators to the success of SA implementation:

... the specific expertise of analysis using this questionnaire should be concentrated (B11)

This CEO also suggests that training needs to be more intensive:

If more further explanation, the results could be more exact. (B11)

The company CEO referred to the fact that that the educational background of some of the assessor group (senior managers) was still problematic.

Besides, the young and new managers who were promoted from a worker background were not well educated ... Because of the shortage of managers, we were forced to promote them to the manufacturing management positions. (B11)

³⁷ LAN is shorted for Local Area Network

Communication: There was no comment from this group on the impact of communication on SA implementation.

Management competence: Some evidence of limited management competence was indicated by two directors:

Besides, the competence of the management team is limited; therefore, the identification of the customers' needs and expectations is performed very poorly. (B1)

The core managers of our company were not of the same competence. There was still some one that was afraid of improvement and didn't catch up with the new quality control system, and was slow in managing the information control system. ... They were lacking in strategic vision. Because of the shortage of managers, we were forced to promote them to the manufacturing management positions while they were of limited competence. (B11)

Specially, the CEO (B11) recommends the relationship between SA implementation and management competence:

The SA using the questionnaire you mentioned above fairly represented the management competence of all managers in the company. (B11)

(iii)The influences of organisational management culture

No details in this point were described by this group.

(vi)The influences of Vietnamese culture

There was no evidence of national culture reported by this group.

Theme 4. The potential of implementing EFQM SA in Vietnam

In evaluating the potential of using such SA in other Vietnamese organisations, they believed that there seemed to be a very bright prospect for using SA against BEM. The CEO commented:

Generally, the implementation process did have a good effect, and its score ranking method was suitable and close to the Vietnamese ranking system (Bad – Typical – Good – Excellent) ... Finally, it directly affected the considerations of the company's leaders in

paying more attention to the management system with detailed and persuasive proofs.
(B11)

This view was echoed by interviewee B1, who emphasised the additional benefit of SA in strengthening company competitiveness:

I totally agree with the idea that the SA-EFQM is useful for Vietnamese companies. We can tell that through the SA experience, everyone [of management team] is well aware of the benefits of such SA. Moreover, the SA directly affects the company's performance and enhances the competitiveness of the company....

I thought that the application of such an assessment tool should focus on the management team. After accomplishment, the possibility to deploy this questionnaire has been undertaken widely for all staff. (B1)

Although the CEO expressed some disappointment with SA outcome, he finally gave the general evaluation of SA implementation describing by his experience:

In general, the SA using the EFQM questionnaire was quite easy to understand and interesting to the management team who had been trained in management classes or who had read management books before. However, to other people, further explanation and more training should be needed. (B11)

5.3.2 The evaluation by departmental management

Similar to Company A, there were five departmental managers of Company B taking part in the interviews. They were: Manager of Import and Export department (B2); Deputy Manager of Planning department (B3); Deputy Manager of Quality Assurance department (B4); Deputy Manager of (Domestic) Sales Department (B9) and Manager of Administration department (B10).

Theme 1: The benefits of SA using the EFQM questionnaire

(i) Confirmation of the intended benefits of SA-EFQM

Benefit a: Help the organisation identify its current position and determine future directions and priorities.

Two out of five department managers who agreed with this intended benefit generally.

(a1) Help the organisation identify its current position

Two respondents showed doubt about the accuracy of results regarding the company's 'Very-good' position as recognised by the overall SA scores:

It is too good with this international scale, or our company is 'Very good', nearly reaching world-class.... In my opinion, initially, I thought the accurate result should fluctuate from 300 to 500 (on 1000-point scale). According to this result (64%), the majority of people didn't understand the questionnaire ... It should be ... about 30-50%

In fact, I can confirm that most Vietnamese companies haven't met international standards. Of course this excludes some foreign-invested enterprises that have good management processes....In reality; I reckon that Vietnamese companies haven't done these things well. If we apply your European standard, most Vietnamese companies are likely to score around 30% - 50% as I have said, and can never dream of 75%. What we have done was 'pretty good'... it [ranking] did not reach good' (B2)

Maybe, it is incorrect... or it is imprecise... I think the typical score should be 50%. It is therefore inappropriate with a score of 60% and above. In fact, it is greater than the real typical score. In my view, the European standards might be too rigorous. (B10)

(a2) Determine future directions and priorities

The benefit of this SA tool in defining the priorities for improvement was confirmed by manager B10:

All of those strengths and weakness information of the organisation are new to me. The perception of the scorer has changed after completing the SA-EFQM. For instance, the management team has a more positive direction through these results. (B10)

Benefit b: Allow comparisons with the achievements of other organisations

There was no agreement in affirming this intended benefit of SA –EFQM.

Benefit c: Encourage the organisation to monitor its progress on a regular basis.

No interviewee referred to this point.

Benefit d: Assess whether all members of a management team have the same view of the organisation's achievements and weaknesses

Manager B9 showed her impressiveness when witnessing the gap among different management perception:

When receiving the SA's results which are segmented into different functions of each of the departments and factories... It's very impressive. I couldn't believe that we can get such good results thanks to this questionnaire.... (B9)

Benefit e. Create a focus on agreeing improvement priorities

The Administrative Manager (B10) comments about this benefit:

The benefit (e) is of greatest importance in showing the priority of weaknesses, so that the organisation could concentrate on it for easier improvement. Indeed, there are some weaknesses which do not need to be improved immediately. (B10)

Benefit f: Ensure that the organisation is not over-stressed by too many improvement actions

Similar to benefits b and c, nothing noticeable happened in this issue.

(i) Confirmation of possible benefits suggested by the literature review

The benefit of SA-EFQM in identifying the company's strengths and areas for possible improvement was indicated clearly by three members of this group.

Two organisational potential strengths which were identified previously by SA in Company B were Society Results and Key Performance Results (section 5.2). This departmental group confirmed:

In my opinion, the strengths are Society Results, and the Key Performance Results (Criteria 8 and 9), these are evaluated as accurate which totally coincides with the common assessment of the whole organisation. (B10)

... the strengths and weaknesses in my opinion only partly coincide with those of the company. (B9)

Similarly, as organisational potential weaknesses Policy and Strategy (category 2) and Leadership (category 1), received many supportive comments. To provide the rationale for the judgment of Leadership as a company's weakness, Manager B2 put forward a lot of convincing evidence acquired over a long period of time:

I hold those points to explain why Leadership in my company is low. Overall, this reflects the real situation in the company ... In fact, Leadership of the company is at a certain (limited) level. Perhaps, because they (managers) are not educated well, their knowledge about human management is not suitable. Therefore, there exists the situation that if you

don't have enough knowledge about human management, many big problems can happen because of that. (B2)

On the other hand, there were several disagreements about organisational weaknesses and they also suggested other weak categories. For example, Sales Manager (B9) also gave another weakness, the *People* category:

I scored the People criterion the weakest because of the high rate of workers' quitting jobs or another word was there was no feeling of loyalty towards the company. (B9)

Secondly, the additional benefits of SA questionnaire described were improving management viewpoint, vision, awareness and organisational learning; there being consensus here among all five participants:

In my opinion, if we follow such steps, the company's leaders will have more information concerning mind-sets, viewpoints, working behaviour of people in other countries ... for reference. That would benefit the company. It's a chance to learn about modern management. (B3)

In conclusion, it's useful in terms of the given information and the learning opportunity for Vietnamese management teams as well. (B9)

I am sure it did help. After accomplishing the SA-EFQM, the scorers' minds have changed. For example, after this questionnaire's results, all the members of management team have strengthened their awareness and vision. (B4)

More significantly, participants inspired SA outcomes because it helped to demonstrate a holistic organisational picture and vision.

It is a good chance to look back on ourselves, and update relevant information among departments and divisions concurrently. (B10)

To me, what you propose in this assessment and steps for the company to employ them is completely satisfactory. I don't know how others think but personally I really like it. This is the opportunity for companies to look back on their situation to know where they are, on or off the track. I'm fully contented. (B2)

According to B10, when implementing SA, the company has the chance to move towards a European SA approach and then its result will contribute to management enhancement.

It also contributes to the perception of an organisational assessment method of European organisations in comparison with managers' perception in Vietnamese organisations ... The scorer has more opportunities to learn from factors which have not yet been understood (B10)

Table 5-5 presents an overview of departmental management's responses

Table 5-5. Overview of the benefits of SA-EFQM by departmental manager's responses

The confirmation of the benefits of the EFQM questionnaire SA	Total confirmed interviewees	Number of references					
		Manager B2	Manager B3	Manager B4	Manager B9	Manager B10	Total
<i>Confirm the intended benefits</i>							
Benefit (a) <i>Help the organisation identify its current position and determine future directions and priorities</i>	1/5	30				1+ 10	5
Benefit (b) <i>Allow comparisons with the achievements of other organisations.</i>	0						0
Benefit (c) <i>Encourage the organisation to monitor its progress on a regular basis</i>	0						0
Benefit (d) <i>Assess whether all members of a management team have the same view of the organisation's achievements and weaknesses</i>	1/5				1		1
Benefit (e) <i>Create a focus for agreeing improvement priorities</i>	1/5					1	1
Benefit (f) <i>Ensure that the organisation is not over-stressed by too many improvement actions</i>	0						0
<i>Confirm possible benefits suggested by literature review</i>							
<i>-Identify organisational strengths and weaknesses</i>	3/5	3			2	2	7
<i>-Improving organisation's learning</i>	5/5	1	2	1	2	4	10

Note: O = Other views

Theme 2 Confirming the usefulness of SA EFQM in helping to improve the company's performance

Two out of five participants showed a positive confirmation of generic benefits to their company based on the use of SA.

I think it [the SA-EFQM result] will contribute to the improvement of overall business performance. If I consider this result correctly, I will start to solve the problems step by step, for example the problem of poor leadership. I do it by asking why, then figuring out how to overcome it. After all, those are the consensus of opinions of all managers. (B2)

Certainly it is [benefited]... Because our company's products now are exported to the European market, we should know about the European assessment standards currently applied, not only for the products but also for the manufacturers of such products. As a whole, it's very useful for the company. (B9)

However, there were some considerations surrounding the conditions of successful SA. They thought that SA is useful when receiving full support from top leaders (two responses); or from 'positive' attitude of participants (one response). They stated:

If the organisation expanded the assessment throughout, with the approval of managers, the board of directors would have a consensus upon which to make a decision, so that they could direct which particular criterion should be implemented in order to improve organisational performance. (B10)

This is a benefit only when the question is answered in positive way. It can't be accurate without being answered positively. (B2)

There was no report of actual improvement activities. One participant affirmed:

... improvement on organisational disadvantages would be directed into actions, through the specific contents of each question. ...Unfortunately, there have not been any improvements applied after SA. (B10)

Theme 3. Factors influencing the success of SA implementation

(i) *Individual impacts on the degree of accuracy of the SA outcome*

Scoring: In terms of the validity of SA scores, two interviewees stated that there was a tendency of over-emphasising high scores, although "people didn't think" on purpose (B3). Manager B2 expressed his viewpoint that SA should be conducted honestly to lessen the degree of "less reliable" results:

In fact, when you sent me the result, I referred to the general result of the whole company, which is about 30 - 50% ... I think this score is high. (B2)

Frankly, this interviewee admitted that this high tendency included him:

Even me, I marked high on some questions. Based on the foundation of Vietnamese companies generally ... the final score should not get that high (B2)

Further, the degree of 'mostly accurate' SA scores was revealed by four department managers, except B3, who suggested a lower degree, 'quite accurate'.

Awareness/understanding: An explanation for the lack of apparent accuracy may be due to an awareness dilemma. Two out of five managers identified about a lack of understanding was present:

The reason why this [results] is inconsistent is because of those who completed the questionnaire, not because of the questionnaire itself. People were not fully aware or did not thoroughly understand the questionnaire, but they didn't even show this or ask for clarification. (B3)

I think it depends on the understanding level of each person, or participant's capacity...In fact, when reading your questionnaire, there are people who didn't understand the meaning of questions completely ... when being interviewed, there's likelihood that they admit they marked unintentionally because they didn't understand.. (B2)

The reason of this may be because of educational background, as suggested by two managers, B2 and B3.

This is understandable due to the fact that participants were not educated well. Rather, because most of them are factory managers (9 people), the final qualitative result was far away from the standard. This proves the heavy effect of education impact ... I said before, many people don't have an adequate understanding level... Overall, this reflects the real situation in the company... (B2)

In contrast, there was one response that the SA questionnaire was 'fairly easy to understand'. (B10)

Attitude and psychological impacts: The Planning, Import and Export Manager, who appeared satisfied with SA, suggested that SA application requires the 'right' attitude, consideration and rigour:

I myself had to take into careful consideration how to assess it fairly ... so I could mark

100% without having doubts, but personally I wanted to use my own opinions... the general results are quite accurate... so we had to ponder carefully. (B2)

At the same time, this interviewee and another interviewee also confirmed that there existed phenomena which ‘*should not have happened*’ (B3), ‘*it was not really serious and strict*’, ‘*a loose assessment*’ (B2) and ‘*not wholly objective*’ (B3)

There seemed to be too much optimism, as one manager thought her company could achieve the European Quality Award:

When I became aware of the EFQM scoring standard benchmarking against my company’s performance, I had an idea that based on our company’s overall outcome, it could be considered for winning the European Quality Award. This can be considered a way to actively boost the improvement of the company’s performance. If a consensus is reached, it will be not very difficult to accomplish. (B4)

Additionally, a psychological phenomenon described by one manager (B9), was a fear of being out of line and being glad at having a personal score quite similar to the overall scores.

(ii) *The influences of organisational management resources*

Quality management experience: With regard to the VQA experiences, according to the Administrative Manager (B10), it seemed that the achievement of this award in Company B was not respected:

The company achieved this award and the certificate is hanging up against the wall in the Recognition room ... the Vietnam Quality Award could just be for display. (B10)

Top commitment: It was agreed by four out of five interviewees that top commitment is crucial for successful SA implementation.

I think top commitment is the key because whatever task, including this SA-EFQM implementation, is undertaken, the leaders must all agree with the implementation of such a task. (B4)

Further, management commitment is also still important for the achievement of SA.

The commitment of the management team is the most critical factor in our company’s case. Clearly, all organisational activities are under the control of the management team. The degree of their approval would lead to activities that need to be deployed as an imperative, as well as a concentration on the improvement of factors to which leaders attach special importance, and vice versa. (B10)

All participants emphasised the tight ‘cause and effect’ relationship between the success of SA implementation and the determination of leaders.

I think it depends on the company’s leaders. If they realize it is necessary to improve the weaknesses, they will make it happen! Otherwise, such a questionnaire will not help the company in any aspect. If all the leaders of the company are determined to improve, I think there will be a chance... (B3)

I think it depends on the leaders. Those at lower management levels just follow the leaders’ direction ... In fact, everyone in the company desires to improve the performance of the company. I don’t know what it is like in other divisions, but in the domestic sales area, our department’s activities mostly depend on the company’s BOD. We only work effectively if the BOD invests in us. (B9)

Education and training: Training is identified as important for ensuring the success of SA-EFQM by one manager. Manager B4 argued:

Training with the involvement of the top managers will help the company’s staff training activities in the future, and help our people direct themselves towards an objective, systematic and logical thinking ... In order to do so, training should be considered to provide the scorers with full and accurate knowledge to get the most efficient results. (B4)

This manager also confirmed his satisfaction about training issue.

its [SA] relevant training satisfies me most. (B4)

Communication: Comments from Manager B2 were that communication played an important role when undertaking SA. Information sharing should be determined ‘from the beginning’ of SA. This manager argued:

The second [important] thing is information sharing. This is because all departments are connected to each other, which requires the sharing of information. Otherwise, some problems might happen. This is like a cross-check after receiving information. (B2)

Management competence: Management competence was mentioned by two managers. The reality of insufficient management competence and the dominance of top leaders seemed to be reflected in Company B. Interviewee B2 commented:

Except for the General Director and Vice General Director, if the director of one member factory has poor management skills, he is unable to allocate human resources properly,

and this leads to reduced capability once the links among operating chains have been broken. As for functional managers, sometimes their scientific-technical knowledge is not up to date or they do not know how to apply that knowledge to work. Despite the low frequency of this problem, they tend to treat their staff improperly. In other words, the way they decide at their own discretion without considering the opinions of the majority causes staff repression. So, this attitude affects task effectiveness or hinders work flow as people work without creativity....

... Senior managers including the board of director consist of about 15 to 17 people, but more than half of them are not qualified. Hence, I propose the rate 36% which represents about only 6-7 people out of 17 people ... If we include all 40 managers of the management team, we also receive the same quantitative rate in which 1/3 managers are effective. (B2)

Most of the division were quite weak (B9)

(iii) The influences of organisational management culture

No manager in this group has mentioned this issue.

(iv) The influences of Vietnamese culture

The view, which was suggested by Manager B2, that self-esteem in traditional Vietnamese culture would lead to over-scoring phenomenon in his company.

Due to the oriental perception of the Vietnamese, we can't get rid of the idea of self-esteem. Naturally, this will be applied when we make an evaluation... (B2)

Theme 4 The potential for implementing EFQM SA in Vietnam

Concerning the usefulness of applying such an SA approach in other Vietnamese enterprises, the majority of the group agreed on the potential of the SA tool. It is clear that these evaluations were based on the assessors' experience of SA and the benefits gained in their company. Several explanations are follows:

I think it would be very useful for Vietnamese enterprises. The management team would have opportunities to think about the [new] organisational management system which is more close to state-of-the-art management ... Based on the results; organisational strengths could be developed at a reasonable level. As a result, organisational image and

position would be improved among the business community. Similarly, enterprises must concentrate on the greatest weakness, and then the second and the third one. (B10)

I think it's very useful because if we assess the company accurately, it will bring about the benefits mentioned previously. Moreover, I believe if we do this SA well, we can know our position. What's more, we can surely improve our company, and competitive advantages will be enhanced naturally without any strategy once we have recognised our strengths and weaknesses. Also, the company can heighten its position by knowing its weaknesses then overcome them. I think pricing strategy or distribution channel, etc. just play a partial role. (B2)

In my view, this is a chance for everyone in the company to have a... longer vision. The Vietnamese quality standards are somehow limited while the European standards are more open and developed. I think it's useful in terms of widening vision and knowledge... and providing more chances for Vietnamese businesses to learn. (B3)

The same viewpoint was echoed by Managers B4 and B9.

Several concerns were also described as important for successful SA in Vietnam, such as considering educational background (B2), or top commitment (B3):

A SA questionnaire survey can be easily conducted in large companies such as banks or securities companies... it is difficult to do this in the garment industry as the educational background is not high. (B2)

Finally, a suggestion about the role of external to ensure the validity of understanding and effectiveness of SA was made by one manager:

the questionnaire should still be translated based on the standard, but annotations can be added ... Assessment teams from outside are required to evaluate the company on its overall standard. (B2)

5.3.3 The evaluation by manufacturing management

Each of four participants in this group is a director of a garment factory: Director B5 in garment factory number 2; Director B6 in garment factory number 1; Director B7 in garment factory number 4; and Director B8 in garment factory number 5.

Theme 1: The benefits of SA using the EFQM questionnaire

(i) Confirmation of the intended benefits of SA-EFQM

Benefit a: Help the organisation identify its current position and determine future directions and priorities

(a1) Help the organisation identify its current position

One manager B6 stated that the position shown by the SA results was correct:

my company is of very good type. (B6)

(a2) Determine future directions and priorities

The primary benefit of determining organisational direction and improvement priorities was identified by three interviewees:

I think they have helped, simply because I think that after gaining such benefits, our company will work out the weaknesses and to seek for the improvement solutions later (B5)

Because ... thanks to the assessment results, companies can find out the weaknesses to focus on and improve.Once a weakness is identified, it should be considered and improved right away.... (B6)

Knowing the company's position to suggest the right and feasible strategy... (B7)

Benefit b: Allow comparisons with the achievements of other organisations

This benefit has been not provided by this group.

Benefit c: Encourage the organisation to monitor its progress on a regular basis

No manager referred to benefit c.

Benefit d: Assess whether all members of a management team have the same view of the organisational achievements and weaknesses

Director B6 was the only person who agreed that this was a benefit:

...we can see the gap among people's ideas and the assessment of the leaders. I therefore think its results would help. (B6)

Benefit e. Create a focus on agreeing improvement priorities;

No opinion in the group referred to this use.

Benefit f: Ensure that the organisation is not over-stressed by too many improvement actions

There was no response on this benefit in the manufacturing group of Company B.

(ii) Confirmation of possible benefits suggested by the literature

The potential of SA-EFQM in discerning the company's strengths and weaknesses was significant in Company B. Regarding the accuracy of SA results concerned with strengths, *Society Results* and *Key Performance Results*, one respondent (B5) gave many convincing explanations to express this use:

The criterion 8 (Society Results) was accurate as a company's strength because my company was developing stably and our direction was reasonable... Similarly, in the criterion 9 (Key Performance Results), the revenue of the company and that of each factory grew from year to year. We have also measured and evaluated annually and compared to previous years. This criterion was assessed to be our strength by the fact of the expanding manufacturing capacity, increasing productivity ... decreasing workers per line. (B5)

Furthermore, other organisational weaknesses, such as *Policy and Strategy* and *Processes* categories, were revealed correctly. Respondent B7 stated specifically:

Regarding the first weakness, about Policy and Strategy, ..In that aspect, our company is still weak ... In my opinion ...what we're not strong in is Policy and Strategy and People criteria. These two aspects are "weaker" because we don't have resources to work on them....

...The third [weakness] is the Processes ... This is accurate because of the following reason: Our company manufactures products to serve exports to other countries while we don't have any service to satisfy domestic needs. That's why on this point, we are very weak ...

... Because we produce in accordance with the orders, we have no idea about customers' needs. We can just hear comments about our quality... from those who place orders, but not comments from users, I mean ... real customers ... Hence, we are totally restricted in this field. (B7)

Actually, there was a kind of loosening ... no clear and strict rule or processes for companies in Vietnam so far (B7)

Another additional use of the SA tool in providing objective evidence in order to improve organisational learning was stated by manager B5:

To summarise, firstly, via the SA-EFQM questionnaire, we've learned new knowledge about assessing a company operation via 9 criteria –for any company ... Second,

concerning the benefit of the results achieved after the assessment, we can have objective proof about people's thinking about each criterion. (B5)

On this basis, a chance to look further into the company's vision and improve management thinking was provided to SA participants, as B5 stated:

I think that according to this SA-EFQM, we can consider and think deeper about... the process... I mean after our busy time with our daily work, when we have time for thinking, we have an opportunity to look at the overall activity of the company. (B5)

Table 5-6 presents an overview of manufacturing management's responses

Table 5-6. Overview of the benefits of SA-EFQM by manufacturing manager's responses

The confirmation of the benefits of the EFQM questionnaire SA	Total confirmed interviewees	Number of references from interviewee				
		Manager B5	Manager B6	Manager B7	Manager B8	Total
<i>Confirm the intended benefits</i>						
Benefit (a) <i>Help the organisation identify its current position and determine future directions and priorities</i>	3/4	1+10	7	1+10		10
Benefit (b) <i>Allow comparisons with the achievements of other organisations.</i>	0					0
Benefit (c) <i>Encourage the organisation to monitor its progress on a regular basis</i>	0					0
Benefit (d) <i>Assess whether all members of a management team have the same view of the organisation's achievements and weaknesses</i>	1/4		1			1

Table 5-6 (continued). Overview of the benefits of SA-EFQM by manufacturing manager's responses

The confirmation of the benefits of the EFQM questionnaire SA	Total confirmed interviewees	Number of references from interviewee				
		Manager B5	Manager B6	Manager B7	Manager B8	Total
Benefit (e) <i>Create a focus for agreeing improvement priorities</i>	0					0
Benefit (f) <i>Ensure that the organisation is not overstressed by too many improvement actions</i>	0					0
<i>Confirm possible benefits suggested by literature review</i>						
<i>-Identify strengths and weaknesses</i>	3/4	2	2	4	0	8
<i>-Improving organisation's learning</i>	1/4	3				3

Note: O=Other views

To sum up, the emergent benefit of SA –EFQM which received the agreement among three out of four participants in manufacturing level, was ‘*Help the organisation identify its current position and determine future directions and priorities*’ (**benefit a**). Another suggested benefit, ‘*Identify strengths and weaknesses*’, was accepted by three manage as well, as can be seen in Table 5-6.

Theme 2 Confirming the usefulness of SA-EFQM in helping to improve the company's performance

With respect to the usefulness of SA implementation in Company B, there was a consensus view that generally it benefited the company totally. In some way, it was really ‘interesting’ to many assessors:

Regarding the results, after analysing them, I found them very interesting. It will be very good if we can apply them... (B6)

...concerning the benefit of the results achieved after the assessment, we can have

objective proof about people's thinking about each criterion. (B5)

I have read through your materials and questionnaires, and think that this is the case I am really interested in and this questionnaire had a big impact on the companies. We can benefit to catch up with the regional development if we put this model into operation. Otherwise, we can't improve if we continue the current loose way of management. I really think this is a good model... (B7)

In fact, this questionnaire requires answers for those criteria which I think are quite close to the reality of a manufacturing company... In short, I feel this questionnaire is good. (B8)

Nevertheless, there was some regrets expressed that improvement actions had not been implemented after beneficial SA outcomes. Two managers commented:

However, some things to be considered during the implementation of the SA-EFQM were that the improvement plan has not turned into a detailed strategy and relevant training was insufficient. (B5)

Actually, the company's leaders would care about the assessments if those assessments were about them. (B8)

Theme 3 Factors influencing the success of SA implementation

(i) Individual impacts on the degree of accuracy of the SA outcome

Scoring: Interviewee B6 believed that lack of evidence in scoring existed in Company B, and explained:

Maybe... when assessing, people scored based on their perception about things at the time of the survey. (B6)

Awareness/understanding: Some managers suggest that there was a lack of awareness and some misunderstanding among these respondents:

In my opinion, these results were lacking in accuracy because of the misunderstanding here ... I don't know if it's limited due to my ability, but... I didn't understand the questions very clearly (B5)

That's difficult ... Based on what we've just discussed, it seemed that I didn't have an... accurate and standard idea about the content of the 9 criteria. Maybe the contents which I assessed aren't included in the 9 criteria, for example, the criterion People. (B6)

But one of these managers giving the view "The language is very easy to understand, not difficult at all". (B6)

Attitude and psychological impacts: All the respondents stressed a committed and rigorous attitude as being important in SA implementation:

My viewpoint when assessing criteria such as Leadership was that I had to try more, I was therefore stricter on myself. (B5)

Actually, for me, I'd rather go deeply into one thing which is practical for the company. I don't like general and superficial responsiveness.... (B7)

In fact, at the time of taking the questionnaire, I didn't think thoroughly about all the issues in the questions... (B8)

Manager B7 emphasised the relationship between participant attitude and the usefulness of the SA tool.

... if we seriously undertake them all, we will see all the problems. Otherwise, if we are not serious or superficial ...or not close to reality, our direction will deviate. ... if the attitudes of the scorers are not serious, the effectiveness of the SA will not be very high. (B7)

In this group, interviewee B8 expressed her lack of confidence in knowledge (inferiority) in her accountability or when comparing with other managers. She stated:

Moreover, in comparison with other company's leaders, I am the most disadvantaged person. Not mentioning those in departments, just mentioning the management team of the same level as mine (factory's directors) ... As I told you before, I am very new in the position as director of a garment factory, so I have been working and learning a lot from others at the same time ... I was a normal worker, then was promoted to be the head of a team, and then Deputy Director and ... Director. (B8)

It possibly suggests that limited educational background led those people to be less confident in assessing their own business.

(ii) *The influences of organisational management resources*

Quality management experience: As the leaders of factories, all interviewees were serious about the quality issues regarding their products. However, sharing such SA knowledge, such as the

VQA application, seemed to be strange to this group. That is why there were no responses about SA experience.

Top commitment: Similar to the departmental group, the manufacturing team totally agreed that top commitment is crucial for the success of SA implementation. One respondent said:

In terms of the key factors to the SA success, the first thing to mention should be top commitment. It's the direction. The other steps are necessary. ... (B6)

The reason for this view is the important role of leadership across all operational activities of an organisation, especially in the garment industry.

Leadership plays a very important role. It leads all the activities of the company and all the heads. (B5)

The first factor is the leaders. The leaders must be in very close touch with the factory's reality, with each phase in the process and with each task. (B8)

Education and training: Two out of four interviewees stated that education and training is the most important factor in an SA.

Training is the most important factor... if training is insufficient... we can't know what to discuss, and what to assess. (B5)

I think the training. This is the EFQM questionnaire applied in Asia. This is new, so in order to apply it in Asia successfully. Training is the most important... Many things may also happen. But the most important is still the training. Once we train people carefully so that they understand thoroughly... (B6)

There was a need to be acknowledged about how to transfer SA results into action in training.

The improvement plan has not turned into a detailed strategy (B5)

Communication: There was only one manager who claimed his internal data used for assessing was limited:

Because I didn't know the information of others' assessment, I assessed this criterion based on my personal actions as a senior manager ... As I mentioned before, mainly because I didn't have enough information from other managers, I had to use the concept of 'majority' in the activities to assess. (B5)

Management competence: During the interviews, there were two respondents who expressed a common concern about the capable management skill of management team. One of them stated: *”we are not strong in ... a strategic longer-term viewpoint “ (B7).*

(iii) The influences of organisational management culture

Unexpectedly, this factor was not paid any attention to in the manufacturing group.

(iv) The influences of Vietnamese culture

In this group, the impact of Vietnamese culture on the success of such an SA approach was described as possibly not much (B6) and measuring problem was due to *“... very easy and comfortable” (B7)* characteristic of the Vietnamese.

Theme 4 The potential of implementing EFQM SA in Vietnam

Two out of four directors confirmed that SA-EFQM is really useful for Vietnamese businesses, one of them argued:

I think it is useful for Vietnamese companies, because after the assessment which is generalised from all the assessments of the management team, we can know our weak areas to focus on and figure out the improvement solutions... (B6)

5.4 Summary of the key findings in Company B

5.4.1 The benefits of SA using the EFQM questionnaire (theme 1)

Firstly, EFQM SA implementation was reported by six out of eleven managers (55%) as beneficial in assisting Company B to identify its current position and determine future directions and priorities (**benefit a**). However, the accuracy of the company’s position (‘Very good’) was questioned by five managers. Four out of these five managers suggested about a more appropriate position, ‘Pretty good’, which on the range from 30% to 50%. **Benefit a** was also accepted as the most important among the six intended benefits of the EFQM SA tool. Secondly, **benefit d**

(Create a focus on agreeing improvement priorities) was selected by four out of eleven respondents (36%). Other intended benefits received little agreement.

Two other benefits were added by management team. Among these two, the usefulness of the EFQM SA approach in enhancing organisational learning was evaluated highly in this garment company, with eight agreements (73%). It helps to benefit the company's culture. The benefit of SA in identifying the company's strengths and weaknesses received seven agreements. Similar to benefit a, there was some disagreements existed in this benefit.

5.4.2 Confirming the usefulness of SA-EFQM in helping to improve the company's performance (theme 2)

The majority of respondents expressed that SA-EFQM has potential to improve the company's performance and effectiveness, with eight out of eleven agreements (73% agreement). However, no empirical evidence of improvement actions was given.

5.4.3 Factors influencing the success of SA implementation (theme 3)

Individual impacts, which include personal awareness, attitude and SA scoring experience, influenced the usefulness of SA. Many negative phenomena occurred in undertaking SA in this company, such as lack of understanding (36%) and emphasis on high scores (36% agreement). Even though the 64% of the assessor team said that they treated SA in a committed and strict way, these problems might affected the accuracy of the final SA outcomes.

With respect to organisational resources in implementing SA, top commitment support was recognised to be the most important factor influencing the excellence journey and all activities of the company. Eight senior managers (73%) stated that top commitment is crucial for successful SA. A lot of evidence of weak management competence was also given (55% agreement). Unexpectedly, the role of sharing information within the company was not indicated clearly.

While the influence of organisational management culture was not found, national culture had little impact on SA.

5.4.4 The potential of implementing EFQM SA in Vietnam (theme 4)

The results indicate that of eight out of the eleven interviewees (73%) responded positively to this. It is recognised that these confirmations relied on their SA experience and also on the benefits gained. Most significantly, top leaders affirmed the potential of using the EFQM questionnaire for Vietnamese organisations widely, based on the ease of this tool. A suggestion about more training was recommended.

5.4.5 Further discussion on advantages and difficulties of implementation

In terms of both the advantages and disadvantages of the EFQM questionnaire, Table 5-7 shows the confirmation of participants in Company B.

Table 5-7. Overview of confirmation of SA-EFQM advantages and disadvantages in Company B

	Total confirmed interviewees (n=11)	Number of references											
		Top managers		Departmental managers					Manufacturing managers				Total
		B1	B11	B2	B3	B4	B9	B10	B5	B6	B7	B8	
ADVANTAGES													
<i>Easy to implement/use</i>	5		1	2		1		1		1			6
<i>Clearly defined goals</i>	3							1	1	1			3
<i>It is a simple tool</i>	3	1				1				2			4
<i>Quick/ not time-consuming</i>	2		1							1			2
<i>Low efforts/ Low resources requirements</i>	1									1			1

Table 5-7 (continued). Overview of confirmation of SA-EFQM advantages and disadvantages in Company B

	Number of references												
	Total confirmed interviewees (n=11)	Top managers		Departmental managers				Manufacturing managers				Total	
		B1	B11	B2	B3	B4	B9	B10	B5	B6	B7		B8
DISADVANTAGES													
<i>Lack of accuracy of overall outcome/ difficult to score</i>	5			2	1			3	1	1			8
<i>The outputs represent perception and require validation</i>	3			1		2			1				4
<i>Difficult to identify the causal factors</i>	2	1								2			3
<i>Lack of the need to provide evidence</i>	2								1		1		2
<i>Other (hard to conduct SA regularly)</i>	0												0
<i>Other (Unfamiliar language/difficult to understand)</i>	2	1				1							2
<i>Other (Difficulty in implementation in general)</i>	1								1				1

According to this table, the advantages of SA implementation illustrated by top management include: easy to implement, simple and quick to use. Nevertheless, its difficulties in language and in identifying causal factors were declared. There was 50% agreement in the top management group.

According to departmental managers, *being simple* and *easy to use* are revealed as the main disadvantages of the SA questionnaire tool. The major reasons given for dissatisfaction in SA implementation included the lack of accuracy of SA results.

The manufacturing group reported a range of advantages and disadvantages. Among them, ‘*clearly defined goals*’, was assessed as the SA tool’s merit, ‘*lack of accuracy*’ and ‘*lack of the need to provide evidence*’ as its limitations; these are drew more attention than other categories.

5.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, key themes related to SA implementation using the EFQM questionnaire in Company B have been justified. Key findings of SA experience in Company B are shown in Figure 5-5 in order to serve cross-case analysis in Chapter 6. Table 5-8 summarises the results of each management group.

Among the six intended benefits of the EFQM, **benefit a** was agreed highly. Two additional benefits were suggested strongly by management team, including the uses to identify the company's strengths and weaknesses, and to enhance organisational learning.

Although SA using the EFQM questionnaire was considered as benefiting Company B, owing to the identification of organisational position and improvement priorities, many concerns were identified; mainly difficulties in understanding and scoring. Surprisingly, two factors, organisational management culture and Vietnamese culture, did not attract much attention among the interviewee team. Top commitment was crucial for successful SA.

There was no proof given by Company B in illustrating improvement in the company's performance. However, eight out of eleven managers confirmed that SA is useful in improving the performance and effectiveness for their company and Vietnamese organisations in general.

In the next chapter, all emerging themes in both Company A and Company B will be examined in accordance with the literature review.

Figure 5-5. Summary of key findings of the application of SA using the EFQM questionnaire in Company B

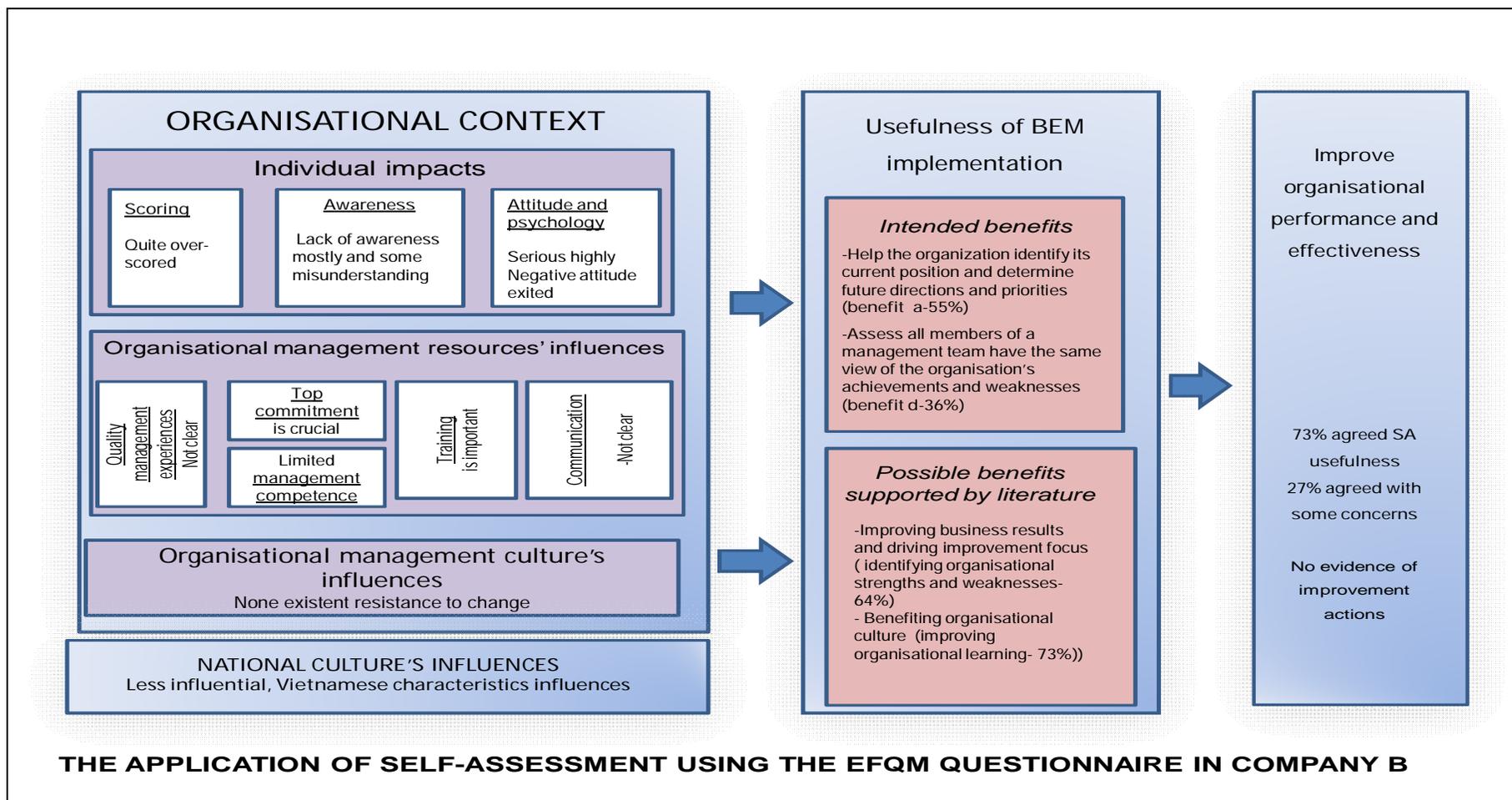


Table 5-8. A comparison of key findings among 3 different management groups of Company B

	Top management (2 respondents)	Departmental management (5 respondents)	Manufacturing management (4 respondents)
Theme 1: <i>The usefulness of SA using the EFQM questionnaire</i>	<p>-Benefit a and benefit d were accepted by 100% of respondents</p> <p>- The benefit of discovering the company’s strengths and weaknesses was recognised but with some doubt.</p> <p>-Suggestion of the benefit in improving organisational learning (100%)</p>	<p>-Not strongly convinced about the intended benefit which was obtained in Company B</p> <p>- A consensus with 100% agreement on other benefits of SA-EFQM: Identifying organisational strengths and weaknesses (60%) and Improving organisation’s learning (100%). Neither belongs to the intended benefits of EFQM SA.</p> <p>- A few doubts about its usefulness in helping the organisation identify its current status</p>	<p>-Benefit a was agreed by 75% of respondents in this group.</p> <p>-<i>Improving the organisation’s learning</i> was suggested (25%), and Identifying the company’s strengths and weaknesses was confirmed (75%)</p> <p>-This manufacturing group is the only one who mentioned that the position shown by the SA results was correct</p>
Theme 2: <i>Confirming the usefulness of SA-EFQM in helping to improve the company’s performance</i>	<p>-High agreement with the potential of SA to strengthen the company’ performance and effectiveness (100%)</p> <p>-Could undertake SA more widely for staff.</p> <p>-No actual improvement was confirmed</p>	<p>- 60% of managers admitted the usefulness of SA-EFQM mostly depending on certain factors (the will of leaders, the attitude of participants)</p> <p>- No improvements applied after SA undertaking</p>	<p>Generally, there was a consensus view SA-EFQM benefited the company through interesting results (100%)</p> <p>A regret that improvement actions had not been implemented after beneficial SA outcomes (50%)</p>

Table 5-8 (continued). A comparison of key findings among 3 different management groups of Company B

	Top management (2 respondents)	Departmental management (5 respondents)	Manufacturing management (4 respondents)
Theme 3: <i>Factors influencing the success of SA implementation</i>	SA results reflected ‘most of the activities’ and were ‘close to real business environment’ -Scored most loosely	- The level of ‘mostly accurate’ and less reliable of SA results was expressed. - Scored most strictly	An ‘ Mostly accurate ’ reflection was indicated
Individual impact	- Easy to score but the SA results seemed high (50%) - SA-EFQM was uncomplicated but still not easy to understand (50%) - A loose assessment occurred (50%)	-Over-emphasising high scores unintentionally (40%) -A trend of lack of understanding (40%) presented, possibly owing to limitations of educational background or management competence - A few negative assessment attitudes existed (not wholly objective – 40%) -The psychological symptom of fear of being out of line occurred (20%)	- Lack of evidence in scoring existed - Lack of awareness and some misunderstanding (75%) -Emphasised the relationship between participant attitude and the success of SA implementation 100% managers scored seriously -lack of confidence in knowledge was stated

Table 5-8 (continued). A comparison of key findings among 3 different management groups of Company B

	Top management (2 respondents)	Departmental management (5 respondents)	Manufacturing management (4 respondents)
Organisational management resources impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Low level of quality management - Although it benefited the company, the VQA still had several limitations -Required external expertise support - Limited management competence; there was a relationship between SA implementation and management competence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Quality management was not mentioned, and the achievement of the VQA was not respected -Top commitment plays a key role in the SA process (80%) -Training is also evaluated as crucial (20%) -Communication also played an important role -Insufficient management competence (40%) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Top commitment is crucial (100%) -Education and training is important (50 %) -Lacked efficient communication in a particular factory or the whole company. - A need to know how to transfer SA results into action -Not much belief in manager’s competence.
Organisational management cultural impact	- Not mentioned	No evidence was provided.	Not mentioned
National culture impact	-Not mentioned	There is a connection between the self-esteem of the Vietnamese and an over-scoring tendency (20%)	Not much affected. Very easy and comfortable of Vietnamese impacted to SA results (30%)
Theme 4: The potential of implementing EFQM SA in Vietnam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Useful potentially for using in Vietnamese companies (50%) because of its effect on the company performance and its advantages (score ranking was suitable, quite easy to understand) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The majority of the group agreed on the affirmative potential of the SA tool (80%) - A concern about educational background in the garment sector -A suggestion to make annotations in the SA questionnaire to increase the success of the SA process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SA-EFQM is really useful for Vietnamese businesses (50%) and useful in certain conditions (25%)

CHAPTER 6. CROSS-CASE DISCUSSIONS AND FINDINGS

6.0 Introduction

In Chapter 4 and Chapter 5, the interview data for Company A and Company B were analysed; with the provision of a number of extracts as evidence. The key findings from the two cases were also summarised in the last section of each chapter. In the present chapter, emergent themes from both previous chapters will be examined by making a comparison with the literature reviewed.

Firstly, four themes of the research template, which was developed from the conceptual framework, will be justified in the cross-case discussion, spanning section 6.1 to 6.4. In particular, within these sections the principal objective will be addressed, namely, *to evaluate the usefulness of the BEM using the SA approach approach in Vietnamese enterprises*. The second objective will be examined in section 6.3, namely, *to explore implementation issues associated with SA in specific contexts*. In this section, the implementation elements influencing the success of SA will be explored in the Vietnamese manufacturing context.

The final objective, which is *to suggest appropriate SA approach and implementation strategies suitable for the Vietnamese organisations based on research findings*, will be addressed in section 6.4 by reviewing the limitations of SA implementation, as analysed previously. Furthermore, new insights into organisational participation in the existing business excellence model of Vietnam (the VQA) can be found in section 6.5.

Managerial cross-case analysis was applied in order to discover the similarities and differences between three management groups: top managers, senior department managers and senior manufacturing managers. This can be found in section 6.6. Finally, a summary of the findings is presented in the conclusion section.

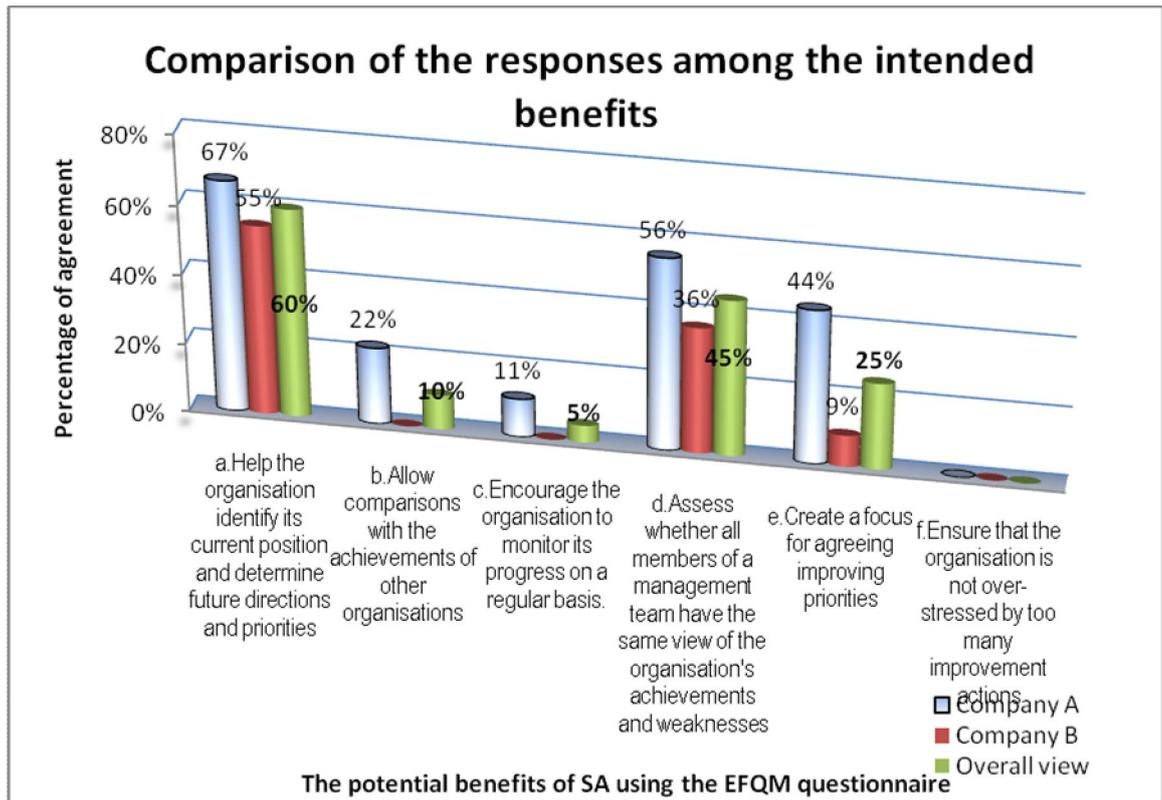
6.1 The benefits of SA using the EFQM questionnaire (Theme 1)

In the following section, both the intended and possible benefits of SA application are examined with reference to the literature reviewed.

6.1.1 Confirmation of the intended benefits from SA using the EFQM questionnaire

To illustrate respondents' agreement on specific intended benefits of SA- EFQM, Figure 6-1 shows the results of the two companies.

Figure 6-1. A comparison between Company A and Company B of the intended benefits obtained from SA-EFQM implementation.



As can be seen in this figure, five out of six intended benefits mentioned in the questionnaire were confirmed to have been recognised in the two companies. Significantly, it can be identified that **benefit a** (*Help the organisation identify its current position and determine future directions and priorities*) was actually the most agreed upon (60%). Next, **benefit d** (*Assess all members of a management team have the same view of the organisation's achievements and weaknesses*) had 45% agreement. Thirdly, **benefit e** (*Create a focus for agreeing improving priorities*) was indicated by 25% of respondents.

Conversely, confirmation of **benefit b** (*Allow comparison with the achievements of other organisations*) and **benefit c** (*Encourage the organisation to monitor its progress on a regular basis*) was offered by few managers. Surprisingly, neither company confirmed **benefit f** (*Ensure that the organisation is not over-stressed by too many improvement actions*).

Details of the particular intended benefits of SA-EFQM, based on analysis information shown in Figure 6-1, are explored below.

Benefit a: Help the organisation identify its current position and determine future directions and priorities

In general, the benefit of SA-EFQM of *helping the company identify its current position and determine future directions and priority* was confirmed by 67% in Company A and 55% in Company B (see Figure 6-1). However, details of evidence showed some disagreement.

The administration of SA using the EFQM approach has provided overall scores of each case company. This overall performance (overall score) of the organisation was compared with the score scheme provided by the EFQM in order to pinpoint its position. Based on the organisational score, the business is ranked at a particular degree on the excellence roadmap.

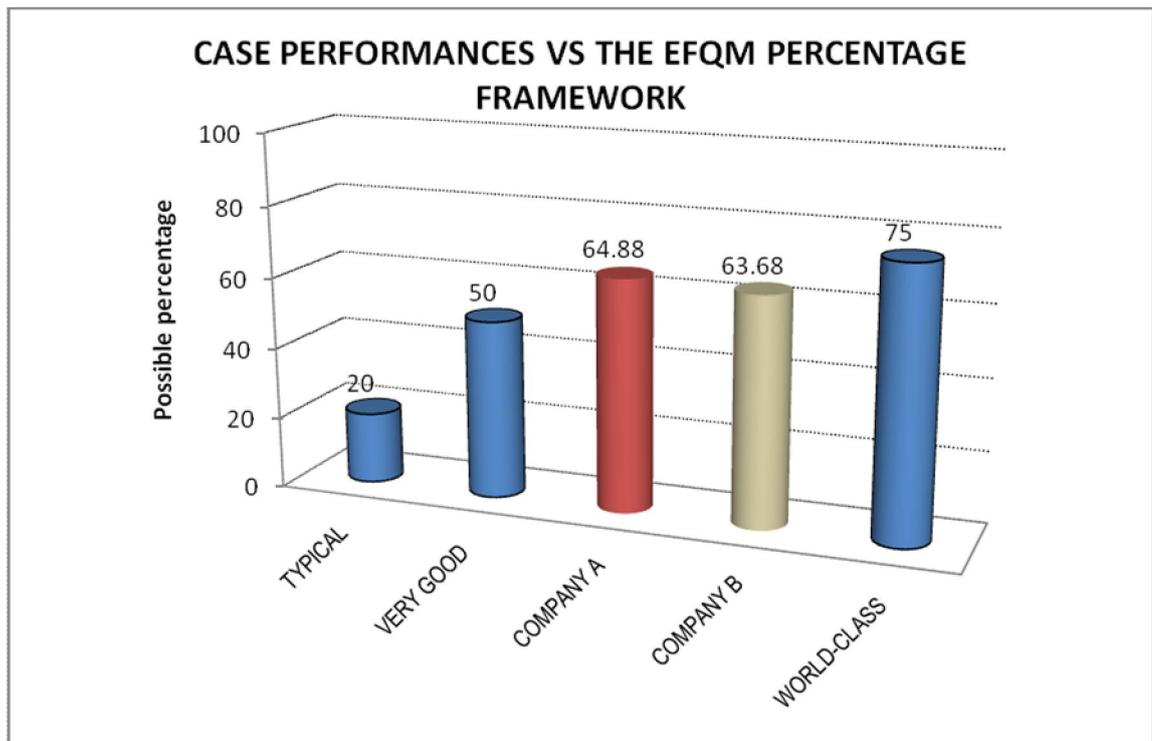
Regarding the benefit of the EFQM questionnaire to pinpoint an organisations position, there were only two managers in two companies that agreed with their organisation being at the ‘Very good’ stage. With respect to the generous scoring and ‘quick’ evaluation of the company’s position, these managers thought that their company had nearly reached a superior ranking. This analysis supports the observation of Porter and Tanner (2004, p.374) about a company’s over-optimistic belief that “they are ‘world-class’ when in fact they are only on the first rung of the ladder”.

Another dominant group with 40% agreement (eight managers) provided evidential statements that the company’s position in SA-EFQM seemed higher than it was in reality. These managers suggested a more rational rank, namely the ‘pretty good’ level, which is equivalent to a range of 30% to 50%, rather than the current score of 64%. In this group, one top manager suggested a score of 50% and another manager indicated a reasonable range of between 30% and 50%.

The remaining group consisted of three managers, whilst two managers in Company A, including a top leader, stated SA outcomes were ‘not true’ and ‘not reasonable’. Another manager in Company B neither agreed nor disagreed.

The quantitative SA-EFQM results of both Case A and Case B regarding organisational average score was 64.88% and 63.68% respectively (see Figure 6-2). With respect to the position function, the owner of the chosen SA questionnaire stated that “*many companies will score about 20%, with very good organisations scoring about 50% and world class performance registering 75%*” (EFQM, 1999-2003d, p.31). On this basis, the positions of Company A and Company B are considered to be of a high-level category against the 50% performance score of very good companies in the world.

Figure 6-2. The position of case companies against the EFQM questionnaire framework



According to Porter and Tanner (2004), the rational score of companies at the entry phase of the SA excellence roadmap is a score of up to 300 out of a maximum of 1000 (30%). Regarding the EFQM, another suggestion from Dale and Smith (1997) is that the degree of TQM adoption in both case companies at the **Tool-pushers** level is equivalent to a score range of between 100-300 of the **Drifters** level (10%-30%) and 300-650 of the **Improvers** level (30-65%), on a scale of 0 to 1000 points. Hence, with a score of 64% and a 'Very good' ranking in both companies, it is assumed that these results do not accurately reflect the company's performance and are higher than is actually the case. Actually, 40% of managers (out of 65% responded) proposed a lower ranking, namely 'pretty good', as mentioned previously.

When breaking down individual scores of participants from the two companies into three levels — 'Typical', 'Very good' and 'World-class' — the score gap was found to be extremely large overall. The position of actual individual scores indicated a range from **Typical** (21%-50%) to **World-class** (71%-100%) ranking. The example in Figure 6-3 shows the scoring gap when conducting SA-EFQM in Company A. As can be seen in this figure, while the minimum gap of between 40% and 50% existed in the Policy and Strategy category, the maximum gap of between 60% and 70% occurred in four criteria: Leadership, People, Customer Results and People Results. Clearly, the dominant tendency of over-emphasising high scores that occurred in SA against the EFQM questionnaire in these Vietnamese cases was confirmed, with a huge scoring gap ranging from 40% to 70%. From this analysis, it is obvious that the 'deadly risk' mentioned by Conti

(1997a), of drawing a ‘favourable’ organisational picture instead of representing the reality, was realised in the current study.

Figure 6-3. Scoring gaps in the 9 criteria of the EFQM in SA of Company A

	Average of 100%	0-20%	TYPICAL			VERY GOOD		WORLD CLASS			Appropriate gap (%)
			21-30%	31-40%	41-50%	51-60%	61-70%	71-80%	81-90%	91-100%	
Leadership	61	-	1	2	2	8	10	3	1		60-70
Policy and Strategy	66				3	6	9	5	4		40-50
People	64			1	3	11	3	6	2	1	60-70
Partnerships and Resources	65				2	13	3	6	2	1	50-60
Processes	66				3	7	6	7	3	1	50-60
Customer Results	61			3	4	9	4	4	1	2	60-70
People Results	60		1	3	4	5	9	2	3	-	60-70
Society Results	72				3	2	11	5	2	4	50-60
Key performance results	69				1	5	11	3	6	1	50-60

When implementing SA using the EFQM questionnaire, many participants appeared to provide an ‘unrealistic’ personal assessment, which included seven out of nine criteria gaining 100%. There were 2 out of 27 participants (7%) in Company B and 5 out of 27 managers (18%) in Company A who gave at least one of the nine categories of their company’s performance the maximum score (100%). This evidence can be found in appendices L and M.

In short, even though there are many concerns about the accuracy of SA results, the contributions of SA-EFQM towards the identification of a company’s position and areas necessary for improvement have been confirmed. These concerns are related to the fact that over-scoring occurred.

Benefit b: Allow comparison with the achievements of other organisations

In the current study, there were two agreements (22%) affirming this benefit in Company A only. A likely reason for this low result is the issue of confidentiality concerning internal SA outcomes.

Benefit c: Encourage the organisation to monitor its progress on a regular basis

Unfortunately, only one department manager in Company A (11%) agreed with this and encouraged SA to be conducted once every year. It is well recognised that the SA process pinpoints areas for improvement effectively, urging this process to be conducted more regularly. Later assessments can use the previous diagnostic assessment as a trustworthy foundation to measure improvements in a company's operational activities.

Benefit d: Assess whether all members of a management team have the same view of the organisation's achievements and weaknesses

As introduced above, after **benefit a**, **benefit d** was recognised to be the second main SA-EFQM benefit obtained. Data collection from the semi-structured interviews also supports this view of SA-EFQM, helping to draw out the perception gap. As mentioned previously, 56% of Company A's respondents and 36% of Company B's respondents confirmed this use. One top manager stated that the result was unexpected but meaningful; others expressed feelings of surprise at the big gap in their company's performance. Moreover, some department managers claimed that they felt they had been woken up by how other units assessed their own accountability and achievements. According to those respondents, the value of this recognition is based on systematic, scientific and objective SA results. That is why they accepted the fact that although the SA outcome could not address precisely every issue of the company, its usefulness cannot be disputed.

One of the advantages of the SA questionnaire approach is that it allows easy segmentation by function and by level in order to serve specific needs (EFQM, 1999-2003b; Porter and Tanner, 2004). Individual SA results of a management team need to be reviewed and compared with a holistic view of the company in order to show gaps in the evaluation of the business's achievements and deficiencies.

In this study, the SA-EFQM outcomes were expanded into the lower levels of department and factory/mill. To clarify this benefit, an example of this concern is presented in Table 6-1, a combination of Figure 6-4a, Figure 6-4b and Figure 6-4c which reflect the SA results for the Leadership criterion in Company A. The full SA results of both Company A and Company B can be found in appendices L and M.

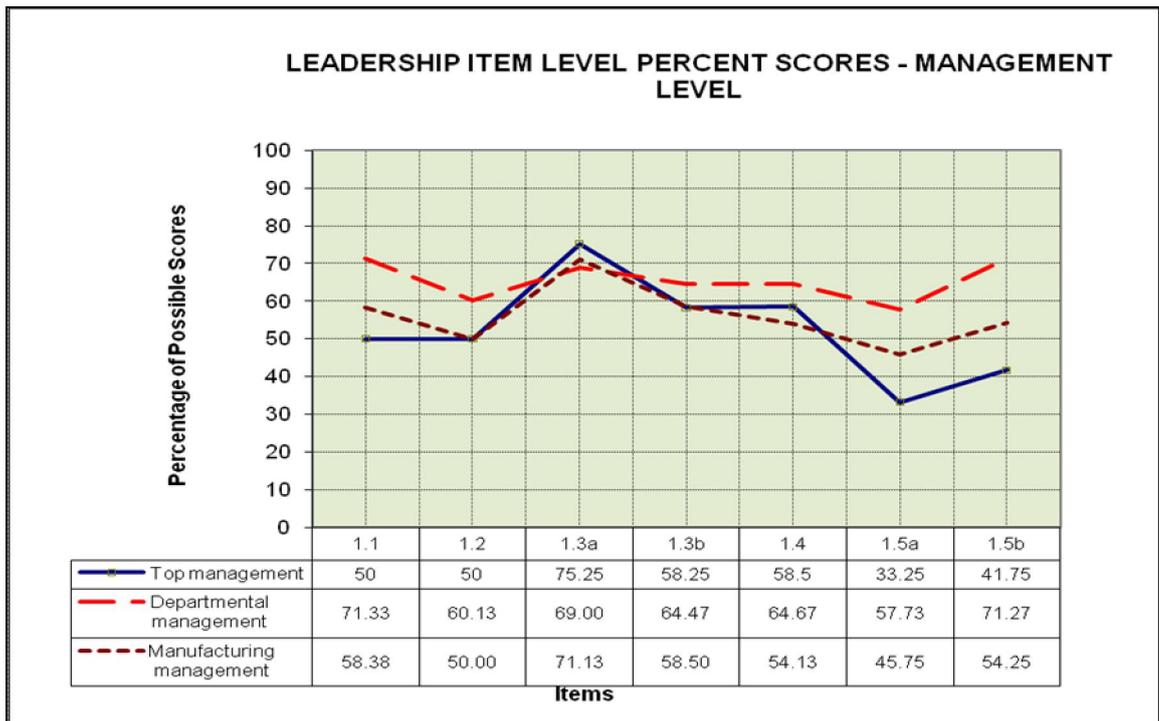
Table 6-1. Performance in the Leadership criterion in Company A

	Items	% of performance
1.1	<i>Are all the senior managers personally involved and visible in generating and communicating a strategic statement for the purpose, direction and culture of the organisation (including its quality values and priorities)?</i>	64.3
1.2	<i>Have the senior managers ensured the implementation of an organisational structure and process management system that is respected and is effective in delivering consistent and improving results?</i>	55.6
1.3	<i>a. Do the senior managers, by example and action, demonstrate support and emphasize the values of their organisation?</i>	70.6
	<i>b. and are these values widely accepted and practised throughout the organisation?</i>	61.8
1.4	<i>Do all managers make themselves available to staff and involve themselves in the positive and timely recognition of the efforts made by individuals and teams who generate improvement?</i>	60.6
1.5	<i>a. Are all the managers taking actions to meet customers, suppliers and others outside the organisation,</i>	50.6
	<i>b. and be actively involved in promoting partnerships and improvement initiatives with them?</i>	61.9

Table 6-1 presents the overall scores of Company A for five items in the Leadership category. A quantitative analysis technique was used and the content was graphitised by management group (Figure 6-4a), functional level (Figure 6-4b) or manufacturing unit (Figure 6-4c).

For item 1.1 – “*Are all the senior managers personally involved and visible in generating and communicating a strategic statement for the purpose, direction and culture of the organisation (including its quality values and priorities)?*” — the overall score of the whole company was 64.3% (see Table 6-1), which is equivalent to a very good rank. However, when breaking down this item by management level, it was found that while top and manufacturing management scored about 50% and 58% respectively, department managers scored about 71%. The gap in the scores for this item between those at different levels was over 20% (see Figure 6-4a).

Figure 6-4a. A comparison between management groups of the performance of Leadership items



In Figure 6-4b, the similarity and differences about leadership were presented by various departmental managers. Whilst there were two distinct trends in evaluating item 1.3b (The *values of organisation widely accepted and practised throughout the organisation*), for example; a similar view occurred in item 1.4 (*All managers make themselves available to staff and involve themselves in the positive and timely recognition of the efforts made by individuals and teams who generate improvement*) among all departments.

Similarly, in Figure 6-4c, it is recognised that there existed a gap of nearly 40% between factories in items 1.1 and 1.5b, along with the maximum of 83% scored by the knitting–dyeing mill, though the score of other mills was about 40%+.

Figure 6-4b. A comparison between functional departments of the performance of Leadership items

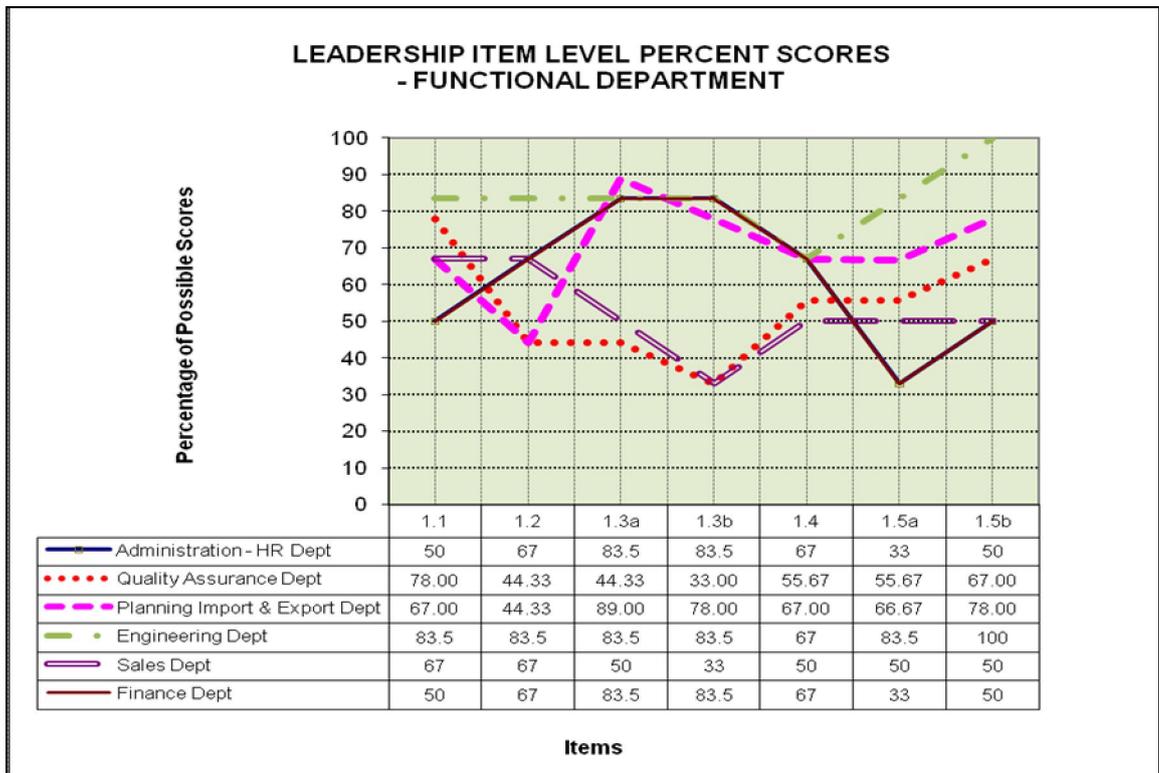
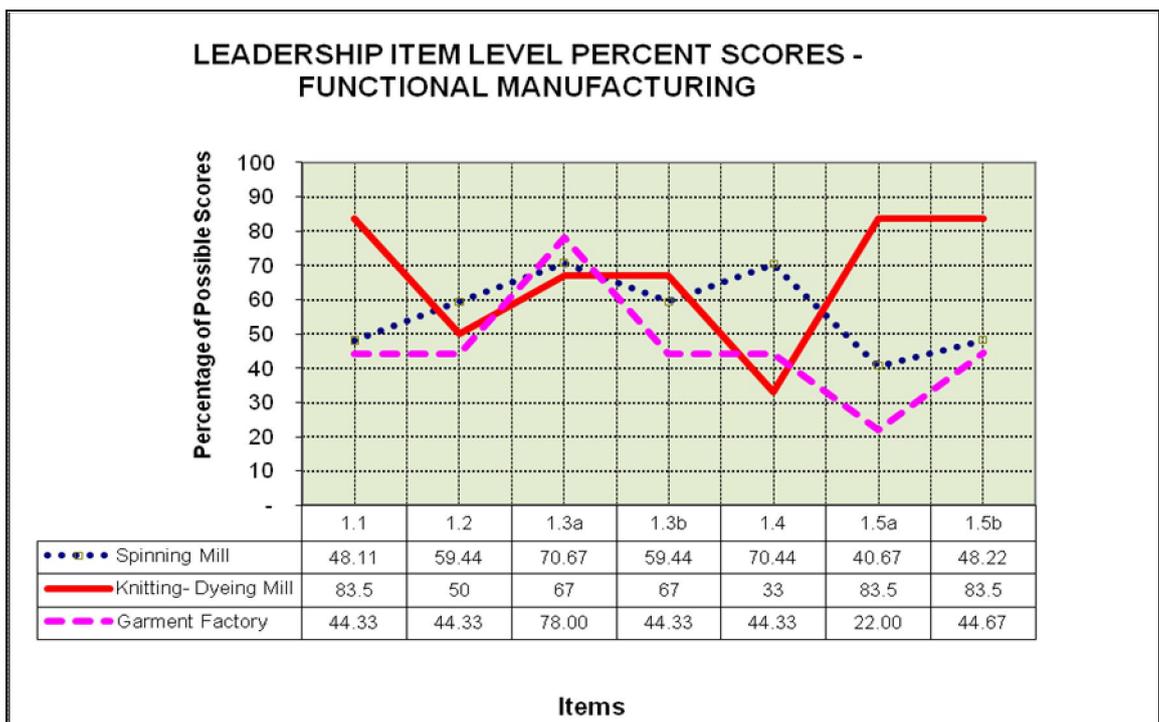


Figure 6-4c. A comparison between functional manufacturing units of the performance of Leadership items



Clearly, when the outcomes of the research are closely scrutinized, SA results reveal an intensive and holistic view through a glance at different sections. It can be said that the greatest merit of the SA tool is that it provides a more holistic, broader view of the whole management group than has ever been provided before. Specifically, the scoring gaps highlight the trend of not all agreements happening in different management groups. Possible reasons are a lack of communication inside the company or misunderstanding in SA. Bearing this in mind, the performance gap between units requires further investigation.

Benefit e. Create a focus for agreeing improvement priorities

Benefit e was agreed upon by a limited number of interviewees— a total of four senior managers (44%) in Company A and one senior manager (9%) in Company B. Such a view was primarily based on their perception rather than on any actual benefit gained in their companies. However, two managers indicated that organisational weaknesses, which were outcomes of SA-EFQM, provide the priority of improvement actions needed to be focused.

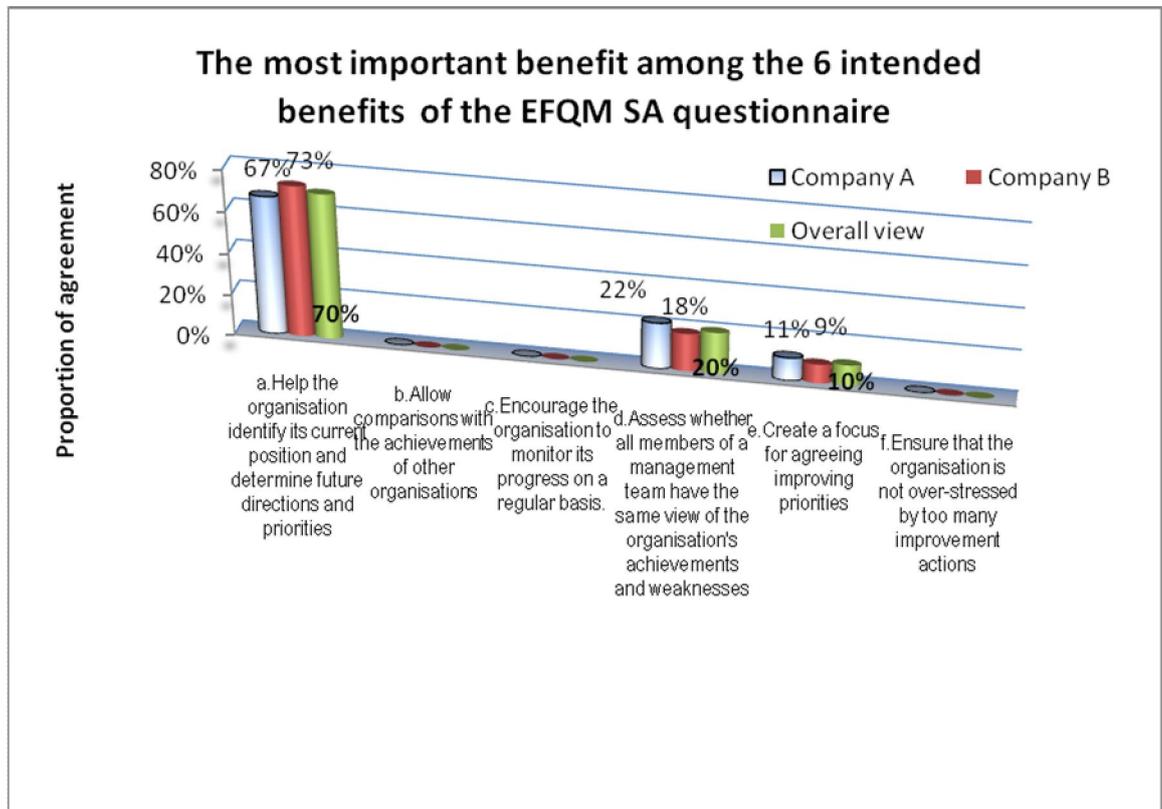
Benefit f: Ensure that the organisation is not over-stressed by too many improvement actions

Unexpectedly, there was no response from either case company. The possible explanation is because SA using the EFQM questionnaire is an academic exercise. Hence, it is not surprising if the companies do not give actively a list of improvements actions. Given this, the manager team had no experience regarding this benefit.

6.1.2 The most important benefits of SA SA-EFQM in the two companies

The most important benefit among the six intended benefits of the EFQM SA questionnaire was found to be that it helped the organisation identify its current position and determine certain areas required improvement (**benefit a**). Figure 6-5 shows the agreement percentage of Company A, Company B and the overall percentage of the two companies. In brief, 70% of managers stated that **benefit a** was the most important, whilst the remaining 30% focused on **benefit d** and **benefit e**.

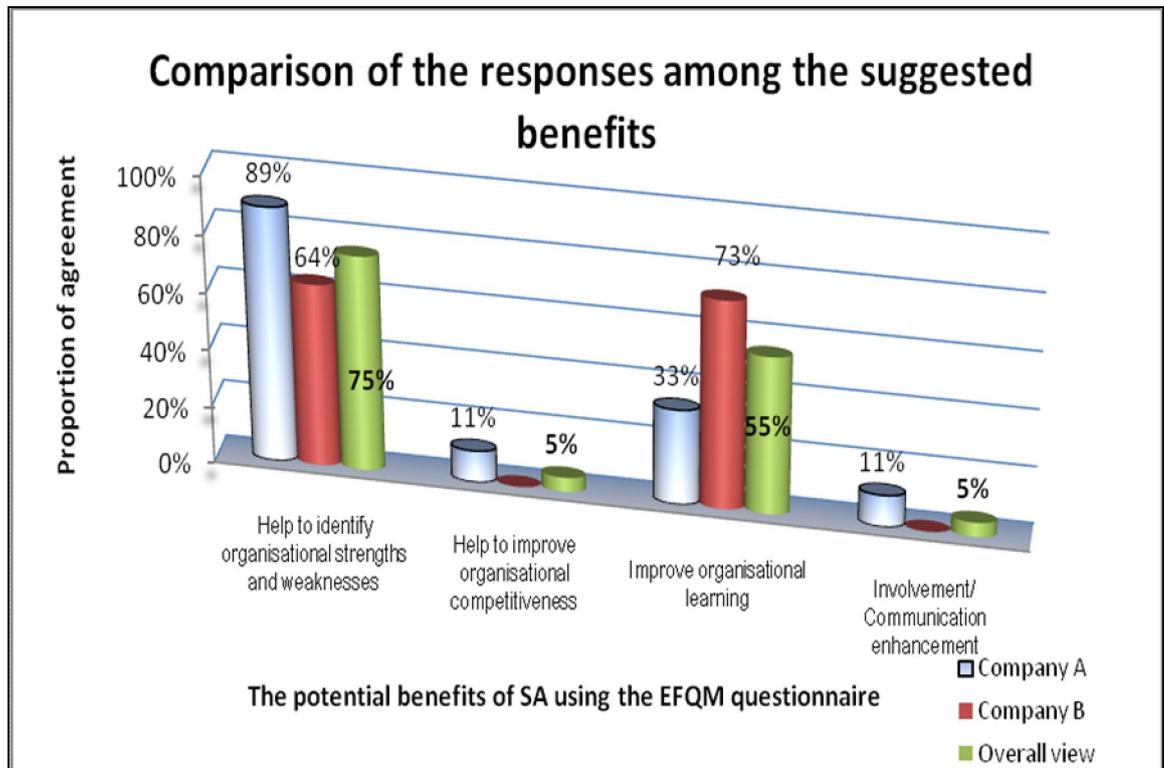
Figure 6-5. The most important benefit among the 6 pre-described (intended) benefits of the EFQM self assessment questionnaire



6.1.3 Confirmation of possible benefits suggested by general SA literature

The literature review identified five potential categories of benefits related to the usefulness of SA: improving business results and driving improvement focus, benefiting organisational culture, improving process management, providing benchmarking opportunities, and improving strategic planning. The interviewees provided four additional benefits of SA-EFQM in their businesses. Figure 6-6 shows the interview responses from both companies regarding the four suggested benefits of the SA tool. Two of the main benefits suggested were to *help to identify organisational strengths and weaknesses*, with 75% agreement, and to *improve organisational learning*, with 55% agreement.

Figure 6-6. A comparison between Company A and Company B of the suggested benefits obtained from SA-EFQM implementation



As can be seen in Figure 6-6, although not an original benefit of SA –EFQM, one of the most important benefits was found to be *help to identifying organisational strengths and weaknesses*. This idea, involving the pinpointing of the strongest and the weakest aspects of a company, is based on the SA terminology of EFQM (1999-2003b) and the view of many authors, as indicated in Chapter 2. The majority (89% in Company A and 64% in Company B) confirmed this benefit of the SA tool. When comparing individual assessment of a company’s performance with the overall SA outcomes, it can be recognised that a gap still exists in managers’ perceptions of the benefit of SA-EFQM to assist their company pinpoint strengths and weaknesses.

In the positive group, interviewees provided empirical evaluations to verify the point of view that their assessments of company strengths and weaknesses were similar to those of the whole company. For example, regarding the Customer Results criterion being a weakness of Company A, several pieces of evidence demonstrated problematic management issues such as weak information policy for customers, ineffective customer feedback and an inconsistent system. Such remarks contribute to the validity of SA implementation. In the opposite group, some managers indicated they had different opinions of their company’s strengths and weaknesses during the interviews based on their views.

Lascelles and Peacock (1997, p.40) point out that the outcome of the SA questionnaire is a 'multi-point' perspective. EFQM (1999-2003b) and Porter and Tanner (2004) contend that the questionnaire approach does not allow the provision of a list of strengths or areas for improvement immediately and specifically. Conventionally, those assessment results which rely on personal perceptions require further validation. Therefore, this dispute is easy to understand and can be accepted in these cases because the personal judgments came from those of different backgrounds, with different SA awareness and experience, and it is also potentially due to the limitations of the EFQM SA questionnaire.

The second major benefit confirmed by 55% of managers in both case companies was *improving organisational learning* by providing a holistic organisational picture. As can be seen in Figure 6-6, this benefit received 33% (three managers) and 73% (eight managers) agreement in Company A and Company B respectively. According to these respondents, the provision of an evidential and exclusive picture of a company helps to improve management thinking and views, thus improving the performance of the whole company. Further, one manager stated that SA "*is useful in terms of the given information and the learning opportunity for Vietnamese management teams*". And then another confirmed that "*after accomplishing the SA-EFQM, the scorers' minds have changed. All the members of management team have strengthened their awareness and vision*". A similar view is that SA provided a good chance for managers to look back on their situation and update new knowledge.

The other two choices regarding benefits were *helping to improve organisational competitiveness* and *involvement enhancement*, both of which were chosen by one manager (11%) in Company A.

6.1.4 Discussion and findings on the benefits of SA-EFQM

To discuss the usefulness of SA-EFQM, a summary of specific findings is given in Table 6-2 from all the indented and suggested benefits identified, classified into the five possible benefit categories that emerged from the literature review in section 2.4.

Table 6-2 Summary of confirmed benefits of SA using the EFQM questionnaire among interviewees in the two cases companies

Gained benefits in the current study	% agreement			Benefit category referred ³⁸
	Company A (n=9)	Company B (n=11)	Overall view	
<i>Confirm the intended benefits</i>				
- <i>Help organisation identify its current position and determine future directions and priorities (benefit a)</i>	67%	55%	60%	(IV) + (I)
- <i>Allow comparison with the achievements of other organisations (benefit b)</i>	22%	0%	10%	(IV)
- <i>Encourage organisation to monitor its progress on a regular basis (benefit c)</i>	11%	0%	5%	(I)
- <i>Assess whether all members of a management team have the same view of the organisation's achievements and weaknesses (benefit d)</i>	56%	36%	45%	(IV)
- <i>Create a focus for agreeing improvement priorities (benefit e)</i>	44%	9%	25%	(I)
- <i>Ensure that the organisation is not overstressed by too many improvement actions (benefit f)</i>	0%	0%	0%	(I)
<i>Suggest additional benefits</i>				
- <i>Identify organisational strengths and weaknesses</i>	89%	64%	75%	(I)+(V)
- <i>Improve organisational learning</i>	33%	73%	55%	(II)
- <i>Improve organisational competitiveness</i>	11%	0%	5%	(I)
- <i>Involvement enhancement</i>	11%	0%	5%	(II)

As can be seen in Table 6-2, confirmations of SA-EFQM benefits in case Company A are generally higher than in case B. It can be assumed that SA outcomes in Company A are more accurate, which has led to high recognition of the management team regarding their company's

³⁸ (I) Improving business results and driving improvement focus, (II) Benefiting organisational culture, (III) Improving process management, (IV) Providing benchmarking opportunities, (V) Improving strategic planning.

strengths and weaknesses. Exceptionally, the opportunity for enhancing management knowledge, especially in the quality field, seemed to have been appraised by Company B.

Among the benefits stated, managers in Company A and Company B were found to agree the most (60%) on the intended benefit of SA *to help organisation to identify its current position and determine certain areas required improvement*. However, the strongest gains in the two companies are not related to the six intended benefits, rather they are to *identify the company's strengths and weaknesses*, which had 75% agreement.

Table 6-2 shows the benefit of SA using the EFQM questionnaire which had the highest consensus was recognised in category I - *improving business results and driving improvement focus* – in both case companies. This result appears to replicate the view that opportunities for improvement areas are suggested by SA outcomes (Coulambidou and Dale, 1995; Van der Wiele *et al.*, 1995, 1996a, b; Brown and Van der Wiele, 1996; Teo and Dale, 1997; Van der Wiele and Brown, 1999; BNQP, 2009; Ruben *et al.*, 2007; Michalska, 2008; Tari, 2010).

Furthermore, another three benefits obtained in the current study were *benefiting organisational culture* (category II), *providing benchmarking opportunities* (category IV) and *improving strategic planning* (category V). Conversely, no specific evidence was found for *improving process management* (category III) but perhaps managers insisted this benefit with regards to process management.

Some disagreement was found in the benchmarking benefit of SA (category IV). From the findings derived from both the SA results and interview analysis in this study, particularly the performance gap between individual scores and overall organisational scores, it is almost certain that a problem in measuring SA occurred and this led to limitations in the usefulness of the SA tool. Many reasons explained for this gap include lack of understanding or lack of efficient communication. All irreconcilable issues related to how accurate these results are for contributing towards the enhancement of business performance and the relevant reasons still need to be investigated in subsequent sections. However, the disagreement of benchmarking benefit is reasonable in somehow because managers who took different positions would identify their company's strengths and weaknesses differently, or locate company's position in various levels. The difference of management perception which has been drawn by the performance gap would provide additional benefit to the companies.

There were limited empirical works related to the study of the SA questionnaire tool. They include: Teo and Dale (1997); Venero *et al.* (2007); Tari and Juana-Espinosa (2007); Michalska (2008); and Tari (2010). Among them is Teo and Dale's (1997) study in which one of four case

companies specially employed the same SA questionnaire³⁹. With respect to the findings on the usefulness of the SA questionnaire, all previous studies mentioned above found that the tool is recognised as a prime method for analysing strengths and areas for improvement. Other benefits realised include facilitating learning in an organisation by increasing awareness and involvement (Teo and Dale, 1997; Tari, 2010), laying the foundation for benchmarking, communication enhancement and improving non-financial organisational performance; for example, strategic planning or customer satisfaction (Teo and Dale; 1997). More importantly, helping to locate the company's current status is a main objective of the EFQM survey design (EFQM, 1999-2003d). Porter and Tanner (2004) also point out that the benefits delivered at this entry phase mainly focus on culture at a lower level.

With these benefits being confirmed in the present study, the benefit of SA using the EFQM questionnaire for improving business results and driving improvement focus (category I), improving organisational learning (category II) and improving strategic planning (category IV) is strongly confirmed. Although the SA outcome does not help the case companies fully obtain all six intended benefits (as analysed in section 6.1.1), the research results have given a certain amount of evidence of the suitability of the EFQM questionnaire as a useful SA tool for Vietnamese companies.

The findings also support the view that SA-EFQM is an excellent approach for gathering different management perceptions with respect to the criteria of BEM (Shergold and Reed, 1996; Dale, 2003). This result also agrees with the findings of literature about the effective usage of SA for benefiting organisational culture through managers gaining a better understanding of the company and being involved in enhancement.

There remains the issue of reliability of SA outcomes, which has led to limitations to the success of SA-EFQM. From the viewpoint of SA literature, the validity of SA results impact on the usefulness of SA application (Porter *et al.*, 1998, Porter and Tanner, 2004). Besides this, the variability in scoring is a problem experienced in data collection and its subsequent interpretation (Dale and Coulambidou, 1995; Karapetrovic and Willborn, 2001; Hides, Davis and Jackson, 2004). Hence, relative problems will be explored further in section 6.3.

In summary, the usefulness of the application of SA using the EFQM questionnaire in Vietnamese textile and garment companies is undeniable. These actual merits, which are suggested by both the owner of the SA tool and the review of literature, show that SA-EFQM is most useful in four categories: improving non-financial business results and driving improvement focus, benefiting organisational culture (learning), providing benchmarking opportunities, and improving strategic planning in Vietnamese cases.

³⁹ The questionnaire 'Determining Business Excellence' is developed by the EFQM.

6.2 Confirmation of the usefulness of SA-EFQM in helping to improve a company's performance (Theme 2)

With respect to the second theme of the research template, the usefulness of SA using the EFQM questionnaire, 12 out of 20 participating managers (60%) in the two case companies stated a strong view that the SA tool was very useful in improving the performance and effectiveness of their company in general. Most of them emphasised its great contribution of 'valuable' and 'meaningful' information which was useful for assessing the whole company's performance.

Another similar view, which received 30% agreement, was that SA was interesting but needed careful consideration to be successful. Although admitting the SA tool's usefulness, this group highlighted elements of SA implementation such as the success of SA absolutely depending on the commitment of top leaders, or the importance of a 'serious/interested attitude' for paying much attention when scoring.

On the other hand, disappointments were reported related to execution difficulties and the degree of accuracy of SA outcomes. Limitations of the application of SA-EFQM in both companies reported by a few interviewees included information not being new, and difficulties with language due to translation issues. The complicated language barrier in SA was recognised by Svensson and Klefsjö (2000).

In Company A, seven out of nine managers (78%) stated that SA-EFQM is useful in helping the company's performance and effectiveness (in general/with certain conditions). However, only three departmental managers stated that they were sure that certain improvements had been realised after implementing SA, and evidence was provided. They indicated certain improvements that had taken place following the company's underlying weaknesses being pointed out. Specifically, significant improvements focused on enhancement of customer strategy; such as improving the customer policy, improving communication skills in dealing with customers, top managers' behaviour and empowering staff. These reflections demonstrate how effective use of the SA approach against the EFQM questionnaire was; however, interviewees from the top and manufacturing group claimed that there was no change after SA application.

According to the data analysis of Company B, the usefulness of SA using the EFQM Excellence Model was confirmed as contributing towards improving organisational performance by eight out of eleven managers (in general). Unfortunately, no direct proof that something was a consequence of SA implementation was given. During the interviews, some disappointments and regrets were expressed relating to an action plan which was supposed to have been carried out.

In regard to the assumption in the research question, despite the positive signs of agreement as to the benefits of SA-EFQM, as analysed previously in section 6.1.1 and 6.1.3 for both cases, the usefulness of SA using the BEM technique to improve Vietnamese organisational performance has been agreed by 90% of managers (in general/with certain conditions). However, little improvement activities have been made in one company.

According to Van der Wiele *et al.* (1995), it is always difficult to clarify the impact of SA implementation on an organisation's business results. To be of value, the output of the EFQM SA clearly needs to determine two routes for a company: it can proceed from strengths by focusing on the best processes and systems or it can work to fix managerial errors and deficiencies.

Regarding the success of SA implementation in the entry phase, Porter and Tanner (2004) found that organisational effectiveness actually improved in the 'strategic' level only. Teo and Dale (1997) found that SA provided a benchmarking foundation and led to improvement in communication and non-financial results.

In this study, evidence of benchmarking, which results by SA-EFQM, was confirmed in sections 6.1.1 and 6.1.3 previously. Additionally, enhancement of the case companies' effectiveness was measured by actual improvement actions believed to be the result of implementing SA using BEM. These certain improvements were made related to customer service and top leader focus, which were believed to be Company A's weaknesses. Regrettably, no such action took place in the case of Company B. All beneficial evidence from the management group showed there was improvement in key non-financial areas. However, despite this evidence, it can be said that a successful amount of SA in both case companies clearly happened at low and strategic levels.

In this research, it can be said that the motivation for and focused objectives of SA implementation were not clear because the primary academic intention came from the researcher. It can be argued that the management team, who may have been inexperienced with SA activities, did not expect practical and comprehensive improvements after using the obligatory SA tool. Obviously, they did not put much effort into this SA activity, and so opportunities for improvement did not turn into action. This limited the chance of greater effectiveness as a consequence of SA implementation.

Surprisingly, after the SA results had been scrutinised there was found to be desire (25% agreement) within the two businesses to continually apply this tool in the future. This suggests an optimistic view that SA outcomes can help to raise management thinking and management learning, especially in terms of building a vision on the journey to 'excellence', along with a set of standard criteria, which was indicated by Ritchie and Dale (2000a). In fact, excellence culture, which is believed to be a result of the enhancement of organisational learning, was facilitated in

both cases. This culture is fundamentally based on core themes which not only focus on customers, but also on other aspects such as society and people. There was a lot of evidence from the two respondent groups, which has been affirmed in section 6.1.3. The basis of this view is that, through this benefit, improvement of the company's management competence leads to enhancement of its effectiveness and drives continuous improvement. Another benefit of increased management competence is that it leads to expansion of the role and responsibilities of the management team, and also helps enhance organisational leadership. Clearly, this advantage cannot be measured by a quantifiable number of improvement actions only. In fact, this can also be reflected in the positive and supportive attitudes of participants and the high quality of SA outcomes.

6.3 Factors influencing the success of SA implementation (Theme 3)

During the literature review, several authors were found to have emphasised that the accuracy and validity of SA outcomes influence the usefulness of SA (Shergold and Reed, 1996; Porter *et al.*, 1998; Van der Wiele *et al.*, 1996; Teo and Dale, 1997; Teo and Dale, 2003; Porter and Tanner, 2004). Teo and Dale (1997) argue that the validity of BE application is defined by the degree of reflection on the current position, as well as pinpointing areas for improvement within the organisation.

As the ultimate characteristics of the SA tool are quick completion and low demand on resources, the limitations of the tool lie in the accuracy of its results. Technically, to complete the SA process, the participants here simply used their perception to justify the company's performance. Thus, many individual factors, such as personal understanding, attitude and experience, could have limited the success of SA implementation.

To understand how such factors impact on the accuracy of SA outcomes and on the success of SA implementation in general, implementation issues are explored below. This exploration serves the second objective of the present study, and also explains the existing limited effectiveness of SA given in section 6.2.

6.3.1 Individual impacts on the degree of accuracy of the SA outcome

Porter and Tanner (2004, p.365) state that in the entry phase there is a "temptation to tie SA results with personal results". Individual barriers which should demand attention include qualification and awareness, attitude and SA experience (Zink and Schmid, 1998; Siow, Yang and

Dale, 2001; Porter and Tanner, 2004; Brown, 2008). These individual issues will be examined to show their connection with the accuracy of final SA scores, and the usefulness of SA –EFQM.

Scoring: In this study, the interview results regarding the SA approach using the EFQM questionnaire in both case companies were determined to be ‘*mostly accurate*’, with 90% agreement in both companies with regards to reflection on their organisational performance. SA outcomes, which include existing measuring gap that has been mentioned previously, was acceptable. It is interesting that a large number of interviewees revealed that the reason for the ‘*mostly accurate*’ results was the high-profile cumulative experience of all participants. Additionally, the failure of a rigorous assessment of organisational performance was seen to be due to the scoring problem. It is important to be aware that a lack of evidence ‘sickness’ (*managers do not use the evidence to score*) was confirmed by nine managers in the two companies (45% agreement).

When the researcher decided to employ the SA tool in Vietnamese companies because of its appropriateness, the greatest challenge which was faced was a warning about the SA output being less reliable and requiring validation (Porter and Tanner, 2004; Brown, 2008; Lascelles and Peacock, 1996). Using a simple and less demanding SA method, such as the EFQM questionnaire to apply SA in the company in the entry phase of the excellence journey, the qualitative data collection, which is gathered typically from ‘*people’s perception and not solid fact*’, represents a disadvantage of the tool (Porter and Tanner, 2004, p.369). Moreover, according to the publisher of the EFQM questionnaire (1999-2003d, p.8), “scoring the Questionnaire is likely to provide a challenging task for most organisations and this is not because of the complexity of the Questionnaire”. Considering these views, the ‘mostly accurate’ results are appropriate in this study.

The qualitative interview data demonstrates the over-score problem. All nine interviewees in Company A and four out of eleven managers in Company B pointed out the tendency to over-score (65% agreement overall). Alternate views among the 20 interviewees included: scoring is useful (three agreements), it is easy to score (one response), and focusing on improvement rather than high score (two agreements). Many managers explained that owing to deficiency in personal understanding, ‘emotional’, ‘generous’ and ‘less accurate’ scores did, indeed, exist and led to an incorrect final result in SA-EFQM.

Another interesting finding was that there were three respondents in Company A and one respondent in Company B who mentioned that there was a relationship between a high score and the relevant accountability of participants. This means that the nearer to the assessor’s responsibilities, the higher the score tended to be.

Surprisingly, the scoring problem in Company A was explained by a manager as being due to internal organisational conflicts, which resulted in dissatisfaction among different functional departments, or between manufacturing and business sections over particular issues. It is clear that the approach mentioned by such participants in this situation is non-scientific and subjective, reducing the usefulness of the SA results. Further, the other four managers in this company stated that the view of assessment between department and manufacturing groups was different.

The previous discussions regarding SA results in section 6.1.1 and 6.1.3 shows the disagreement in both case companies when using the overall score of SA-EFQM to illuminate the company's position in terms of strengths and weaknesses, clearly showing that scoring was a difficulty. Evidence in Chapter 4 and 5 showed the gap between the minimum and maximum score of participants lay in a range from 45% to 63% in Company A, and from 44% to 63% in Company B (examples can be found in figures 4-3 and 5-3).

The SA literature warns that emphasising high scores is a common drawback in measuring (Zink and Schmid, 1998; Conti, 1997; Van der Wiele *et al.*, 2000). Teo and Dale (1997) examined a utility company using the questionnaire tool and found that the measurement problem occurred and over emphasised scores rather than leading to improvements. Porter and Tanner state that a score ranging from 50 to 150 is probably usual in the entry phase of organisations. They explain that this scoring problem occurs because individuals take pride in their companies, to which they devote many years, and this leads them to select a higher scoring rank. Longbottom (1998) recommends that this gap is around the range of about 300 (equivalent to 30%). Brown (2008) highlights how an impressive score of 550 (equivalent to 55%) actually happened in the Baldrige Award.

To explain this drawback, one possible major reason given by literature is a lack of SA knowledge and experience among participants concerning SA activities (Teo and Dale, 1997; Van der Wiele, Dale and Williams, 2000; Lascelles and Peacock, 1996). This particular issue will be presented in the subsequent 'Awareness' section.

In short, this study clearly found a tendency for emphasising high scores, as mentioned in SA literature, among 65% of managers, but with an unbelievable gap in scoring. An actual scoring range of between 40% and 60% was recognised in the two case companies. Explanations similar to those found in literature regarding this problem were stated, such as a lack of evidence and a lack of knowledge. Nevertheless, some new non-scientific problems in scoring appeared, such as an 'encouraging score' style and scoring highly in areas in which the scorer was in charge.

Awareness/understanding: In the two case companies, difficulty in understanding ability actually occurred (60% agreement); eight out of nine managers (89%) in Company A and four out of eleven managers (36%) in Company B indicated there was a lack of understanding when conducting SA in their company. Whilst 30% of interviewees stated that SA-EFQM was much easier (than ISO) and understandable, 40% of them indicated that it was not easy to understand thoroughly.

Confusion in SA language and terminology, as well as a lack of fundamental management knowledge, were reported by six managers (30% agreement). For instance, misunderstandings happened when people stated that support activities in the company (e.g. building the company's kindergarten) belonged to the Policy and Strategy criterion, and creating social jobs through recruiting belonged to the Society Results category. Another example occurred when assessing the Leadership criterion; many interviewees admitted that there was misunderstanding that leadership was only determined by top management. This problem occurred more often in the manufacturing group (five managers) than in the departmental group (one manager).

Several pieces of evidence of the lack of awareness mentioned above show that it was a result of limited personal educational backgrounds and inefficient management competence, and these issues resulted in scoring without intention. Regarding both educational background and management competence, data will be analysed in section 6.3.2. This finding confirmed the risk of insufficient qualifications outlined by Zink and Schmid (1998) and Porter and Tanner (2004).

Literature indicates the significant role of knowledge and awareness when employing a new management philosophy in SA (Van der Wiele, 1996a; Black and Crumley, 1997). It is clear that difficulties in understanding easily lead to measuring problems and less accurate results. Barriers to understanding identified include a lack of adequate awareness of the SA technique (Dale and Coulambidou, 1995; Siow, Yang and Dale, 2001; Dale, 2003) and the risk of confused language (Van der Wiele *et al.*, 1996a; Svensson and Klefsjö, 2000; Kruger, 1997). The consequences of these barriers include 'emotional' or 'pleasant' evaluations, and vague, subjective or pre-perceived assessments (Porter and Tanner, 2004; Yang, Dale, and Siow, 2001). Clearly, the results of this study are evidence of the important impact of individual knowledge on successful SA, and also the associated difficulty of gaining a proper understanding of SA.

Attitude and psychological issues: When assessing the role of personal attitude in the successful implementation of SA-EFQM, it was found that 70% of interviewees (14 managers) in both companies argued that their assessments were made carefully based on their interests; three managers among them described how they scored with an objective view, but 6 out of 20

interviewees (30%) claimed that there existed a lack of interest, care and seriousness when others scored. Additionally, 30% of the two management groups emphasised scoring rigorously, whilst another 30% of them complained that there existed a lack of rigour in other assessments and even themselves.

The threat of subjectivity in scoring and over-optimism, as stated in literature, was found in the two companies. While the subjectivity problem was accepted by seven managers out of the 20 interviewees, over-optimism was only indicated by three respondents. Other attitude problems, such as inferiority (lack of confidence in knowledge), were agreed upon by three managers in both companies.

Two respondents in both case companies emphasized the relationship between participant attitude and the effectiveness of the SA results, which is also stressed in the literature review (Zink and Schmid, 1998; Teo and Dale, 1997; Jackson, 2001).

With regard to problematic psychological issues, the fear of giving a low score (two agreements in Company A) and the fear of being out of line with others (i.e. too high or too low) (20% agreement overall — three managers in Company A and one manager in Company B), as well as the view “*never score leaders low*” (one agreement), were indicated. One interviewee stated: “*A good company should have a score of more than 75%.*” Another problem, namely pre-perception in scoring, was described by four managers of Company A. This included the intention to give the overall score/rank first, or “*A good company should have the score of more than 75%*”, which not match with the EFQM standard.

Regarding negative phenomena potentially occurring in relation to attitude and psychological issues, the dangers are subjectivity, prejudice, pre-perceptions, being dogmatic and being over-optimistic (Van der Wiele *et al.*, 2000; Porter and Tanner, 2004; Yang, Dale, and Siow, 2001). Furthermore, when mentioning attitude problems in the SA process, Ritchie and Dale (2000b) were concerned about the unenthusiastic attitude of participants, whilst lack of rigour was raised by EFQM (1999) and Ruben *et al.*, (2007). Additionally, because SA requires assessing activities in certain areas, it therefore involves ‘sensitive’ psychological issues such as fear of verification, and fear of being out of step with others (Teo and Dale, 1997). According to Porter and Tanner (2004), the rationale for presenting the company in a favourable light is the willingness of participants to contribute towards the best image of the company for which they work every day and of which they are very proud. Thus, it is difficult to be objective in this situation.

In conclusion, evidence suggests that individual impacts, which include individual scoring, understanding and attitude, affect strongly the success of SA implementation. This conclusion is consistent with the view of Porter and Tanner (2004). More specifically, problems with assessors' attitudes and understanding arising as a result of there being inexperienced assessors in the two case companies clearly led to scoring problems and 'less accurate' overall organisational scores. In other words, in both cases the existing limitations explain the inability to obtain all the intended benefits suggested by the EFQM questionnaire and SA literature. It can be said that the benefits obtained in these situations are inadequate and this probably lessens the usefulness of SA-EFQM in practice.

6.3.2 The influence of organisational management resources

10% of all participants recognised that successful SA depended on the company's resources and conditions. In terms of two case companies, 40% of participants admitted a lack of organisational resources to succeed SA-EFQM. SA literature recommends that available quality management resources and several key organisational resources need to be considered in order for SA to be applied successfully. They include management commitment, education and training, and communication (Hillman, 1994; Van der Wiele *et al.*, 1995; 1996a, b; Teo and Dale, 1997; Zink and Schmid, 1998; Tari, 2010). These emergent elements will be addressed in the following sections.

Quality management experience: Regarding the impact of quality management experience in the two case companies on SA, the application of ISO 9000 and the actual experience gained when each company participated in quality activities such as ISO implementation, or the VQA, were only described by a few managers involved. The issue of SA application using the VQA is analysed separately in section 6.5 owing to its significance.

With respect to ISO application, though Company A had possessed the ISO 9001:2000 certificate since 2003, four managers, including a top manager, stated that there was a lack of proper knowledge and experience in their company's quality management and SA activities. The top leader expressed that quality implementation in his company was still subjective, formal and ineffective. There was substantial evidence of massive implementation obstacles across his company. Three managers echoed the view that the quality of the company was recognised to be inconsistent and inadequate.

Quality development in Company B seemed more mature than in Company A, since they had achieved recognition through ISO certification in 2001. There were two comments about the positive impact of quality management on the company's performance. However, the current situation of Company B in terms of quality was described by the quality manager as having product emphasis rather than TQM or an all-system emphasis. The phenomenon of having a 'certificate hanging on the wall' was expressed by one manager. Literature states that organisational experience in SA and relevant quality management contributes significantly towards the success of SA implementation (Yang, Dale, and Siow, 2001; Van der Wiele *et al.*, 1996a). Van der Wiele *et al.* (2000a) warn that in companies who have gained quality certification so as to 'get a certificate on the wall', SA activities will probably not be conducted that regularly and will mostly centre on quality audit.

Regarding ISO quality audit, only the quality manager in Company A suggested from her experience that SA-EFQM was easier to understand and implement than a quality audit. Having said this, apart from the quality managers it seems there is a lack of assessment experience among staff which contributes towards some of the issues with SA implementation. Thus, there is a risk that a lack of intention among the management team, which has been warned by Lascelles and Peacock (1996) and EFQM (1999-2003), will occur in Vietnamese companies in terms of participating in quality activities. Van der Wiele *et al.* (1997) mention this problem and argue that because non-related quality managers just follow and endorse quality requirements, they do not need essential involved understanding. Moreover, the results of Teo and Dale (1997) indicate that quality understanding established when approaching TQM is a foundation for effective SA.

In literature it is mentioned that, the role of organisational experience in SA and relevant quality management contributes significantly towards the success of SA implementation (Yang, Dale, and Siow, 2001; Van der Wiele *et al.*, 1996a). Van der Wiele *et al.* (2000a) warn that in those companies that have gained quality certification just to 'get a certificate on the wall', SA activities are usually not conducted regularly and they mostly centre on quality audit. Hence, problematic issues emerge in such companies' quality systems in Vietnam and they are likely to limit SA usefulness due to pessimistic views. Moreover, the findings evidently support the view that there is an immature level of quality management in Vietnamese enterprises, which has been reviewed in Chapter 2.

Top commitment: The consensual agreement in the two cases was that top commitment was important for the success of SA-EFQM— a fact revealed by 75% of managers (seven and eight respondents respectively in Company A and Company B). Some six respondents who agreed mentioned that top commitment was vital for the effectiveness of the whole company's processes.

They also stated that there was a tight 'cause and effect' relationship between the success of SA implementation and the determination of leaders. This result again matched the very famous cliché of Juan that that "*Management commitment is pertinent to every successful quality revolution, no exceptions are known!*" (Juran and Gryna, 1988), and it is also consistent with the literature reviewed.

From the two management groups, 15% indicated that SA application received the full commitment of the company's leaders. Little evidence in this study showed there was a lack of full commitment from top management, which is believed to be the foundation of SA-EFQM. Empirical literature has shown that one of the failures of SA implementation is a lack of commitment from top leaders or the management team (Van der Wiele *et al.*, 1996a, b; Coulambidou and Dale, 1995; Teo and Dale, 1997; Ruben *et al.*, 2007).

Education and training: In this study a simple and quick approach (the EFQM questionnaire) was used; it did not demand many resources in terms of training. As described in Chapter 3, the education and training lasted about one hour, the EFQM materials, with a Vietnamese version, being sent to each participant in advance. The content of the training was rich, covering the objective, methodology, scoring scheme of the SA-EFQM topic and specific explanations about the nine criteria of the EFQM Excellence Model. The satisfaction level with this training in both cases was found to be relatively high in the workshop afterwards.

In the interviews there was only one manager in each company who expressed that the level of training was adequate; a need for more time for training was also mentioned by 4 out of 20 participants (20% agreement) in both companies. According to their views, more training would bring full understanding of the SA process and relevant criteria. They also wanted the content of questions to be more detailed, or more focused on the benefits of such an SA approach, on how to transfer SA outcome into action. It is noted that the EFQM suggests that no necessary to train intensively for conducting the EFQM questionnaire. However, both management groups recommended a need more training. Clearly, this finding is important in Vietnamese context in terms of SA training issue.

Regarding education background of participants, there were three opinions in Company B stated that factory's managers in their company were not well educated.

Education and training are crucial for successful SA, and this was stressed by eight managers in both case companies. Three managers believed that both training and top commitment were crucial for the success of SA-EFQM.

The prioritised role of the education and training issue is linked to effective SA implementation, as shown in the SA literature presented in Chapter 2. The principal aim of training in BEM implementation is to build up adequate awareness and understanding among the people involved. Literature argues that the credibility of the outcomes depends on the assessor's knowledge of related quality issues or the personal qualifications used to score and interpret SA (Zind and Schmid, 1998; Yang, Dale, and Siow, 2001; Porter and Tanner, 2004). Zink and Schmid (1998) point out the threat that an inadequate assessor may easily lead to inefficient training. In fact, the limited qualifications of manufacturing managers were described in Company B, which possibly linked to the 'insufficient training' mentioned and a lack of relevant understanding.

Finally, management competence was found to be connected to the SA's results, as stated in both companies. Specifically, both leaders of Company B expressed the relationship between management competence and successful SA; 50% of the total views (four managers in Company A and six managers in Company B) agreed that there was weak management competence in their organisations. It is interesting that inefficient involvement of top management was suggested by 25% of managers. The findings related to management competence offer a new insight into SA implementation which was not found during the literature review.

Communication: That communication was an important factor for the success of SA implementation was agreed upon by five respondents in Company A and one respondent in Company B (30% agreement overall). One manager in Company A argued that sharing SA results about the company's situation helped the management team to not fall into a vicious circle of personal perceptions.

There was evidence, however, that a lack of efficient communication occurred in both cases, with 40% agreement. In Company A, less efficient internal communication, which was described as 'pretty-open' (instead of open communication), was found; and this was virtually limited to a person's own responsibility. One respondent stated that less than 50% of managers who participated in scoring understood other companies in the same industry. In Company B, only one manager stated that there was limited internal data used for assessments in general.

Within literature, proper communication is thought to assist in maintaining management commitment and the effectiveness of training (Conti, 1997; Zink and Schmid, 1998; Svensson and Klesjo, 2000; Salmuelsson and Nilsson, 2002). Besides this, an internal communication network has to be set up effectively to ensure that the company's performance can be transferred to the necessary users. This helps to avoid the difficulties ensuing through a lack of intersectional

communication (Teo and Dale, 2003). Those difficulties described in Vietnamese companies surely limit the effectiveness of the benefit of SA, especially in benchmarking.

In conclusion, the findings regarding the influences of organisational resources on the success of SA implementation are relatively consistent with the literature reviewed. This shows that top commitment, education and training, and communication are crucial factors for SA achievement. A lack of organisational management resources affecting the implementation of SA has been warned against by literature, and this occurred in both case companies. They include a lack of full commitment and a lack of effective internal communication. Surprisingly, there was a common view of ineffective quality application and more of a product-focus than one of TQM in the two companies, in spite of them having obtained an ISO certificates over six years ago, as well as the VQA certificate. It also noted that there was a need for training more intensive with extra time. Hence, it can be seen that these difficulties constituted a drawback to appropriate individual understanding, which is believed to be fundamental for SA activities.

6.3.3 The influences of organisational management culture

Regarding the contextual culture of the organisation, only one manager in Company A confirmed that the degree of success of SA relied on the company's management culture. Factors of management culture which can impact on the success or failure of the SA approach include management style, resistance to change, people commitment and management behaviour, according to SA literature. However, only resistance to change was described in this study.

In Company A, although there was an existence of 'optimistic thinking' about the need to change and few activities were established, evidence of actual resistance to change in management culture was provided by two managers in Company A, including the top manager. They did not comment directly on any resistance to implementing SA-EFQM, but described a problem in the management team when implementing improvement activities, such as the ISO quality management system and the deployment of new strategies in the company. In terms of SA using the EFQM questionnaire, two managers assumed that it was quite difficult to successfully achieve this technique based on their company's management culture. In Company B, quite unexpectedly, the impact of organisational management culture received no attention among respondents.

In literature, the climate of organisational culture is believed to have an impact on successful implementation of SA (Lascelles and Peacock, 1996; Samuelsson and Nilsson, 2002; Sousa-Poza Nystrom and Wiebe, 2001; Davies, Douglas and Douglas, 2007; Benavent, Ros and Moreno-

Luzon, 2005; Davies, 2008). Resistance to SA will happen if the company has experienced a failed quality program. Resistance to change was described as having occurred in daily business activities, highlighted in the quality activities of Company A. Therefore, it is possible that this problem will occur and challenge the SA implementation using the EFQM approach. This problem also drew the researcher's attention towards suggestions about administering SA related to training and education issues.

6.3.4 The influences of Vietnamese culture

With regards to this aspect, three issues emerged in both Vietnamese companies. Firstly, there were six managers (30% agreement) who claimed that Vietnamese culture disadvantaged SA implementation; owing to several Vietnamese characteristics common in everyday manners including self-satisfaction (hiding one's own weaknesses), being pleasant and being easy-going. The top leader of Company A mentioned that the easy-going characteristic of the Vietnamese always led to them giving a good judgement (good score) when the object of evaluation was related to their own responsibilities. This explanation helps to clarify the lack of rigour in scoring and also the connection between the over-scoring tendency and the relevant responsibility of assessors.

Secondly, 15% of managers identified that the problem of over-emphasis on high scores is a consequence of the 'encouraging scoring' style, which is surely an effect of Vietnamese culture. Having an easy-going character easily explains the 'encouraging' scoring which has been identified in this study. Finally, the view that Vietnamese culture had a minor impact on successful SA was agreed upon by two interviewees in Company A and one in Company B (15% of the overall views).

As mentioned in Chapter 2, the link between national culture and BEM implementation has been claimed by many researchers, including Flynn and Saladin (2006) and Sila (2007). The current research found that national culture impacts on the reliability of SA outcomes. Whilst evidence showed that Vietnamese culture had a minor impact on SA, the over-scoring problem which has been mentioned earlier is likely to prove the significant link between them.

6.3.5 Advantages and difficulties of SA using the questionnaire tool

Regarding a list of advantages and disadvantages of the questionnaire tool described in Chapter 2, Table 6-3 shows the interview responses for both issues related to implementing the EFQM questionnaire in Company A and Company B.

Table 6-3. Overview of responses regarding SA-EFQM advantages and disadvantages

	Total confirmed managers (n=20)	% confirmation	Number of affirmed managers					
			Company A			Company B		
			Top	DM	MM	Top	DM	MM
ADVANTAGES								
<i>Easy to implement/use</i>	10	50	1/1	3/5	1/3	1/2	3/5	1/4
<i>Clearly-defined goals</i>	5	25	0	1/5	1/3	0	1/5	2/4
<i>It is a simple tool</i>	5	25	1/1	1/5	0	1/2	1/5	1/4
<i>Quick/not time-consuming</i>	3	15	0	0	1/3	1/2	0	1/4
<i>Low efforts/low resources required</i>	2	10	0	1/5	0	0	0	1/4
DISADVANTAGES								
<i>Lack of accuracy of overall outcome</i>	13	65	0	5/5	3/3	0	3/5	2/4
<i>The outputs represent perception and require validation</i>	10	50	0	4/5	3/3	0	2/5	1/4
<i>Difficult to identify the causal factors</i>	6	30	0	4/5	0	1/2	0	1/4
<i>Lack of a need to provide evidence</i>	5	25	0	3/5	0	0	0	2/4
<i>Other (Hard to conduct SA regularly)</i>	3	15	1/1	1/5	1/3	0	0	0
<i>Other (Unfamiliar language /difficult to understand)</i>	8	40	1/1	2/5	3/3	1/2	1/5	0
<i>Other (Difficulty in implementation generally)</i>	4	20	1/1	0	2/3	0	0	1/4

Note: Top = Top management; DM = Departmental Management; MM = Manufacturing Management

50% of participants in both cases confirmed the *easy to implement* nature of the SA tool in practice. The next two most highly agreed upon advantages were *clearly defined goals* and *simple tool* (25%). Other advantages, such as *not time-consuming* or *low resources required*, gained limited agreement.

On the other hand, the most challenging barriers to the implementation of the EFQM questionnaire include a *lack of accuracy of overall outcomes* and *the outputs represent perception and require validation*. Those high agreements about the disadvantages of SA questionnaire also explain the implementation obstacles that occurred, such as that unfamiliar language easily lead to a lack of understanding or the output represent perception may explain highly scoring. All the shortcomings listed above have already been identified by several academic authors. It can be noted that these difficulties are stated by academics when reviewing the initial period of SA practice.

6.3.6 The crucial success factor of SA implementation

Finally, when asked about the key success factor of SA-EFQM, the two companies gave the responses which are shown in Table 6-4. The evidence in this table shows that both top commitment and training are the most important issues, and scoring is the least important factor among success factors. Clearly, these success factors have been identified by existing literature. The important point here is that the training issue has proved to be significant equally with the role of top commitment in SA implementation in the Vietnamese business context.

Table 6-4. Overview of findings regarding the key success factors of SA-EFQM

KEY SUCCESS FACTORS	Total respondents	Number of respondent						Rank
		Company A			Company B			
		Top	DM	MM	Top	DM	MM	
<i>Top leaders/Top commitment</i>	6	0	3	1	1	1	0	<i>I</i>
<i>Training</i>	6	0	3	1	1	0	1	<i>I</i>
<i>Communication</i>	3	0	1	1	0	1	0	<i>II</i>
<i>Awareness</i>	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	<i>III</i>
<i>Scoring</i>	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	<i>IV</i>

6.4 The potential of implementing the EFQM SA questionnaire in Vietnam (Theme 4)

To discuss the potential of implementing the EFQM questionnaire in Vietnam, it is recognised that the author should outline the appropriateness of using the SA tool in the two case study companies. When considering whether SA using the EFQM questionnaire was useful for the two Vietnamese companies in general, it can be said that two key positive responses emerged: general agreement and agreement with certain conditions. The first view, *SA-EFQM is completely useful for Vietnamese companies*, was agreed upon by five managers in Company A and eight managers in Company B (65% of the overall view).

The second view, *SA-EFQM is useful for Vietnamese companies in certain conditions*, was accepted by four managers and two managers (30% of the overall view) in Company A and Company B respectively. Certain conditions have to be considered to determine the degree of application and success in the opinion of two managers, linked to the company's resources. The remainder of this group described a few vital areas in the SA approach as requiring particular care, such as understanding, education and training, have a respectful attitude and the 'Vietnamese' assessment style. These considerations are a close match to the wide range of implementation barriers indicated previously.

These evaluations of the potential of the SA approach are possibly based on the participants' awareness of the benefit it can give to their companies. The value of the EFQM tool was evaluated as "meaningful" and "if such assessment is applied more regularly in Vietnam, it would be good" was a comment made by the top leader of Company A. This respondent also stated that the 'close-to-accurate' results of SA-EFQM definitely stimulate vital improvement solutions, which can surely bring about benefits for Vietnamese companies. However, the reality of immature and inefficient ISO and TQM implementation in his company possibly led him to express the idea that EFQM should not be embarked upon yet. This seems to confirm the effect of organisational resources on the implementation of BE quality activity that has been described in the literature review.

The negative viewpoints in Company A show that the prospect of expanding such BE SA to lower level staff (i.e. workers) is poor. One manager doubted the success of such BE SA in the near future and suggested that it would require considerable patience to witness its widespread application in Vietnam. Another interviewee was concerned about the confidentiality of such SA results. In Company B, the educational background of the team participating should be taken into consideration, as indicated by one interviewee.

There were three suggestions from the participants in Company A. Firstly, to resolve the scoring problem, several recommendations were given; for instance, an adjustment scoring scale would increase from the current 4-degree scale— A (0%) B (33%) C (67%) and D (100%) — to larger degree levels (10% each degree). Another recommendation is, breaking down questions into smaller items so that they are easier to digest, such as the example of the University Entrance Exam consisting of 100 points for 100 questions. The top manager of Company A proposed to increase the excellence indicator framework used, employing a scale of 50-70-90% for Typical - Very good - World-class indicators, instead of 20-50-75% used in the EFQM guidelines. Such adjustments to the score framework, according to these managers, will better suit the Vietnamese context and Vietnamese judging style, and also help organisational scores to be more accurate. The second suggestion is a solution for existing difficulties, namely understanding through the support of external experts. Their deep and wide practical BE SA knowledge and objective attitudes were believed to be significant for the achievement of successful SA implementation. The third idea from Company B was that annotation could be added in order to avoiding misunderstanding and for a proper explanation to be provided.

As described in Chapter 2, the less complex EFQM SA questionnaire was chosen for application in the cases investigated, since they were beginners on the excellence road (EFQM, 1999-2003b; Ritchie and Dale, 2000b; Sturkenboom, Van Der Wiele and Brown, 2001, Lascelle and Peacock, 1997; Shergold and Reed, 1996). Even though this simple instrument was used, empirical evidence showed an array of implementation difficulties. Thus, it has been reinforced that employing a (quality) award application, such as the VQA, is not suitable for a company seeking to discover its performance gap and the root causes. The issue of the two case companies obtaining recognition for winning the BE award is examined in the next section.

6.5 Further discussion on the application of BEM/QA in Vietnam

Regarding the role of SA using a BEM existing in Vietnam, the VQA, two main findings were made from limited evidence of the interview data (the Vietnamese expert and the two companies examined). Generally, all comments made about the VQA by eight respondents in the present study were given by the top and departmental management groups. There were no comments made by manufacturing managers.

Firstly, as discussed in Chapter 2, it is argued that the benefits brought to Vietnamese applicant mainly focus on distinguishing deserving companies based on the available resources of the VQA. In Company A, while few benefits of the VQA were listed by the two managers involved, certain action improvements were deployed after assessment; for instance, cutting-edge information was

obtained through participation in a quality productivity forum, and it enhanced the company's image. In Company B, two positive comments from the top leader about taking part in the excellence journey by applying the VQA to the company were that it has enhanced IT capacity and productivity has increased. However, the VQA had only a limited affect on the identification of Company B's improvement actions, according to the company's CEO.

An array of negative points related to award participation were described by three managers in Company A, including it being time-consuming, there being a lack of participation from the management team and that it was won too easily. One manager stated the award was a kind of achievement 'disease', as companies just tried to obtain the award rather than seek potential opportunities for improvement. Another manager described the difficulty of using the company's SA outcomes to benchmark with others; as such a service was unavailable in Vietnam. Company B also recognised such benchmarking needed foreign consultants, which the company cannot afford. The CEO of Company B complained that the limitation of the VQA was that its output did not closely reflect the reality of company performance because it strongly relied on SA statistical reports which do not show the different management views.

The VQA has been described as not having a wide impact and not being of much interest to companies, according to the top managers of the two case companies. Based on the limited VQA participation, one manager in Company A and one top leader in Company B pointed out that the EFQM brought more benefits than the VQA because the EFQM questionnaire helped to provide a comprehensive assessment which included various management views

With regard to this aspect, the Vietnamese award expert stated that many enterprises do not fully recognise the advantages and benefits of VQA application. The important distinction when comparing this award to many local ones is that the VQA not only pays attention to cherish companies themselves but also provides them with managerial knowledge guided by a set of excellence criteria. It is clear that beneficial learning through the award experience was indicated by only one respondent in the two case companies. Moreover, the award expert pointed out that the two weakest points of the VQA are its narrow impact owing to inefficient advertising and its inability to enhance understanding of BE/QA among award participants because of a lack of training resources.

According to the award expert, it is very difficult to access information for external benchmarking because of the scarcity of data about competitors. This possibly explains why **benefit d** (*Allow comparison with the achievements of other organisations*) was not achieved highly when using the SA EFQM in this study. The expert also mentioned that the most difficult part of the award body's work when evaluating Vietnamese enterprises was SA. In reality, most companies relied on regional external professionals, even if these people had not been trained effectively. Finally,

the expert emphasised that the deployment of assessment based on the VQA can have positive results if it is paid enough attention to by managers, especially if it has the commitment of the top leaders.

Literature proposes potential benefits of award application, including the opportunity to learn excellence and provide benchmarking in the same industry (Halachmi, 1995). However, it has been argued that it is easy to hide negative aspects through writing and that it is time-consuming (Lascelles and Peacock; 1996; EFQM, 1999-2003b, Porter and Tanner, 2004; Ekriksson, 2004). The findings regarding the Vietnamese case studies show limited benefits they gained mostly centred on improvement some aspects of their activities. Limitations of application of VQA were time-consuming, lack of participation and the accuracy of VQA's output.

Secondly, regarding the process of award application in Vietnamese enterprises, the quality manager in Company A indicated the similarity with the generic process indicated by Zink and Schmidt (1998). Both companies also insisted that they did not apply the award voluntarily. Aiming to increase awareness of their company brand, the two companies wrote the VQA report by describing processes and procedures. With the support of external assessors, the final report was written in order to submit it for the award. The quality manager of Company A admitted that the management team did not provide scores themselves and that the final score of 650-670 points was provided externally.

The same opinion came from both companies regarding the judgment of external assessors who work for the local branch of the Directorate for Standards, Methodology and Quality of Vietnam (STAMEQ); namely that their judgment was subjective. Moreover, feedback reports from the VQA were described as being oral by Company A. One of the potential reasons for this problem is the shortage of efficient assessors in Vietnam, which has been mentioned in Chapter 2.

In short, SA using the VQA experience brought limited benefits to the participating organisations. With limited resources in terms of expertise and guidance in SA activities, it is clear that this award can only really help applicants by enhancing their company's image.

6.6 Further discussion on the different views of the management group

This section examines the similarities and differences between the different management groups and functions in the two Vietnamese textile and garment companies. The matrices in tables 4-7 of Chapter 4 and table 5-8 of Chapter 5 are used to clarify the similarities and differences of key themes of the study.

6.6.1 Comparison of the views of top management

For Theme 1, the assessments of the top leaders of the two companies were similar in that they confirmed the benefits were **benefit a** and **benefit d**. Another suggested benefit was to improve organisational learning, as indicated by Company B. A debate about organisational strengths and weaknesses, which was indicated by the overall SA scores, proved that there was a lack of accuracy in scoring.

Regarding Theme 2, although the chief executives of the two companies admitted the usefulness of SA-EFQM, they did not provide any specific evidence of actual improvement which had taken place as a result of SA implementation in the company.

The issue of SA-EFQM implementation in Theme 3 was revealed as uncomplicated but still not easy to understand. There was a similar view in over-scoring and loose assessment in both leader groups. The distinction between the two cases lies in the interesting indications given by Company A (the psychological impact on scoring, the relationship between over-scoring and the responsibility of participants, and the easy-going nature of the Vietnamese) and Company B (the relationship between management competence and SA implementation). Another difference was found to be the role of the two main factors — organisational culture and national culture — which were not mentioned by Company B.

With respect to the potential of implementing SA-EFQM in Vietnam in Theme 4, the level of positive support in Company B seemed to be higher than that of Company A.

6.6.2 Comparison between the views of senior departmental managers

Among the two management levels, departmental managers are believed to have contributed the most qualified, impressive and convincing evidences in the present study. Based on the usefulness of SA using the EFQM questionnaire (Theme 1), evaluation of this group in the two companies is fairly uncommon. While the group in Company A confirmed the intended benefits of SA, Company B's group suggested other benefits, as highlighted by the literature review. There is one similar doubt in both cases about the benefit of the SA tool to identify organisational position, owing to the scoring gap that occurred.

The majority of interviewees stated that SA using the EFQM made a great contribution towards enhancing the company's effectiveness. However, empirical evidence showed that actual improvements were made after SA implementation only in Company A. The departmental group

in Company B seems to lay emphasis on the necessary condition of SA implementation to bring about benefits to their business. Specifically, they indicated that the success of implementation of such BEM would depend on the will of leaders and a supportive attitude of participants.

Regarding the SA execution process in Theme 3, departmental groups in both Company A and Company B revealed that the role of individuals contributes towards SA outcomes. Similarities were expressed regarding the reality of over-emphasising a high score and a lack of awareness. In Company A, participants seemed to appraise themselves carefully, strictly and objectively, but claimed others lacked interest. Psychological issues existed, such as a fear of being out of line with others. Regarding the critical factors of SA utilisation, top commitment was considered the most crucial factor, with education and training being less important. One respondent was concerned about the educational background of assessors in the Vietnamese textile and garment sector, in that it is relatively lower than in other manufacturing and service sectors

The management group also supported that organisational culture impacts on the outcomes of the SA process. The minor effect of Vietnamese characteristics, such as self-esteem and having an easy-going character, was deemed to be a possible explanation for the over-scoring trend and 'encouraging scoring'.

The interview data showed that several managers, normally in the quality department, were involved to SA against the VQA. Thus, it can be assumed that a lack of management commitment and involvement limited the actual benefits that the companies gained after SA implementation.

A final theme related to the potential usefulness of BE implementation in Vietnam was also affirmed. Departmental managers in both cases suggested several essential requirements for SA, including respectful attitude, leader commitment and the confidentiality of SA results. One manager predicted that SA implementation in other manufacturing and service sectors would be more successful than in the two companies investigated.

6.6.3 Comparison between the views of senior manufacturing managers

With regard to Theme 1, the percentage of affirmed intended benefits of SA-EFQM by manufacturing managers in Company A was higher than in Company B. There were similarities in both the intended and suggested benefits stated by these informants. All three respondents of the manufacturing group in Company A pointed out that SA implementation made a useful contribution to management learning. This was not only accepted by the manufacturing group in Company A, as both management groups of Company B (consisting of eight respondents) considered it to be a valuable experience to gain and practise modern management knowledge —

BE SA. This group in Company B was the sole group who indicated that the organisational position identified for them by SA was correct.

Regarding Theme 2, there was no proof of improvement actions after SA undertaken which was described by the manufacturing group. However, 50% of this group agreed that SA outcomes potentially led to the company's performance improvement.

For theme 3, both groups confirmed there were some implementation problems, such as an emphasis on high scores, a lack of awareness and negative participant attitudes. The danger of misunderstanding the scope was also identified in the two groups. SA and participation in the VQA seems to be unfamiliar to this management level. In Company A, the factory managers highlighted psychological phenomena including being afraid of a 'low score' and being afraid of being out of line with others. Resistance to change was also stated by this group in Company A only. The majority in the two cases believed that top commitment and leadership was critical for successful SA. Training was also seen as important and requiring more investment. A lack of efficient communication occurred in both companies. According to this group, national culture seemed not to significantly affect SA outcomes.

In terms of the potential to implement, such an SA questionnaire in Vietnam (Theme 4), they all agreed its usefulness for helping to improve Vietnamese organisational performance. However, certain conditions and a 'Vietnam assessment' style would be necessary.

6.6.4 Lessons from the three levels of management discussion

The quantitative results in this study provided evidence of the assessment gap in scoring organisational performance of the two case companies among the three management groups. Clearly, this finding supports the findings of similar work by Venero *et al.* (2007) that showed the relationship between the views of managers at different levels when employing an EFQM-based questionnaire. In general, the similarity between the three management groups in evaluating SA using the EFQM questionnaire was they confirmed the benefit of this questionnaire, which was based on mostly accurate and acceptable results, to help company identify its strengths and areas for improvement.

There are potentially three lessons learnt from the three cross-section analyses above. Firstly, working with management groups, especially departmental groups, is valuable in Vietnam. Most good explanations came from the departmental group. This group also provided evidences of improvement actions which occurred after SA implementation. Secondly, the success of the application of SA-EFQM was not great, as analysed previously, due to a lack of company's

resources and management culture. The viewpoints of different manager groups about SA benefits and implementation factors were not similar, especially between departmental and manufacturing groups. Finally, although manufacturing managers have just as an important role as departmental managers regarding positional level, the reality in these two Vietnamese textile and garment companies showed that there was a lack of involvement, information and awareness/knowledge in SA activities in this group. This explains the misunderstanding and other difficulties in scoring of the manufacturing group. This important concern will help the researcher suggest appropriate strategy for successful SA.

6.7 Conclusion

The literature review found that there is a lack of knowledge of SA implementation using the BEM in the Vietnamese context. The findings of this study fulfilled the literature gap by obtaining qualitative interview data from management team of two textile and garment companies in Vietnam through their experience of using the EFQM SA questionnaire. Moreover, discussion on SA using the existing national award, which is supported by expert opinion, has also contributed to some of the minor findings in this study.

Based on a synthesis and interpretation of management views in the two companies, firstly there were only five out of six intended benefits of the EFQM questionnaire recognised. The other four benefits were suggested by interviewees. Specifically, the benchmarking benefit of SA using the EFQM questionnaire was found to have been limited in the two companies and the expert view was that it was difficult to compare organisational performance with that of other companies in Vietnam. Few improvement actions were described, and they were not determined by top managers. Limited benefits could not help to provide clear and consistent evidence of improvement actions in both companies. The first possible reason for this failure is that the actual motivation for SA implementation relied on an academic aim, rather than the willingness of the case companies. It seems that the commitment of top leaders ceased halfway through the SA process and they did not continuously deploy and integrate the benefits of SA outcomes into everyday basic operational activities. This is why actual improvement actions which were believed to be consequences of SA implementation were only indicated by departmental managers. It is assumed that these activities were based on individual perception through individuals' awareness of SA benefits, and the team in question transferred them into action. The second reason is the execution barriers and difficulties.

Secondly, evidence suggested that individual impacts affect strongly the success of SA implementation. There were some minor problems with assessors' attitudes and understanding arising as a result of there being inexperienced assessors in the two case companies. The management team in the two companies were unanimous in agreeing that high scoring existed.

Following further analysis, the key categories identified were top commitment, education and training. Moreover, some evidence suggested that organisational resources, such as quality maturity and communication sharing, were inefficient in both companies and did not provide an ideal environment for the success of the SA process. The issue of resistance to change was visible in Company A. Management competence, which was not indicated in the literature, was found to be connected to the success of SA with minor evidence.

Although some Vietnamese organisations have experience in the application of the VQA, the general objective of these companies was to enhance their image. Limited benefits were described, but managers in both companies stated that the VQA was not useful to Vietnamese organisations because of its limitations.

Thirdly, the role of national culture was found to influence the success of SA. A unique Vietnamese 'encouraging scoring' style was found to exist due to the pleasant character of the Vietnamese and their preference to give a good score.

Some success of SA using the EFQM questionnaire is evidence of its 'appropriateness' with conditions for determining a well-suited approach. The limited benefits companies achieved from the VQA show that 'award simulation' is not synonymous with the resources and culture of these companies. To foster the application of the BEM in practice, SA implementation should be more focused in order to avoid damaging its value (Porter and Tanner, 2004). According to William *et al.*, (2006), low level SA using the BEM should be centred on creating opportunities for improvement for beginners on the SA journey. Based on the findings of this study, Vietnamese companies should implement a much simpler technique, rather than award simulation. On this basis, the questionnaire SA technique seems appropriate for the majority of starters on the SA journey using BEM in Vietnam. In terms of the potential for more successful SA implementation using the EFQM questionnaire over the long term in Vietnam, it is almost certain that the usefulness of the SA application could have been increased if the commitment of each company's leaders had been higher. Essential mechanistic preparation should be arranged with emphasis on comprehensive training and more efficient communication in order to avoid the challenge of the Vietnamese 'encouraging scoring' style when scoring and other negative psychological impacts.

CHAPTER 7. CONCLUSIONS

7.0 Introduction

In this exploratory research, the application of BEM-based SA was accomplished in two Vietnamese textile and garment case companies with the support of the EFQM questionnaire; which is an appropriate technique for Vietnamese organisations in the early stage of the journey towards excellence. The SA experience of using this questionnaire tool for assessment through scoring filled the literature gap, as discussed in Chapter 2, by providing new insights into how SA outcomes are useful for improving a company's performance and effectiveness in the Vietnamese business context.

Primary data was gathered by interviewing top and senior managers in the Vietnamese case companies, based on the quantitative outcomes of SA implementation. The interpretivism paradigm and semi-structured interviews were adopted in this study, and primary data was analysed through the combination of template analysis and NVivo software (presented in Chapter 3).

Data analysis of Company A was shown in Chapter 4 and of Company B in Chapter 5. Along with cross-case discussion synthesis with literature reviewed in Chapter 6, this showed the usefulness of the EFQM SA tool and also highlighted implementation issues which impacted on the success of the SA process. Along with providing a greater understanding of SA implementation in Vietnam, a developing country, and both its beneficial and its negative aspects, it has been possible to enhance the validity of the application of BEM in current literature.

This last chapter contains a summary of the crucial findings regarding the three objectives of answering the research question. Significantly, the chapter attempts to illustrate the original contributions achieved, as well as relevant implications and limitations of the present study. Final thoughts based on the benefits and limitations of this study are included, and recommendations for future research are made.

7.1 Summary of the research findings

Bearing in mind the plethora of BE-based SA approaches (questionnaires, matrix and award simulation/application) used in Western countries, the researcher specifically chose the simple and less resource-demanding EFQM SA questionnaire, which is often used as a preliminary tool of SA. Although the two companies had experience of SA implementation and acknowledged the

business excellence concept through VQA application, the application of the EFQM tool can be seen as a unique opportunity for the Vietnamese organisations to employ a more appropriate SA tool, owing to their immature levels in quality management.

Using the SA questionnaire tool, the management groups in the two case companies gained further experience of evaluating their organisational performance. Subsequently, the outcomes of this SA process were used as the basis for answering the research question regarding whether SA using the questionnaire is useful and whether its benefits can enhance a company's effectiveness. In other words, this evaluation activity shows whether BEM-based SA implementation works in the Vietnam context. The similarities and differences in perceptions between management groups measuring the achievement of the SA activity were reflected upon using the interview data.

Together with the primary findings which relate to the three research objectives of the current study regarding the usefulness of the EFQM SA questionnaire for Vietnamese organisations, another minor conclusion provides unique empirical knowledge about the benefits and participation of two case companies to the existing BE or quality award in Vietnam. It can be noted that this conclusion was supported by the VQA expert's opinion. Details of each finding are explored below.

7.1.1 Discussion on the usefulness of SA using the BEM.

Objective 1: *To evaluate the usefulness of the BEM using the self-assessment approach in Vietnamese enterprises*

The main objective of this research has been basically achieved with the following findings:

Finding 1: The benefits realised from the SA-EFQM application.

Only five out of six intended benefits were recognised in both companies; the exception being **benefit f**. However, the high view on the benefit of the SA tool was that it '*help[s] an organisation identify its current position and determine future directions and priorities*' (**benefit a**). This benefit was also confirmed to be most important among the six intended benefits of the SA tool, as shown by 70% agreement. In addition, another four benefits were identified by the two companies. They were: helping to identify organisational strengths and weaknesses, improving organisational learning, helping to improve organisational competitiveness and

involvement/communication enhancement. Among these, the benefit '*Identify organisational strengths and weaknesses*' was confirmed strongly by the companies; with 75% agreement. In general, this finding shows that SA using the EFQM questionnaire was verified as being useful in four categories: potential improving business results and driving improvement focus, benefiting organisational culture, strategic planning and providing benchmarking opportunities (see section 6.1.4).

Although the results of this study confirm findings from previous studies using similar SA tools (Teo and Dale, 1997; Tari and Juana-Espinosa, 2007; Michaska, 2009; Tari, 2010), several important details were concluded in terms of the obtained benefits of the EFQM questionnaire, as follows:

(i) Regarding the benefit of SA of locating the current position of a company against the EFQM ranking scale (**benefit a**), there was disagreement about the accuracy of SA outcomes. The dominant group consisted of 40% of all managers in the two companies recommended a proper position — 'encouraging/pretty good', rather than a 'very good' rank — because the position based on the SA-EFQM scale seemed higher than the reality. Alternative scores ranging between 30% and 50% of SA outcomes were suggested rather than 64%. This seems to match equivalent scores mentioned in literature (Dale and Smith, 1997; Porter and Tanner, 2004). Moreover, some examples of SA outcomes were evidence of 'unrealistic' assessment. An apparent problem of over-scoring was highlighted.

(ii) In terms of the second main benefit obtained with 45% agreement, **benefit d** (*Assess whether all members of a management team have the same view of the organisation's achievements and weaknesses*) was evaluated by some managers as being meaningful, systematic, scientific and objective. This benefit can help top leaders steer management views into the right direction for the company. This study also provides evidence for the view that SA is an outstanding approach for collecting management perceptions (Shergold and Reed, 1996; Dale 2003).

(iii) Surprisingly, although the benefit '*identifying organisational strengths and weaknesses*' was not the original and pre-defined benefit of this EFQM tool, it received the agreement of 89% of the management team in Company A and 64% in of the management team in Company B. However, the identification of a company's strengths and weaknesses met with some disagreement.

When discussing the dispute about the measuring problem relating to both (i) and (iii), Lascelles and Peacock (1997), EFQM_e (1999-2003), and Porter and Tanner (2004) contend that the questionnaire approach neither provides highly accurate results or allows for the provision of a list of strengths nor areas for improvement, specifically because it only requires less-demanding

resources (time, money and efforts). Therefore, the findings of the SA outcomes are 'mostly accurate' as outlined by the two Vietnamese companies which regard to scoring is confirmed by literature. In particular, personal judgments of managers when came from different backgrounds and differing SA awareness and experience led to differences in the overall SA results. However, this concern has led to the view that SA training should be tailored carefully to the Vietnamese context.

(iv) One of the three significant benefits of SA was organisational learning improvement with 55% agreement. Managers in Company B strongly confirmed this benefit with 73% agreement. Interesting outcomes of this benefit were confirmed, such as the provision of valuable experience and practising modern management knowledge

One of the advantages of the SA questionnaire approach is that it allows easy segmentation by function and by level in order to serve specific needs (EFQM, 1999-2003; Porter and Tanner, 2004). The multiple analysis of the current study clarified this advantage by showing the perception gap among management groups through graphical presentations. Management teams in two companies were particularly interested in how organisational performance was displayed in graphs, showing different managerial views, and the benefit of these presentations in terms of directing future improvement. Some managers claimed that they felt they had been woken up by how other units assessed their own accountability and achievements. Through the provision of an evidential and exclusive picture of a company helps to improve management thinking and views, thus improving the performance of the whole company. That is why they accepted the fact that, although the overall SA outcome could not address precisely every aspect of the company, its usefulness could not be ignored.

(vi) Finding 1 can be linked to similar case studies by Teo and Dale (1997), which examined Western SA practice. One of four cases in Teo and Dale's work employed the same SA questionnaire. The similarities between the actual benefits recognised in their work and the current study include: non-financial improvement directions being realised and quality awareness being increased through learning and communication. Additionally, the benefits obtained were recognised as mostly improving business results and driving improvement actions (category D). This result replicates the findings of the SA literature reviewed. However, in this study, the benefit which was highly recognised in pinpointing the company's strengths and weaknesses is not one of the six intended benefits of the EFQM. Among these six benefits, one benefit in encouraging a company to monitor its progress on a regular basis received one agreement out of 20 managers, and another benefit in ensuring that the organisation is not over-stressed by many improvement actions was not confirmed.

Finding 2: The usefulness of the EFQM questionnaire as an appropriate SA tool in order to assist an organisation to improve its performance and effectiveness.

In both companies, the study identified the Vietnamese management perception that supports the argument found in literature, that SA using a bespoke questionnaire tool is useful in improving a company's effectiveness. Notably, the view that SA tool was useful in improving the effectiveness of their company in general, received an average rate of 60% from all scorers, including both top leaders. Another similar view, which received 30% agreement, was that SA was interesting but needed careful consideration to be successful. Many areas were described as needing careful consideration, such as top commitment, a respectful attitude and a 'Vietnamese' assessment style. Several suggestions for coping with the scoring and awareness problem were proposed by some managers i.e. enlarge the degree of scoring levels, increase the performance indicators, explore external experts and add annotations to explain terminologies.

However, little empirical evidence came from Company A. The departmental group of this company listed an array of improvement actions which were deployed after finishing SA in order to handle managerial deficiencies and company weaknesses that had been pointed out. Specifically, significant improvements focused on improving customer relations and customer strategy, including top managers' behaviours and implementation issues; and on developing strategies which empowered staff. This result is consistent with the recommendation of Porter and Tanner (2004) regarding the benefits deliver by a company implement SA in Entry phase, in 'strategic' improvement. No direct evidence of improvement actions was provided by the top and manufacturing groups in the two Vietnamese companies. Disappointingly, there was no specific evidence to reflect this although eight out of eleven respondents in Company B stated that BE implementations was useful in their company.

The reason for the limited improvement actions may have been because the SA study was based on having academic intentions and did not provide active motivation. It can be said that the SA process was not thoroughly integrated into the company business planning process, so opportunities for improvement may not have turned into actions. Improvement actions mentioned in improving strategic planning seem to be the actions of individual assessors in their operational areas, rather than coming from an organisational action plan determined by top leaders.

It is worth pointing out that 25% of the total assessors showed their desire to apply this tool in the future because of their recognition of the SA tool's benefits. This study showed there was an optimistic view that SA outcomes can help to improve a company's performance and effectiveness by improving business results and driving improvement focus; benefiting organisational learning and providing benchmarking opportunities, which were mentioned previously in Finding 1. Clearly, evidence of these benefits, such as organisational learning

improvement or benchmarking opportunities, was intangible. Given that, it would seem that an excellence culture, which stems from the enhancement of organisational learning (Finding 1 – iv) was facilitated in both cases.

Based on the primary aim of SA to provide a range of potential improvement opportunities for improving organisational performance, the outcomes of SA research in the two Vietnamese cases appeared to have been accomplished.

7.1.2 Discussion on the SA implementation process

Objective 2: *To explore implementation issues associated with self-assessment in specific contexts.*

Finding 3: The individual role of the assessor in the success of SA implementation.

Individuals are proven to affect the success of SA implementation and the usefulness of the SA approach. Individual assessment mainly is undertaken by personal evaluation, which basically lacks evidence and is influenced by perception. It is important to be aware that a lack of evidence was confirmed by 45% of participants.

A large scoring gap was found in both companies, along with three other interesting findings. First, SA results were accepted to be ‘mostly accurate’ and ‘acceptable’ in general. Second, while an over-scoring problem was demonstrated by 65% of participants, there was suggestion of the existence of a relationship between a high score and the relevant accountability of the scorer (20% agreement). Thirdly, the interesting assessment style of ‘encouraging scoring’ was found in these cases. With respect to the generous scoring and over-scoring tendency, a few managers scored with a pre-perception that their company had nearly reached a world-class ranking.

Along with the scoring problem, over-emphasis on high scores, which was warned of in the literature (Teo and Dale, 1997; Zink and Schmid, 1998; Conti, 1997; Van der Wiele, Williams and Dale, 2000b), was found to be evident in the two companies. It is evident that individual scores indicated the organisational position to be within a large range, from Typical (25%) to World-class (75%), as can be seen in Figure 6-3. Individual scoring gap in two cases, which ranged between 40%-60% in this figure, also partly supports the explanation for the less-reliable SA results which creates a doubt of the recognised benefits of the SA questionnaire tool (Finding 1 – issue (i) and (iii)).

60% of managers reflected that there was a lack of understanding when conducting SA in the two companies. Moreover, in both cases, 40% of participants stated that the questionnaire's content was not easy to understand. Confusion about SA language and terminology, and a lack of management knowledge were reported, especially in the manufacturing group. On the other hand, 30% of participants stated that SA-EFQM was much easier (than ISO) and comprehensible. SA was affected by a lack of personal awareness and psychological aspects occurring in the two cases; and clearly led to scoring problems and 'less accurate' overall organisational scores.

Regarding attitude and psychological issues, although 70% of interviewees stated their support for SA implementation when scoring with care and an objective view, the threat of a lack of enthusiasm, subjectivity, pre-perception in scoring and over-optimism were found in the two companies. In particular, subjectivity, which is identified by literature, was stated by 35% of interviewees. Another new attitude dilemma, namely the lack of confidence in knowledge, was confirmed by 15% of managers. Furthermore, problematic psychological issues, such as the fear of giving low scores and the fear of being out of line with others, were described by both companies. These results replicate SA knowledge.

Finally, evidence of cross-case analysis in two Vietnamese companies showed that although manufacturing managers have just as an important role as departmental managers regarding positional level, that there was a lack of involvement, information and awareness/knowledge in SA activities in this group. This explains the misunderstanding and other difficulties in scoring of the manufacturing group.

Finding 4: The influence of organisational management resources on SA implementation.

Of the interviewees, 10% recognised that the success of SA implementation depended on the company's resources and conditions.

In both companies, limited evidence of the impact of quality management experience was provided in both cases. Information which concerned both individual and organisational experiences of SA and related quality activities provided evidence of the inefficient and inconsistent quality management in the two Vietnamese case companies. Specifically, there was some evidence of systematic and administrative errors in quality activities, such as a lack of systematic collaboration or 'formalist' sickness, with excessive adherence to recognised forms and papers. In addition, a 'product-focus' tendency was described. It is surprising that both companies investigated had obtained ISO certificate over six years and had also received the VQA certificate. The limited views of the managers regarding SA can be mainly explained by their disengagement from such quality activities.

Regarding the actual benefits of a business excellence/quality award (the Vietnam quality award) in the Vietnamese organisational context, this study provides a number of important insights into the several benefits gained by the participating companies. Semi-structured interview data from the two Vietnamese enterprises and an expert interview with the head of the VQA office cases enriched the initial information regarding this award. The perspective of managers in the participating companies was that there were few benefits gained from the application of the VQA. Limited performance improvements were obtained after award participation, such as enhancing the company's image and certain action improvements. As proven by some limited evidence, the actual benefits gained seemed to not meet the companies' expectations and they found the VQA to be not that useful (30% agreement). The management teams of both companies criticised how easy it was to obtain the VQA certificate, and also stated that it was time-consuming, annoying, that there was an achievement 'disease', and too much reliance on documents and statistics.

When discussing the disadvantages of the VQA, the Vietnamese expert believed that there was a lack of acknowledgment of the benefits of the award in participating companies. The expert stated that the training resources and advertisement of the award were poor. Limited evidence of the VQA' benefits which have been stated in two case companies supported the view of the Vietnamese expert. The expert also mentioned that it is very difficult to access information for external benchmarking because of the scarcity of data about competitors. This possibly explains why the benefit of the EFQM questionnaire in '*allowing comparison with the achievements of other organisations*' (**benefit b**) was not achieved highly in two Vietnamese companies.

There was equal agreement in the two cases that top commitment and training were key success factors in SA implementation (Table 6-4). The important role of communication was identified, but was regarded as less crucial than top commitment and training. This finding is supported by the literature reviewed. 75% of managers stated that top commitment was important for the success of both SA-EFQM and company's activities in general. Little evidence of the education background of the manufacturing group being poor was found. A need for more intensive training in the Vietnamese cases was identified by 20% of managers, although the EFQM literature stated that it was not necessary. Hence, the lack of training described by participants may have affected individual understanding, which is believed to be fundamental for SA activities along with personal attitude. Consequently, this might limit the usefulness of SA implementation. Having said that, this finding is very important, particularly for Vietnamese companies when they are implementing SA.

This study found that there was a lack of an effective internal communication network in both case companies. This evidence clearly helps to explain why the benchmarking of SA (which was mentioned in issue iii of Finding 1) was not confirmed. Having said that, the benchmarking benefit of SA using the EFQM questionnaire was found to have been limited in the two

companies owing to some potential difficulties, such as data accession, a lack of training resources (from government) and inefficient information sharing inside the company.

Finally, management competence, which was linked with the success of SA, was a new finding of this study. In particular, weak management competence of the two companies led to fewer benefits of SA with 50% agreement.

Finding 5: The impact of organisational management culture and national culture on the success of SA-EFQM implementation.

With respect to the influence of organisational management culture on the success of SA, the evidence provided by this study is weak. No respondents directly mentioned resistance to change occurring whilst implementing SA-EFQM, but they instead related conflict to the implementation of continuous improvement activities, such as the ISO quality management system and other new strategies in their company. On this basis, it is argued that resistance to change is a potential challenge to the application and deployment of continuous improvement activities such as the SA approach using BEM.

Vietnamese culture in both case companies was found to have limited impact on the success of BE implementation owing to several everyday Vietnamese characteristics, such as self-satisfaction, being pleasant and being easy-going. In addition, an easy-going character was found to result in an 'encouraging scoring' style, with over-emphasis on a high score. This helps to explain the over-scoring problem mentioned earlier. Finally, although Vietnamese culture was assessed to have a minor impact, its actual influence on high scoring was found to be existed with 15% agreement.

Finding 6: Confirmation of the advantages and disadvantages of the SA questionnaire based on general literature.

According to the view of the interviewees, 50% of managers agreed that the EFQM questionnaire was easy to implement and use. However, the disadvantages were seen as a *lack of accuracy of overall outcome* (65% agreement) and *the outputs represent perception and require validation* (50% agreement). The third main disadvantage added concerned unfamiliar language (confusion in SA), which received 40% confirmation. The first and second disadvantages of the questionnaire approach are evident in SA literature, but the third disadvantage seems new and seems to occur in the Vietnamese context in particular. This also helps to explain the shortage of awareness mentioned earlier.

In conclusion, the most serious disadvantage of using the EFQM questionnaire is the measuring problem, which has been identified as an implementation issue by earlier work.

7.1.3 The potential of SA against the BE model in Vietnam

This study has found that SA using the EFQM questionnaire is very useful for Vietnamese companies; a fact agreed upon by 65% of managers. Another group, 30%, viewed SA as useful to implement but requiring certain conditions, such as proper understanding and a respectful attitude. Important concerns related to the educational background of participants and confidential issues.

The above findings indicated that the simple and less-demanding resource SA tool, the EFQM questionnaire, is appropriate to implement for the two Vietnamese case companies owing to their lack of organisational resources in management. Additionally, this tool was believed to be useful for Vietnamese organisations that are starting out on the excellence journey and seeking opportunities to improve their performance.

Literature has identified that there is a link between the maturity of an organisation's quality management level and the SA approach. Therefore, a company should start the SA journey by applying the simplest tool (questionnaire) to the most complex situation (award application/simulation). Furthermore, although gaining the ISO 9000 certificate is a useful initial step toward excellence (Van der Wiele *et al.*, 1995, 1996a, 1996b), sometimes this foundation brings negative effects (Van der Wiele *et al.*, 1997) owing to a lack of vision within the whole company system and a lack of quality management understanding within the management team.

7.1.4 Suggestions for implementing SA using a questionnaire in Vietnam

Objective 3: *To suggest an appropriate self-assessment approach and implementation strategies suitable for the Vietnamese organisations based on the research findings.*

The findings of this study support the view that a SA tool, the questionnaire, can be used for adoption in a developing country. The potential learning from the research outcomes helps the researcher suggest several recommendations in order to ensure the success of SA using the questionnaire in Vietnamese organisations, as follow:

- To minimise the scoring problem of the Vietnam context, the researcher suggests the development of a new scoring scheme, such as a combination of a hydric questionnaire and a matrix scoring methodology, which would help to increase the accuracy of personal assessment and better suit Vietnamese characteristics.

- The combination of several SA tools, such as a questionnaire and a senior manager workshop, or a questionnaire and an award application, would be more appropriate because such combinations can help to reduce the technical risks of a particular tool and also enhance its validity through additional data confirmation.
- To cope with a potential short of knowledge, lack of awareness, and to overcome execution barriers, including the impact of national culture and resistance to change, comprehensive training needs to be undertaken. The content of SA and BE needs to be thoroughly clarified; there is a need to provide an example of scoring with an adjusted scoring approach. Necessary information about SA implementation and its benefits should be provided to all participants beforehand. The most important thing is the provision of essential knowledge about the BEM before an organisation starts out on the SA journey. Regarding the immature quality level of Vietnamese organisations and their management teams, more time and effort must be invested in education and training.

7.2 Original contribution to knowledge

The literature review in Chapter 2 identified that substantial knowledge regarding the SA field has been provided by academics and businesses in developed countries, but no such publications on SA using BEM and quality awards cover the Vietnam context. The findings of the current research provide useful contributions to two main areas: first, SA experience using the EFQM questionnaire in two Vietnamese textile and garment companies; second, several valuable insights into the benefits of participation in the existing BEM in Vietnam (the VQA). All these findings in the areas of SA and quality award knowledge are of value to both academics and practitioners, especially in similar scenarios in other developing countries.

This study has provided the first knowledge about the usefulness of SA and the EFQM questionnaire to improve Vietnamese companies' performance. Specifically, it found that SA using the questionnaire is useful in two companies and provided some (although not all) of the intended benefits (mentioned previously in section 7.1.1). Only one out of six intended benefits were confirmed by most respondents, which were related to the usefulness of the questionnaire *to help identifying organisational current position and determining future directions and priorities* (benefit a). This benefit was judged to be the most important among the six intended benefits suggested by the EFQM. Moreover, among the four additional benefits that were suggested, the benefit of the EFQM questionnaire *identifying organisational strengths and weaknesses and enhancing organisational learning awareness* were highly recognised by participants.

In general, the result of the EFQM SA questionnaire is evidently contributed great emphasis to support a company in improvement planning. Hence, a company can use this information for its improvement plan, particular in Vietnam. However, in regards to all the benefits gained by the two companies, the two benefits in benchmarking of the SA tool, especially in pinpointing an organisation's position, and organisational strengths and weaknesses, could be less reliable because of the measuring problem in scoring. Confusion seemed to occur when scorers seemed to lack proper knowledge and skill. Having said this, benchmarking could be pointless because SA outcomes is not accurate.

All of the implementation barriers discussed in literature occurred in the current study, even though an elementary standard tool was employed. Some new knowledge relating to SA implementation is contributed to SA literature. They include the issues of high scoring, individual attitudes, training, management competence and national culture.

- Evidence of the 'over emphasis on high scores' and the large variation between individual assessments between categories or positioning gaps, as commented on in current literature, were found to be significant within a range of 40%-60%. It is argued that this problem leads to a reduction in the accuracy of the assessment and so limits the success of SA outcomes. Moreover, this research also recognised the relationship between high scores and the relevant accountability of scorers and 'encouraging scoring' style existed in two Vietnamese companies.
- A new problem was found to be the result of individual attitudes and psychology when implementing SA-EFQM (lack of confidence in knowledge, and skill - 'inferiority').
- Along with top commitment, training in the Vietnamese context was found by this research to be vital. There was evidence that unfamiliar language and limited educational background disadvantaged the SA. Intensive training is needed in the Vietnam context, and this is opposite to the recommendation of the EFQM who suggest that no necessary for training intensively when using a questionnaire.
- Weak management competence was recognised as leading to certain problems preventing successful SA implementation. It clearly explains such problems as shortages in management awareness and language confusion. Therefore, the researcher has made some suggestions concerning training issues, especially the need for full support from top leaders.
- National culture was found to be less influential, having mainly a negative impact due to Vietnamese characteristics such as being easy-going. However, this characteristic was recognised to be the main cause of the unique 'encouraging scoring' style that focussed on high scores in Vietnam.

Further, manufacturing managers in Vietnamese enterprises, whose positions are at the same rank as departmental managers, were found to hold neither proper quality management knowledge nor knowledge of activities in this area. Thus, it is important to pay attention to this group in terms of SA training.

With about 60% agreement, it is evident that SA using the EFQM questionnaire is appropriate and useful for case companies and for Vietnamese organisations in general. However, there are some issues that need to be considered, such as measuring, education and training, and perception. The findings suggest that a less-demanding (in terms of resources) questionnaire tool may be more appropriate in developing countries, as although national quality awards exist most organisations do not have experience of using this tool.

Regarding the two Vietnamese textile and garment companies participating in a particular BEM, the VQA, this research found that limited benefits were gained by the participating organisations, with the main benefit being enhancement of organisational image after receiving the award certificate. The limitations of the VQA described included the ease of obtaining the VQA certificate, it being time-consuming, a lack of participation from the management team, and there being too great a reliance on documents and statistics. Moreover, the SA activities were generally seen as unclear by the organisation and relying heavily on the 'subjective' evaluation of a third-party, namely external examiners. Additional data from the VQA office suggested that inadequate resources for the VQA (training, materials and expertise) explained the small number of benefits gained by Vietnamese participating organisations, especially beneficial learning. The scarcity of competitor indicators for benchmarking purposes and a lack of external feedback also acted as barriers to the Vietnam award program. These findings help to explain the limitations of the benchmarking benefit of SA-EFQM described earlier.

7.3 Implications for practice

This study suggests the development of a simple SA approach, a combination of a questionnaire and workshop, for newcomers and organisations which limited in quality development. It is believed that a simple, less resource-demanding SA tool with specific benefits will persuade Vietnamese enterprises to proceed with its implementation, rather than only using a complex award application.

Literature suggests that there is no 'right way' of implementing an SA approach based on its advantage and disadvantages. It is believed that the author's findings regarding the positive and negative aspects of two SA approaches, the EFQM questionnaire and the VQA application, will encourage Vietnamese enterprises to implement SA successfully according to their own choices.

7.4 Limitations

The main limitations of the current study can be summarised into the following points:

- One major limitation is that there was limited evidence of actual improvements occurred after the case companies had obtained SA benefits. The possible reasons for this are the passive attitudes of participants and the application of an international SA tool. This also led to a narrowing of the benefits of SA in the case companies.
- The generalisability of the findings obtained in this study is not high owing to the limited number of case companies involved.
- Working with two languages also required the researcher spend larger amount of time, and huge effort to cope with translation issue.

7.5 Areas for further research

Kanji (2002) states that 85% of common problems found in the manufacturing and service industries are related to management and systems. Concentration on cutting edge management knowledge, such as SA, seems useful for Vietnamese companies due to its comprehensive advantages. This study has already supplied initial details of the application of a simple SA tool in two Vietnamese textile and garment companies.

The limitations of the current study suggest a number of potential areas for future research. These are outlined below.

Firstly, the initial results of the current study suggest the need for further examination of this EFQM questionnaire tool in other sectors in Vietnam, such as the education field of the public sector. Subsequently, a comparison of this and further studies could provide more information on the appropriateness of using the SA questionnaire in Vietnam.

Secondly, the equivalent American SA questionnaire named *Are We Making Progress?* and *Are We Making Progress As Leaders?*, could be carried out in Vietnam in order to test their applicability. The results could then be compared. Additionally, this could be helpful in designing and developing an SA questionnaire (paper or software-based) specific for Vietnamese organisations just starting on the journey to excellence.

Fourthly, the benefits, difficulties, success factors and motivation of the participating organisations in the VQA could be investigated via a quantitative survey using award applicants or via larger qualitative interviews with regional award administrators/external experts in order to become acquainted with greater SA experience and knowledge by employing a BEM/quality award in Vietnam.

Lastly, regarding the suggestion for further implementation of BE SA to cope with the challenges mentioned that exist in the Vietnam context, research into effectiveness in education and training could help to raise the usefulness of SA in participating companies. Using the idea of the matrix developed by Siow, Yang and Dale (1997), the researcher proposes a scoring matrix which could be used for SA using a questionnaire in Vietnam. The stimulus of this suggestion is the disadvantage of 'emotional' scoring and the lack of evidential assessment observable in the Vietnamese companies investigated. Another reason is that the 5-levels (0%, 25%, 50%, 75%, and 100%) are similar to Vietnamese assessing routines, rather than the scoring scale of EFQM (0, 33%, 67%, and 100%). It is suggested that 75% would refer to a world-class company, while 50% would refer to a good or 'pretty-good' company, as in the case of Company A and Company B.

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PhD

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NGUYEN, THI HOANG LIEN
BEng, MBA

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of
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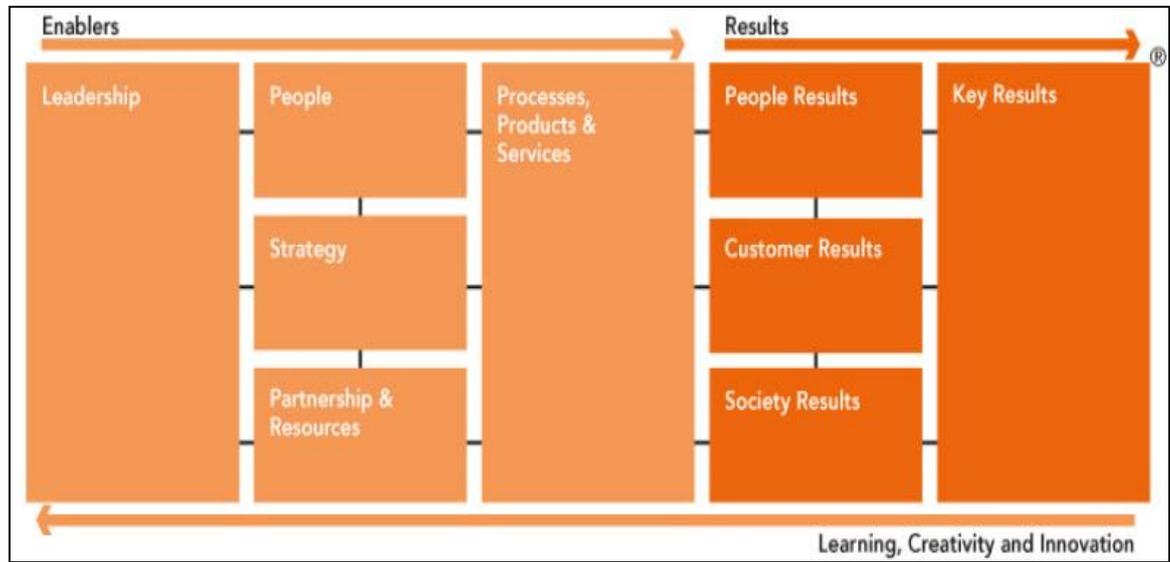
Research undertaken in the
Newcastle Business School
December 2010

Appendices

Appendix A. The EFQM Excellence Model Criteria 2010

Source: EFQM Transition Guide 2010 (EFQM, 2009)

THE EFQM EXCELLENCE MODEL



Source: EFQM (2009) *EFQM Transition guide 2010*

A detailed definition of the EFQM Excellence's 2010 criteria and criteria part is given followed:

1. Leadership

Excellent Leaders develop and facilitate the achievement of the mission and vision. They develop organisational values and systems required for sustainable success and implement these via their actions and behaviours. During periods of change they retain a constancy of purpose. Where required, such leaders are able to change the direction of the organisation and inspire others to follow.

1a. Leaders develop the mission, vision, values and ethics and are role models of a culture of Excellence.

1b. Leaders are personally involved in ensuring the organisation's management system is developed, implemented and continuously improved.

1c. Leaders interact with customers, partners and representatives of society.

1d. Leaders reinforce a culture of Excellence with the organisation's people.

1e. Leaders identify and champion organisational change.

2. Strategy

Excellent Organisations implement their mission and vision by developing a stakeholder focused strategy that takes account of the market and sector in which it operates. Policies, plans, objectives, and processes are developed and deployed to deliver the strategy.

2a. Policy and Strategy are based on the present and future needs and expectations of stakeholders.

2b. Policy and Strategy are based on information from performance measurement; research, learning and external related activities.

2c. Policy and Strategy are developed, reviewed and updated.

2d. Policy and Strategy are communicated and deployed through a framework of key processes.

3. People

Excellent organisations manage, develop and release the full potential of their people at an individual, team-based and organisational level. They promote fairness and equality and involve and empower their people. They care for, communicate, reward and recognise, in a way that motivates staff and builds commitment to using their skills and knowledge for the benefit of the organisation.

3a. People resources are planned, managed and improved.

3b. People's knowledge and competencies are identified, developed and sustained.

3c. People are involved and empowered.

3d. People and the organisation have a dialogue.

3e. People are rewarded, recognised and cared for.

4. Partnerships and Resources

Excellent organisations plan and manage external partnerships, suppliers and internal resources in order to support policy and strategy and the effective operation of processes. During planning and whilst managing partnerships and resources they balance the current and future needs of the organisation, the community and the environment.

4a. External partnerships are managed.

4b. Finances are managed.

4c. Buildings, equipment and materials are managed.

4d. Technology is managed.

4e. Information and knowledge are managed.

5. Processes, Products and Services

Excellent organisations design, manage and improve processes in order to fully satisfy, and generate increasing value for, customers and other stakeholders.

5a. Processes are systematically designed and managed.

5b. Processes are improved, as needed, using innovation in order to fully satisfy and generate increasing value for customers and other stakeholders.

5c. Products and Services are designed and developed based on customer needs and expectations.

5d. Products and Services are produced, delivered and serviced.

5e. Customer relationships are managed and enhanced.

6. Customer Results

Excellent organisations comprehensively measure and achieve outstanding results with respect to their customers.

6a. Perceptions

6b. Performance Indicators

7. People Results

Excellent organisations comprehensively measure and achieve outstanding results with respect to their people.

7a. Perceptions

7b. Performance Indicators

8. Society Results

Excellent organisations comprehensively measure and achieve outstanding results with respect to society.

8a. Perceptions

8b. Performance Indicators

9. Key Results

Excellent organisations comprehensively measure and achieve outstanding results with respect to the key elements of their policy and strategy.

9a. Key Strategic Outcomes

9b. Key Performance Indicators

Appendix B. The process and recognition level of EFQM European Award

Source: EFQM Excellence Award, 2006 available at EFQM website, 2009

THE AWARD PROCESS

	Responsibility	Process flowchart	Description of activities
PHASE 1	Applicant organisation	<pre> graph TD A([Submit a Qualification File]) --> B([Submit a choice of classic document or Enabler map]) </pre>	<p>Qualification file is a maximum 15-page report which presents a synthesis of the Results achieved for the 4 criteria of the EFQM Excellence Model and describes the content (key factors) of these achievements.</p>
PHASE 2	The EFQM Assessors	<pre> graph TD B --> C{Review and select next phase} C -- "Not selected" --> D[Inform applicants] D --> B C -- "Selected" --> E[] </pre>	<p>Evaluation and score application</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Classic applicant using details 75-page submission document which been applied before 2005 - Interactive 2005+ approach using the Enabler map with 10 pages
PHASE 3	The EFQM Assessors	<pre> graph TD E --> F[Require Senior Management Team Meeting] F --> G{Assess and Score} </pre>	<p>The assessment is based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -the 2003 version of the EFQM Excellence Model including 32 criteria parts - RADAR Scoring Matrix <p>The Qualification file should be updated with the latest results</p> <p>The final report includes a 25-page entry document</p>
FINAL PHASE	Senior assessor	<pre> graph TD G --> H[Conduct site visit review and Verify the score] </pre>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -4-8 Assessor team conduct site visit - Review the data and verify the score -Preparation of written Feedback Report
PHASE 4	Expert Juries	<pre> graph TD H --> I[Review and decide the level of recognition] </pre>	<p>There are several recognition levels: Finalist, Prize Winner and EFQM European Award Winner.</p>

THE RECOGNITION LEVELS OF THE EQA

Level 1 of Excellence - Committed to Excellence. This is the beginning level of organisational commitment to the Excellence journey, starting with a 12-page SA report which includes improvement areas. This recognition process has been split into 2 stages, with stage 1 covering a SA review and stage 2 concentrating on the deployment of improvement actions identified in the previous stage. No referenced score is evaluated in this process.

Level 2 of Excellence - Recognised for Excellence: This recognition is given to organisations when they gain a score of above 400 at the end of the site visit (EEA, 2006). Applicants will undergo a process similar to the full EEA procedure with shorter document. The process comprises a three to five-day site visit and is given feedback. Reaching this middle level successfully shows that “*the organisation is well managed and aspires to achieve role model status*” (EEA, 2006, p.7).

Level 3 – Level 5 - The Award recognition: These is given to the organisation that is judged to be the best in four categories: large and business unit; operational units; public sector and Small and Medium enterprises (SMEs). Furthermore, there are several special prizes which are given to organisations which achieve excellence in some of the fundamental concepts of Excellence, for example Customer Focus, Leadership and consistency of purpose. Finalists of the award also receive certificated recognition.

Appendix C. The summary of the development of the Vietnam Quality Award during 1996 – 2009

Sources: Report ‘*The Vietnam Quality Award: the 12-year creation and development progress*’, (VQA, 2008a); Nguyen (2008b); Circular No11/2009/TT-BKHCN 06.05.2009

	Award characteristics	Details	Referenced policy
Phase 1: 1996-2000	<p>Three recognition types of Award: Gold; Silver and Encouragement</p> <p>There is the distinction in classification between the stated-owned companies and foreign-capital enterprises</p>	<p>There are 312 winners included 39 Gold; 207 Silver and 66 Encouragement. Several winners have not achieved ISO yet.</p> <p>Ongoing explore and deploy a new approach</p>	<p>Decision No.716/1998 QD-BKHCNMT 8.6.1998 (contemporary policy)</p>
Phase 2: 2001-2003	<p>There were several improvement phases in this stage.</p> <p>There are 4 specific eligibility categories: Large Manufacturing; SME Manufacturing; Large Service; SME Service without ownership.</p> <p>As last, maximum 4 best organisations would be received the certificate of Merit from Prime Minister. In general, the minimum winning score is 600</p>	<p>There were given 184 award winners included 16 certificated awards.</p> <p>Along with other Awards, the VQA significantly contribute to the system of comprehensive solutions in terms of develop the productivity movement.</p>	<p>Decision No.41/2001/QD-BKHCNMT (contemporary policy)</p>

	Award characteristics	Details	Referenced policy
Phase 3: 2004-2008	The VQA offers 2 categories of recognitions: Award (above 600 scores) and Gold (above 800 score and 6 enterprises maximum) recording outstanding achievements in the formulation and application of quality control systems according to the standards of the VQA.	Many promotion and marketing activities were implemented. The number of participating provinces have increased from 26 in 2006 to 48 in 2004 There is recognition in central management	Decision No.19/2004 QD- BKHCN 14.07.2007
Phase 4: 2009 so far	Being the official National Awards with consisting of Golden (above 800 scores and 3 enterprise each categories) and Silver (above 600 scores). No change for recognition score requirements. Only the title of the Award before would be modified to the Silver so far.	There are some new issues To be nominated to the Asian Pacific Quality Award recipient. To be eligible to exploit the National Quality Award logo in advertisement.	Circular No11/2009/TT- BKHCN 06.05.2009

Appendix D. List of the 15 textile and garment companies gained the VQA certificates during 1996 – 2008

Sources: Report ‘*The Vietnam Quality Award: the 12-year creation and development progress*’, (VQA, 2008a)

	Company name	Won year	Recognition Level	Note
1	COAST TOTAL PHONG PHU Company	1996	Golden	
		1997	Golden	
2	NHA TRANG Garment Materials Company	1996	Award	Silver
3	HA NOI Textile and Garment Company	1996	Award	Silver
		2000	Award	Silver
4	HUE TEXTILE Company	1997	Award	Silver
		2002	Award	
5	HA NOI TEXTILE 1 Company	1997	Award	Silver
		1999	Award	Silver
6	HA NOI TEXTILE 2 Company	1998	Award	Silver
		1999	Award	Silver
		2000	Award	Silver
7	No 10 GARMENT Company	1998	Award	Silver
		1999	Golden	
		2000	Golden	
		2002	Golden	
8	19-5 TEXTILE Company	1998	Award	Encouragement
		1999	Award	Silver
9	HUNG YEN Garment Company	1999	Award	Silver
		2000	Award	Silver
		2006	Award	

	Company name	Won year	Recognition Level	Note
10	TAY DO Garment Company	1999 2001 2003	Award Award Award	Encouragement
11	TIEN TIEN Export-Garment Company	2000	Award	Silver
12	NINH BINH Export-Garment Company	2000	Award	Encouragement
13	HO GUOM Textile Company	2003	Award	
14	THANH TRI Export-Garment Company	2004	Award	
15	DONG XUAN Textile Company	2008	Award	

Appendix E. Self-assessment following by Baldrige Guidelines

Source: Baldrige National Quality Program (<http://www.nist.gov/baldrige/enter/self.cfm>)

5 steps to SA using award model is designed:

1. Use *Are We Making Progress?* and *Are We Making Progress As Leaders?* two questionnaires that will introduce the seven Criteria Categories to your organization and help you quickly identify your strengths and opportunities for improvement
2. **Complete e-Baldrige**: an on-line assessment tool that will help you identify gaps in your understanding of your organization and will allow you to compare your organization to others
3. **Write the Organizational Profile**, the first step in undertaking a full self-assessment using the Baldrige Criteria
4. **Conduct a Full Self-Assessment** using the seven Categories of the Baldrige Criteria
5. **Proceed to Next Steps** using resources to assist you from the Baldrige National Quality Program (BNQP) and state and local programs

Using the Baldrige Criteria for self-assessment can help your organization

- jump-start change initiatives
- energize improvement initiatives
- focus your organization on common goals
- assess performance against the competition
- align your resources with your strategic objectives

The questionnaires can help you assess your organization's progress on its journey toward performance excellence and learn what can be improved.

**Are We Making Progress?* is designed to be distributed to employees to understand their perceptions, and *Are We Making Progress As Leaders?* is designed to be distributed to the organization's leadership.

The questionnaires are conveniently organized by the seven Baldrige Criteria Categories. They contain 40 questions and take approximately 10 minutes to complete. If your organization is new

to the Baldrige Criteria, the questions — written in simple language — will help you understand the intent of the seven Criteria Categories.

The questionnaires also will help you identify areas for improvement and direct you to Criteria Categories that may help you identify approaches for addressing these areas. The answers to the questions will help you focus your improvement and communication efforts on those areas needing the most attention.

****e-Baldrige is an on-line self-assessment tool based on the Organizational Profile, the preface to the Baldrige Criteria.***

The Organizational Profile is a series of questions that will help you create a snapshot of your organization, the key influences on how it operates, and the key challenges you face. e-Baldrige is a tool to help you take the first step toward completing the Organizational Profile.

To complete the e-Baldrige self-assessment, read and consider each question of the Organizational Profile within the context of your organization, and then determine the level of difficulty of answering each question.

‘Easy to answer’ indicates questions that would be easy for your organization to answer and on which there is widespread agreement.

‘Could answer’ indicates questions for which data are not readily available, but your organization could produce data to provide a consensus response to address this question with easy to moderate effort.

****Write the Organizational Profile***

Completing the Organizational Profile can help ensure a common understanding of what is important for your organization, the key influences on how your organization operates, and where the organization is headed.

Many organizations embark with the Organizational Profile and progress gradually to more detailed levels of self-assessment and action. If through preparing an Organizational Profile, you identify topics for which conflicting, little, or no information is available, it is possible that your first self-assessment need go no further. These gaps can be the starting point for action to develop a better understanding of your organization.

To prepare the Organizational Profile, your organization should review the questions included in the Criteria booklet on the pages entitled ‘Preface: Organizational Profile.’ Prepare responses to the two parts, ‘P.1 Organizational Description’ and ‘P.2 Organizational Challenges.’

Writing the Organizational Description provides a picture of your organization. In particular, it will describe your organization's operating environment and your key relationships with customers (including students and patients, as appropriate), stakeholders, suppliers, and partners. The Organizational Challenges section calls for a description of your organization's competitive environment, your key strategic challenges, and your system for performance improvement.

Once satisfied that you have written a complete Organizational Profile, share it with all your employees. It is a great mechanism for communicating what is important to your organization. It will help everyone establish and maintain focus.

****Conduct a Full Self-Assessment***

Organizations more experienced with the Baldrige Criteria may be ready to use the complete set of Criteria to conduct a full self-assessment.

The following are six basic steps for conducting a full self-assessment:

1. Identify whether the whole organization or a specific part of it will be assessed.
2. Select champions for each of the Baldrige Categories to participate in preparing responses to the Item questions in the Categories. If they have not already done so, champions should prepare an Organizational Profile describing your organization and its challenges.
3. Champions select Category teams, which collect information and data for responding to the Criteria questions in their respective Categories.
4. Category teams share their answers to their Criteria questions with other Category teams.
5. Each Category team creates and communicates an action plan for improvement based on their answers and organizational priorities. The Self-Analysis Worksheet, available in the *Criteria for Performance Excellence* and on-line at www.baldrige.nist.gov/Word_files/Optional_Worksheet_Bus.doc, can help your Category teams identify your strengths and opportunities, set priorities, and develop action plans.
6. In the final step in the process, senior leaders, champions, and teams evaluate what has been done and think about ways to improve the self-assessment process in the future.

Appendix F. Summary of four self-assessment techniques of the EFQM

Source: EFQM, *Assessing for Excellence: A practical guide for successful developing, executing and reviewing a Self-assessment strategy for your organisation*, 1999-2003

Benefits	Process	Benefits
Questionnaire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Quick and easy to use – basic awareness training is sufficient to get thing started. - Can readily involve many people within the organisation - Enables the organisation to receive feedback, which can be segmented by function and by level - Can be used in parallel with a workshop involving more senior personnel to provide a more balanced view of deployment for the management team - Can be used to facilitate group discussions between teams on the opportunities for improvement within their unit. - If the EFQM Committed to Excellence questionnaire is used the organisation has already taken the first step towards potentially receiving external recognition - A customised questionnaire provides an opportunity for the organisation to get feedback on specific programmes, issues and approaches. 	<p>5 steps on process: Select questionnaire and sample group; Brief individual so that they are able to complete the questionnaire; Collate and analyse replies to identify low and high scoring; Investigate the causes for low/unusual scores or outcomes; Present findings, prioritise and develop a action plan for improvement</p>

Benefits	Process	Benefits
Workshop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An excellence way to get the team to understand the Model and gain their commitment to it. - Discussion and agreement by the team on the strengths and areas for improvement helps to build a common view. - Ownership by the team of the outcomes, subsequent prioritisation and agreement to actions plans. - A team building opportunities - An agreed list of strengths and areas for improvement is produced which can then be prioritised and used to drive key improvement actions 	<p>5-step process: Awareness training for the people involved; Data gathering; Self-assessment workshop; Prioritisation process; Develop and implement action plans for Improvement - ongoing</p>
Pro-formas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Data collection process provides fact-based evidence. - Delivers a list of strengths and areas for improvement for driving improvement actions - Scoring profiles can be close to the Award simulation technique in terms of accuracy - Has the potential to involve a range of people from different functions and levels in the data-gathering process 	<p>6-step process: Select and train team to produce the assessment; Data and evidence gathering, including interviews, to complete the Pro-formas; Pro-formas assessed individually and circulated within the team; Assessors reach the consensus and produce final Pro-forma report; Presentation to Management team; Prioritise issues, develop and implement action plans</p>

Benefits	Process	Benefits
Award simulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The EFQM approach - Provides a powerful and concise way of reflecting the culture and performance of the organisation - Produces a list of strengths and areas for improvement. - Provides an excellence opportunities for involvement and communication during the data gathering process - Provides an excellence communication and reference document to be shared internal and external. - Subsequent reports are easier to complete - The site visit and presentation from the Assessor team are two 'value add' steps - Provides an easy way for units within an organisation to compare processes and results and identify examples of good practice that may be shared - Enables comparison with the scoring profiles of applicants for the European Quality Award. - Can be used as rehearsal for entry to the European Quality Award process and its national or regional counterparts. 	<p>7-step process: Select and train Report Writing and Assessor team; Data gathering and interviewing to write the report; Report 'sign-off' by management; Assessors hold a consensus meeting; Feedback report compiled and presented to Management; Develop and implement Action plans</p>

Appendix G. Benefits and limitations of questionnaire approach

	BENEFITS	LIMITATIONS
<p>EFQM</p> <p>1999 -2003b</p> <p>Assessing for Excellence : A practical guide for successfully developing, executing and reviewing SA strategy for your organisation</p>	<p>-<u>Quick and easy</u> to use – basic awareness training is sufficient to get thing started.</p> <p>-Can readily <u>involve many people</u> within the organisation</p> <p>-Enables the organisation to receive feedback, which can be segmented <u>by function and by level</u></p> <p>-Can be used in parallel with a workshop involving more senior personnel to provide a more balanced view of deployment for the management team</p> <p>-Can be used to facilitate group discussions between teams on the opportunities for improvement within their unit.</p> <p>-If the EFQM Committed to Excellence questionnaire is used the organisation has already taken the first step towards potentially receiving external recognition</p> <p>-A customised questionnaire provides an opportunity for the organisation to get feedback on <u>specific programmes</u>, issues and approaches.</p>	<p>-A list of <u>strengths and areas for improvement</u> is not necessarily generated immediately.</p> <p>-<u>Accuracy depends upon the quality of questions asked.</u></p> <p>-Excessive use of the questionnaire in an organisation may result in a <u>low return</u> – what return rate is a valid return?</p> <p>-Wide circulation can raise expectations, which, if unfulfilled, may demotivate.</p> <p>-Questionnaires tell you what people think, not why they think it. You must investigate further to understand root causes.</p> <p>-Does not allow for comparison with scoring profile of European Quality Award applicants.</p> <p>-There is not necessarily a direct reference between the questions in the questionnaire and the criterion parts of the Excellence Model.</p>

	BENEFITS	LIMITATIONS
Benavent (2006)	- Much easier and cheaper than employing other approaches	- The number of strengths and weaknesses has been indicated in different view.
Porter and Tanner (2004)	<p>Survey self –assessment in general</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It provides a quick way of getting the organisation’s profile against the chosen excellence framework - It is a simple introduction to SA - Questionnaire can be tailored to specific organisational needs - It has low resources requirement - Training requirement are minimized – basic awareness training in excellence framework will suffice - It can achieve a high level of involvement within the organisation – responses can be stratified by function/department, level... - Results and learning opportunities can be quickly found and cascaded down into the organisation, and action taken - It can be used as an input to more sophisticated approaches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The assessment outputs represent perception and require validation. - The approach does not highlight specific strengths or area for improvement - The objectivity and accuracy of the approach depend upon the quality of questions - The element of prescription in the questions limits learning - Ownership of issues is not encouraged. - When used as a survey instrument, response rate may be low, giving rise to concerns over the validity of the approach.

	BENEFITS	LIMITATIONS
Brown (2008)	<p>Using the Baldrige criteria</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Simplest - Least expensive - Not much time required - Provide a rough and rudimentary statement on the health of the organisation against the model criteria 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Less reliable (due to large range of scores) - Subjective problem - Impact of most recent personal experiences
Lascelles and Peacock (1996, p.41)	<p>Using the EFQM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The simplest and quickest approach - Use alone or as a preliminary to start one of other approach (e.g. workshop approach) - Prime method for analysing strengths and areas for improvement - Establishes the basis for the business improvement plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Never as thorough, and accurate, nor as reliable

Appendix H. Benefits and limitations of award simulation/application SA approach

	ADVATAGES/BENEFITS	LIMITATIONS
Lascelles and Peacock (1996, p.35)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Using the EFQM - High degree of correlation with the EFQM Excellence Model, and therefore, a high level of accuracy and opportunities for external benchmarking - It is an only approach that generates a structured documentary body of evidence than can be regularly update to form a ‘live’ business excellence database. - It is also necessary if the long-term aims is to apply for an award 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The length of time and the resources required to the complete - Management may not be as closely involved in the process as some other methods - ‘Cultural’ issues (e.g. managerial fear, divisional/professional barriers, ‘not-invented-here’ syndrome) may be against a wholesale approach.
Porter and Tanner (2004)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In general - It provides comprehensive insight into the capacities and performance of the organisation - It produces details on strengths and areas for improvement - It produces self-assessment results that are directly comparable to actual award assessment (i.e. scoring) - It produces excellent learning opportunities for the submission and assessors team - It provides a powerful communication and reference document - It provides a wealth of ‘quality’ output for action planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It has high resource requirement and a lengthy cycle time - It may not be as objective as it should be – the results can be influence by creating writing, - It may be used at an inappropriate stage of the organisation’s journey top excellence, and distract the organisation from more pragmatic improvement activities,

<p>EFQM 1999 - 2003b</p> <p>Assessing for Excellence : A practical guide for successfully developing, executing and reviewing SA strategy for your organisation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provides a powerful and concise way of reflecting the culture and performance of the organisation - Produces a list of strengths and areas for improvement. - Provides an excellence opportunities for involvement and communication during the data gathering process - Provides an excellence communication and reference document to be shared internal and external. - Subsequent reports are easier to complete - The site visit and presentation from the Assessor team are two 'value add' steps - Provides an easy way for units within an organisation to compare processes and results and identify examples of good practice that may be shared - Enables comparison with the scoring profiles of applicants for the European Quality Award. - Can be used as rehearsal for entry to the European Quality Award process and its national or regional counterparts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Resource intensive - Risk of less involvement by the management team and greater delegation to others. - Potential for creative writing, covering up the real issues. - Technique may be too ambitious as a first attempt at Self-assessment for new recruits in the early days of their journey to excellence.
<p>Svensson and Klefsjö (2000); Stukenboom et al (1999)</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Too complicated to implement

	ADVATAGES/BENEFITS	LIMITATIONS
Halachmi (1995)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enrich Excellence learning about organisation goals, visions, expectation and market driven - Benchmarking with others in the same industrial segment 	
Shergold and Reed (1996); Lee and Quazi (2001); Saunders and Mann (2005)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - High comprehensiveness and accuracy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Time-consuming and resource intensive

Appendix I. Summary of issues in SA implementation

Findings in current knowledge	Key factors in the present research	Explanation from individual aspect	Explanation from organisational aspect
<p>1. Measurement problems (Coulambidou and Dale, 1995, Teo and Dale, 1997)</p> <p>-Lack of the reliability and completeness of SA feedback. (Karapetrovic and Willborn, 2001)</p> <p>- inaccurate SA results due to disadvantage of SA technique used (Karapetrovic and Willborn, 2001; Hides, Davis and Jackson, 2004, Teo and Dale, 1997; Ford and Evans, 2006)</p>	<p>Understanding/Awareness (of individual)</p>	<p>-Due to confusion of language, terminology (Coulambidou and Dale, 1995; Svensson and Klefsjo, 2000; Kruger, 1997)</p> <p>- Disadvantage of SA technique itself (Karapetrovic and Willborn, 2001; Ford and Evan, 2002)</p> <p>- Lack of understanding of what SA actually is (Coulambidou and Dale, 1995; Siow et al, 2001; Wong and Dahlgaard, 2003); -Due to lack of proper awareness (Sturkenboom, Van Der Wiele and Brown, 2001)</p> <p>-Failure to understand the link between SA and business results (Van der Wiele <i>et al.</i>, 1996, 1996b, Coulambidou and Dale, 1995) Teo and Dale, 1997)</p> <p>-Lack of qualification and acceptance problems (Zink and Schmidt, 1998; Siow et al, 2001; Porter and Tanner, 2004)</p> <p>-/Inexperience in TQM (Van der Wiele <i>et al.</i>, 2000b)</p>	<p>Inadequate training potentially</p> <p>The choice of SA technique of organisation</p> <p>Inadequate training potentially</p>

Findings in current knowledge	Key factors in the present research	Explanation from individual aspect	Explanation from organisational aspect
<p>- Focus on improving the score rather than the process/ Over-emphasis on scoring and the score (Teo and Dale, 1997; Zink and Schmidt, 1998; Conti, 1997; Van der Wiele <i>et al.</i>, 2000a,b; Porter and Tanner, 2004; Brown, 2008)</p>	<p>Attitude/Behaviour (of individuals)</p>	<p>-‘Psychological aspects’ due to the interest of participant/ Lack of commitment of participant/ Lack of involvement (Zink and Schmidt 1998; Jackson, 2001; Lascelles and Peacock, 1996)</p> <p>- Lack of enthusiastic (Ritchie and Dale, 2000a,b; Ruben <i>et al.</i>, 2007) or rigour (1999-2003b)</p> <p>-Be sensitive to the attitude and response of the people involved in the SA process (Teo and Dale, 1997)</p> <p>- Drawing a ‘favourable’ picture of organisation (Conti, 1997a)</p> <p>-The scoring can be prejudiced or dogmatic (Zink and Schmidt, 1998; Siow, Yang and Dale, 2001)</p>	
	<p>Scoring (of individual)</p>	<p>-Achieving a high score when implementing SA against BEMs in organisations does not lead to a better performance (Williams et al., 2006).</p> <p>-Lack of rigour in scoring(Zink and Schmidt, 1998; Dale, 2000; Van der Wiele et al, 2000b)</p>	

Findings in current knowledge	Key factors in the present research	Explanation from individual aspect	Explanation from organisational aspect
<p>2. Availability of organisational resources in terms of commitment, time, energy, information and finance (Hides, Davis and Jackson, 2004, EFQM, 1999-2003b; Davies, 2008)</p>	<p>Quality management in organisation</p>		<p>-Lack of appropriateness of maturity level (TQM adoption) of organisations (EFQM 1999-2003b, Svensson and Klefsjö, 2006)</p> <p>- A danger of ‘get the certificate on the wall’ (Van der Wiele et al., 2001a)</p>
<p>→ Will impact on the thoroughness of SA</p> <p>-The implementation of SA demands a serious investment in resources (Van der Wiele and Dale, 2000b)</p> <p>-Lack of resources (Black and Crimbley, 1997)</p>	<p>Top commitment</p>		<p>Commitment and involvement is crucial /essential (Hillman, 1994; Finn and Porter, 1994; Van der Wiele <i>et al.</i>, 1996a,b; Black and Crumley, 1997; Teo and Dale, 1997; Prabhu <i>et al.</i>, 2000; Benavent, Ros and Moreno-Luzon 2005 ;Ahmed <i>et al.</i>, 2003; Tari, 2006;Stok et al, 2009; Davies, 2008; Tari, 2010)</p> <p>-Failure to obtain the commitment from top and senior management/ Lack of leadership commitment and support (Coulambidou and Dale, 1995; Teo and Dale, 1997;Ruben et al., 2007)</p>

Findings in current knowledge	Key factors in the present research	Explanation from individual aspect	Explanation from organisational aspect
	Education and Training		<p>Inadequate training (Coulambidou and Dale 1995; Teo and Dale, 1997)</p> <p>Training is essential for employees who are involved in SA and people involved should be trained properly (Van der Wiele et al. 1996a,b; Teo and Dale, 1997; Ahmed et al., 2003; Longbottom, 2002; Samuelsson and Nilsson, 2002; Davies, 2008)</p>
2. Availability of organisational resources	Communication	- Ability of an assessor to access numerous information (Porter and Tanner, 2004)	<p>-The target, execution and consequences of the SA process must be communicated properly (Hillman, 1994; Conti, 1997a; Zink and Schmidt, 1998; Oakland, 1999; Svensson and Klesjo, 2000; Samuelsson and Nilsson, 2002)</p> <p>-Barriers between departments: Open communication (Ahmed <i>et al.</i>, 2003); Democratic communication (Stok, Mesko and Markic, 2009)</p>
	Others: motivation, follow-up, integration		<p>The role of follow-up: Samuelsson and Nilsson, 2002; Eriksson, 2004; Ford and Evan, 2006; Tari, 2010); motivation (Van der Wiele, Williams and Dale, 2000b; Ritchie and Dale, 2000a; Dale, 2003, Benavent, Ros and Moreno-Luzon, 2005; Davies, 2008); integration (BQF, 1996; Van der Wiele <i>et al.</i>, 1996; Ritchie and Dale, 2000, Benavent, 2003)</p>

Findings in current knowledge	Key factors in the present research	Explanation from individual aspect	Explanation from organisational aspect
3.Organisational culture			The view of organisational culture influences the success of SA implementation (Coulambidou and Dale, 1995; Sousa-Poza <i>et al.</i> , 2001; Lascelles and Peacock, 1996; Shergold and Reed, 1996; Svensson and Klesjo, 2000; Samuelsson and Nilsson, 2002; 2006; Davies, 2008).
3.Organisational culture Resistance to change can increase the failure of TQM/BE implementation			Resistance to change (Dale <i>et al.</i> , 2000; Thiagarajan and Zairi, 1997; Ritchie and Dale, 2000; Davies, 2008; Porter and Tanner, 2004).
4. National culture			Question about national culture impacts BE implementation (Williams <i>et al.</i> , 2006)

Appendix J. Sample of the EFQM Self-assessment Questionnaire in bilingualism: Vietnamese and English

<p>Kính thưa các anh chị</p> <p>Tôi đang tiến hành thực hiện cuộc điều tra bằng hình thức thu thập từ Trả lời bảng câu hỏi trắc nghiệm. Đây được coi là một yêu cầu trong quá trình nghiên cứu Luận án Tiến sĩ tại Trường kinh doanh Newcastle thuộc Đại học Northumbria University, Anh quốc.</p> <p>Mục đích đề tài nghiên cứu của tôi là khảo sát việc áp dụng Mô hình kinh doanh tuyệt hảo tại các công ty (Dệt) May đóng tại địa bàn VN. Hy vọng rằng thông qua việc nghiên cứu sẽ giúp tăng cường sức cạnh tranh của các doanh nghiệp trong bối cảnh Việt nam hòa nhập vào kinh tế thế giới.</p> <p>Bảng câu hỏi được trình bày bao gồm 50 câu hỏi theo 9 tiêu chí nhằm mô tả những khía cạnh khác nhau tại môi trường doanh nghiệp và cách vận hành. Bảng câu hỏi này được tạo ra nhằm giúp đỡ bất cứ doanh nghiệp nào muốn tạo vị trí trên thang bậc vượt trội. Để hoàn tất bảng câu hỏi trên, cần nêu rõ mức độ thực hiện theo từng câu hỏi và chấm điểm theo hướng dẫn dưới đây</p> <p>Xin trân trọng cảm ơn sự đóng góp nhiệt tình của các anh chị</p> <p>Nguyễn Thị Hoàng Liên</p> <p>Ngày 10.1. 2008</p>	<p><i>Dear all,</i></p> <p><i>I am carrying out this questionnaire survey as one of the requirements for my Doctorate degree at the University of Northumbria, United Kingdom.</i></p> <p><i>The aim of my research is to explore the implementation of business excellence model (BEM) by using SA in the Vietnamese textile company. It is hoped that this research will lead to the strengthening of organisational competitiveness as Vietnam emerges into the global economy.</i></p> <p><i>The questionnaire presents a set of 50 statements in 9 criteria that describe different aspects of your department's culture and how it operates. This questionnaire could be use for guiding any organisation to be value on its journey of excellence scheme. To complete this survey, just indicate how much refer the implementing level with each of the statements and score follow on the below instruction.</i></p> <p><i>Thank you for your time and assistant</i></p> <p><i>Nguyen Thi Hoang Lien</i></p> <p><i>10/01/2008</i></p>
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CÁCH CHẤM ĐIỂM

Mỗi trong số 50 câu hỏi trong bảng trắc nghiệm có đóng góp ngang nhau đối với tổng số điểm cuối cùng. Để tự đánh giá thực tiễn một việc làm, chúng ta chỉ ra 4 khả năng đáp án cho từng câu hỏi bao gồm loại A, B, C hoặc D.

Chúng tôi đề xuất bạn nên thường xuyên tham khảo bảng phân tích ở dưới khi đánh giá.

Mức đ□	Đán□ giá	Phân tích mức độ
D	Chưa xảy ra	Chưa thực hiện, có thể có vài ý tưởng muốn thực hiện nhưng chưa tiến hành được
C	Có vài tiến triển	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Có vài bằng chứng chứng tỏ được - Thỉnh thoảng, có các hoạt động cải tiến và tăng cường - Có vài điểm thực hiện thành công
B	Đang cân nhắc thực hiện	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bằng chứng hiển nhiên là vấn đề đã được đưa ra - Việc xem xét và tăng cường được thực hiện thường xuyên và định kỳ - Có vài điểm đang còn cân nhắc về lĩnh vực nào đó mà chưa được đưa ra với đầy đủ lĩnh vực và phạm vi
A	Hoàn tất đầy đủ	Tiếp cận 1 cách hoàn thiện hoặc kết quả được xem xét trên đầy đủ các lĩnh vực và phạm vi

SCORING

Each of the 50 questions in the Questionnaire makes an equal contribution to the final scoring. In order to make self-scoring a practical proposition we have only allocated four possible responses to each question: A, B, C or D score

We would suggest that you regularly refer to this sheet as you make your assessment

Score	Achievement	
D	Not started	<i>Not much happening at all; perhaps some good ideas but they have not progressed much beyond wishful thinking</i>
C	Some progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Some evidence that something useful is really happening - Random and occasional reviews resulting in improvements and enhancements - Islands of successful implementation or results
B	Considerable progress	<p><i>Clear evidence that this subject is well addressed</i></p> <p><i>Regular and routine reviews and enhancement</i></p> <p><i>Some concerns this subject is not being addressed to its full extent in all areas and aspects.</i></p>
A	Fully achieved	<p><i>An outstanding approach or result that is being addressed to the full extent in all areas and aspects.</i></p> <p><i>A role model solution or achievement, and it is difficult to envisage significant improvement</i></p>

Lưu ý : Việc cung cấp các chọn lựa điểm cho từng câu hỏi đã được quốc tế hóa để khuyến khích đánh giá nhanh trước khi bước đến các quan trọng tiếp theo giữa các trình độ.

Tỉ lệ ẩn dưới công thức đơn giản là nếu đánh dấu ở cột D được cho 0%, cột C 33%, cột B với điểm 67% và cột A với 100%. Bởi vì các câu hỏi đóng góp ngang bằng nhau đến đánh giá chung, nên sau nay điểm của bất cứ mục nào trong cả Bảng câu hỏi được tính toán bằng cách cộng với % của mục đã đánh dấu và chia cho tổng số câu hỏi trả lời để đưa ra kết quả điểm trung bình

Note: Providing only four scoring choices for each question is intentional as it encourages a speedy assessment due to the large step between each level.

The rationale behind the pro-forma is simply that a tick in the D column scores 0%, a C score 33%, a B scores 67% and A scores 100%. As each question has an equal scoring contribution to the overall assessment, then the score for the whole Questionnaire is calculated by adding together the 'ticked' percentages and dividing by the number of questions answered to give the 'average' result or score.

QUESTIONNAIRE - BẢNG CÂU HỎI TRẢ LỜI CÂU HỎI TRẮC NGHIỆM

1.VAI TRÒ CỦA LÃNH ĐẠO -		1.LEADERSHIP								
<p>1. Có phải tất cả các cấp quản lý trung gian đều liên quan và hiện hữu trong việc thiết lập và trao đổi các văn bản chiến lược liên quan đến mục đích, phương hướng và văn hóa của tổ chức (bao gồm cả giá trị chất lượng và mức ưu tiên) không?</p>	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px 5px;">A</td> <td style="padding: 2px 5px;">B</td> <td style="padding: 2px 5px;">C</td> <td style="padding: 2px 5px;">D</td> </tr> </table>	A	B	C	D	<p>1. Are all the senior managers personally involved and visible in generating and communicating a strategic statement for the purpose, direction and culture of the organisation (including its quality values and priorities)?</p>				
A	B	C	D							
<p>2. Các nhà quản lý trung gian có đảm bảo việc thực hiện các hệ thống quản trị theo cấu trúc và theo quá trình tại tổ chức nhằm đảm bảo sự tôn trọng và đạt hiệu quả khi được chuyển tải thích hợp cùng với kết quả cải tiến không?</p>	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px 5px;">A</td> <td style="padding: 2px 5px;">B</td> <td style="padding: 2px 5px;">C</td> <td style="padding: 2px 5px;">D</td> </tr> </table>	A	B	C	D	<p>2. Have the senior managers ensured the implementation of an organisational structure and process management system that is respected and is effective in delivering consistent and improving results?</p>				
A	B	C	D							
<p>3. a. Có phải nhà quản lý trung gian thông qua việc làm gương và thông qua hành động thể hiện sự đóng góp và làm nổi bật giá trị tổ chức, b. và những giá trị này có được chấp nhận và thực hành rộng rãi trong tổ chức không ?</p>	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px 5px;">A</td> <td style="padding: 2px 5px;">B</td> <td style="padding: 2px 5px;">C</td> <td style="padding: 2px 5px;">D</td> </tr> </table> <table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px 5px;">A</td> <td style="padding: 2px 5px;">B</td> <td style="padding: 2px 5px;">C</td> <td style="padding: 2px 5px;">D</td> </tr> </table>	A	B	C	D	A	B	C	D	<p>3. Do the senior managers, by example and action, demonstrate support and emphasize the values of their organisation; and are these values widely accepted and practised throughout the organisation?</p>
A	B	C	D							
A	B	C	D							
<p>4. Có phải tất cả nhà quản lý đều sẵn sàng với nhân viên của họ và tương quan với mọi người theo sự thừa nhận sự cố gắng tích cực và đúng lúc của từng cá nhân hay nhóm phát sinh ra cải tiến không?</p>	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px 5px;">A</td> <td style="padding: 2px 5px;">B</td> <td style="padding: 2px 5px;">C</td> <td style="padding: 2px 5px;">D</td> </tr> </table>	A	B	C	D	<p>4. Do all managers make themselves available to staff and involve themselves in the positive and timely recognition of the efforts made by individuals and teams who generate improvement?</p>				
A	B	C	D							
<p>5. a. Có phải tất cả các cấp quản lý thực hiện việc gặp mặt với khách hàng, nhà cung cấp và các bên liên quan bên ngoài tổ chức, b. và tham gia tích cực đến việc đẩy mạnh sự cộng tác và bước đầu cải thiện với nó không?</p>	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px 5px;">A</td> <td style="padding: 2px 5px;">B</td> <td style="padding: 2px 5px;">C</td> <td style="padding: 2px 5px;">D</td> </tr> </table> <table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px 5px;">A</td> <td style="padding: 2px 5px;">B</td> <td style="padding: 2px 5px;">C</td> <td style="padding: 2px 5px;">D</td> </tr> </table>	A	B	C	D	A	B	C	D	<p>5. Are all the managers taking actions to meet with customers, suppliers and others outside the organisation; and be actively involved in promoting partnerships and improvement initiatives with them?</p>
A	B	C	D							
A	B	C	D							

2. CHÍNH SÁCH VÀ CHIẾN LƯỢC

2.POLICY AND STRATEGY

<p>1. a. Tổ chức của bạn có sử dụng nguồn dữ liệu đầu vào thích hợp và phổ biến để xây dựng các chiến lược và kế hoạch kinh doanh ?</p> <p>b. Những thông tin trên có bao gồm kết quả của các quá trình nội bộ, kết quả từ nhà cung cấp, sự đáp ứng và thỏa mãn khách hàng, đối thủ cạnh tranh và dữ liệu so sánh không?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D</p>	<p>1.Does your organisation use widespread and appropriate data inputs to develop its strategy and business plans;</p> <p>and does this data include the performance of internal processes, supplier performance, customer requirements and satisfaction, competitor and benchmark data?</p>
<p>2. a. Mục tiêu chiến lược và giá trị của tổ chức bạn có được hỗ trợ toàn phần bởi chính sách, mục tiêu và phân phối nguồn lực hay không?</p> <p>b. Bạn có đảm bảo được mục tiêu cấp trung ương và kế hoạch khả thi, chấp thuận và triển khai vào những mục tiêu và kế hoạch thực tế ở cấp thấp không?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D</p>	<p>2.Are you strategic aims and value fully supported by your policies, plans, targets and allocation of resources;</p> <p>and do you ensure that top-level targets and plans feasible, accepted and deployed into realistic lower level targets and plans?</p>
<p>3.a. Có phải hầu hết các nhân viên đều đưa những mục tiêu của tổ chức vào hoạt động của họ</p> <p>b và họ cảm thấy thân thuộc với kế hoạch và đạt được trong lĩnh vực riêng của mình không?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D</p>	<p>3.Could most staff list the organisation's goals relevant to their activities;</p> <p>and are they familiar with the plans to achieve them in their own area?</p>
<p>4. Có bằng chứng hiển nhiên nào chứng tỏ tổ chức có khả năng và phương pháp để nhìn nhận khi có sự thay đổi về chiến lược, chính sách, thị trường và các đề nghị, ngay cả khi Tổng giám đốc (CEO) của tổ chức rời khỏi không?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D</p>	<p>4.Is there good evidence that the organisation has the ability and methods to recognise when to change its strategies, policies, markets and offerings – even if the CEO of the organisation were to depart?</p>

3 QUẢN LÝ NGƯỜI LAO ĐỘNG

3 PEOPLE

<p>1.a. Kế hoạch nhân sự (ví dụ như thuê mướn, đào tạo - phát triển) có trực tiếp chuyển tải nhu cầu của kế hoạch chiến lược, mục tiêu không</p> <p>b. và khả năng để đảm bảo kế hoạch và mục tiêu đó dẫn đến thành công không?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D</p>	<p>1. Are the people plans (e.g. hiring, training, development) directly derived from the needs of the strategic plans and goals, and capable of ensuring that plans and goals will be achieved?</p>
<p>2. a. Tổ chức có đảm bảo nhân sự được tuyển dụng phù hợp với giá trị và nhu cầu của tổ chức.</p> <p>b. Hệ thống đánh giá đang được thừa nhận có kết hợp mục tiêu và sự đào tạo của các cá nhân với nhu cầu của tổ chức hay không?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D</p>	<p>2. Does your organisation ensure that the people it recruits match the organisation's values and needs and is there an appraisal process (which is respected by the people) for aligning an individual's goals and training with the organisation's needs?</p>
<p>3.a. Tổ chức có xây dựng quá trình liên quan đến tất cả mọi người trong việc đóng góp cải tiến không</p> <p>b. và khi nhân viên gia tăng được quyền hạn và khả năng để ra quyết định và thay đổi thì không gây rủi ro cho doanh nghiệp (tổ chức)?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D</p>	<p>3. Does your organisation have a process that involves all employees in generating improvement; and are its employees becoming increasingly empowered and competent to make decisions and changes without creating risk to the organisation?</p>
<p>4. a. Có phương pháp đối thoại hiệu quả nào đạt được với những nhân viên</p> <p>b. và những người này có đồng ý rằng họ đã được thông tin đầy đủ và ý kiến của họ được công nhận có giá trị?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D</p>	<p>4. Have effective two way communications been achieved with the employees and would the employees agree that they are well informed and that their opinions are valued?</p>
<p>5. Các nỗ lực của nhân viên trong việc đóng góp cải tiến và trong thành tích chung của doanh nghiệp có được thừa nhận, tôn trọng và thưởng xứng đáng so với các yếu tố khác không (ví dụ: so sánh với yếu tố hoa hồng bán hàng- thưởng doanh số, thời gian phục vụ tổ chức của nhân viên, yếu tố bằng cấp.)</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D</p>	<p>5. Are people's efforts in generating improvement and contributing to the organisation's success recognised, valued and rewarded comparably to other factors (e.g. sales commission, length of service, qualification)?</p>

4 ĐỐI TÁC VÀ NGUỒN LỰC

4.PARTNERSHIPS AND RESOURCES

<p>1.a. Có phải những mối quan hệ cộng tác được phát triển thông qua sự tiếp cận 1 cách chủ động và có kết cấu</p> <p>b.Những mối quan hệ này có xác định và cống hiến thêm cơ hội trong lĩnh vực sản phẩm dịch vụ, thị trường và kết quả tài chính hay không ?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D</p>	<p>1.Are Partnership relationships developed through a proactive and structure approach, and do these partnerships identify and achieve extra opportunities in products, services, markets and financial performance?</p>
<p>2. Tổ chức của bạn có đảm bảo tất cả các thông tin liên quan bao gồm các dữ liệu kết quả quá trình, dữ liệu nhà cung ứng (kể cả kết quả của nhà cung ứng), dữ liệu khách hàng (bao gồm đánh giá sự thỏa mãn của khách hàng) và đối sánh (benchmark) là tin cậy và được cập nhật hóa, sẽ được nhanh chóng đáp ứng và dễ dàng sử dụng cho từng đối tượng tương ứng (bao gồm nhà cung ứng, nhà phân phối, khách hàng ở nơi thích hợp)?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D</p>	<p>2.Does your organisation ensure that all relevant information, including data on process performance, suppliers (including supplier performance), customers(including customer satisfaction)and benchmarks, is reliable, up to date, and quickly available and easily useable by appropriate personnel (including supplies/ distributors/ customers where appropriate)?</p>
<p>3. Tổ chức của bạn có tiếp cận để đảm bảo sự phân phối và sử dụng nguồn lực tài chính ảnh hưởng và hỗ trợ đến mục tiêu, mục đích và giá trị của tổ chức đó, đồng thời đảm bảo kéo dài sự thành công của tổ chức không?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D</p>	<p>3.Does your organisation have approach that ensure that the allocation and use of its finacila resources reflects and supports its strategic goals, aims and values and ensures the lasting success oh the organisation?</p>
<p>4. Những tài sản hữu hình như nhà xưởng, thiết bị, vật liệu và tồn kho có được quản lý và liên tục cải thiện nhằm mang lại lợi ích cho tổ chức cũng như khuyến khích cho mục đích,mục tiêu chiến lược và bảo tồn các nguồn lực?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D</p>	<p>4.Are physical assets such as building, equipment, materials and stock managed and continually improved to the benefit of the organisation and the enhancement of its strategic aims, and goals, and to the conservation of resources?</p>
<p>5. Có một phương pháp định kỳ nào đảm bảo công nghệ thay thế và mới được xây dựng và thực hiện, cũng như sử dụng tốt tài sản tri thức (intellectual property) và kiến thức để đạt ưu thế cả trong sản phẩm và dịch vụ không ?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D</p>	<p>5.Is there a routine method for ensuring that alternative and new technologies are developed and implemented, and the use of intellectual property and knowledge optimised in order to gain an advantage on both products and services?</p>

5 CÁC QUÁ TRÌNH

5.PROCESSES

<p>1. Tổ chức/doanh nghiệp của bạn có hệ thống để đảm bảo rằng tất cả các hoạt động thường để vận hành sản xuất và dịch vụ được kiểm soát dưới các tiêu chuẩn hoặc các qui định bắt buộc (ví dụ thông qua việc sử dụng tiêu chuẩn ISO 9000 hoặc ISO 14000)?</p>	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; text-align: center;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;">A</td> <td style="width: 25%;">B</td> <td style="width: 25%;">C</td> <td style="width: 25%;">D</td> </tr> </table>	A	B	C	D	<p>1. Does your organisation have a system to ensure that all activities used to produce products and services operate, and are controlled, to the prescribed standards or requirements (e.g. through the use of ISO 9000 and ISO 14000)?</p>
A	B	C	D			
<p>2. Có 1 phương pháp toàn diện và tin cậy nào cho việc thấu hiểu về các nhận thức, nhu cầu, và ước muốn của người tiêu dùng và thị trường kinh doanh hay không?</p>	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; text-align: center;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;">A</td> <td style="width: 25%;">B</td> <td style="width: 25%;">C</td> <td style="width: 25%;">D</td> </tr> </table>	A	B	C	D	<p>2 Is there a comprehensive and reliable method for understanding customer's perceptions, needs, and expectations and the markets in which it operates?</p>
A	B	C	D			
<p>3. Có 1 hệ thống toàn diện và tồn tại cho việc đảm bảo các yêu cầu của người tiêu dùng được chuyển tải vào sản phẩm và dịch vụ mới một cách kịp thời hay không?</p>	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; text-align: center;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;">A</td> <td style="width: 25%;">B</td> <td style="width: 25%;">C</td> <td style="width: 25%;">D</td> </tr> </table>	A	B	C	D	<p>3. Is there a comprehensive and viable system for ensuring that customer requirements are translated into the timely availability of new products and services?</p>
A	B	C	D			
<p>4. Có các hoạt động cải tiến liên tục tại những quá trình dựa trên những cơ hội được đánh giá tích cực và nhu cầu thông qua công tác phân tích dữ liệu khách hàng, số liệu kinh doanh và việc đối sánh từ bên ngoài không?</p>	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; text-align: center;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;">A</td> <td style="width: 25%;">B</td> <td style="width: 25%;">C</td> <td style="width: 25%;">D</td> </tr> </table>	A	B	C	D	<p>4. Is there continuous improvement of processes based on positively identifying opportunities and needs through analyzing customer data, operational data, and external benchmarks?</p>
A	B	C	D			
<p>5. Tổ chức/Doanh nghiệp của bạn có 1 phương pháp kỹ lưỡng và định kỳ bằng cách kiểm tra (hoặc các phương pháp tương tự), để đánh giá việc tất cả các hệ thống dẫn dắt và điều khiển tất cả hoạt động của DN có vận hành và hiệu quả không?</p>	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; text-align: center;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;">A</td> <td style="width: 25%;">B</td> <td style="width: 25%;">C</td> <td style="width: 25%;">D</td> </tr> </table>	A	B	C	D	<p>5. Does your organisation have a thorough and routine method, by audit or otherwise, for assessing the implementation and effectiveness of all the system that are used to drive and control its activities?</p>
A	B	C	D			
<p>6. Tổ chức/Doanh nghiệp của bạn có đảm bảo các đánh giá và kết quả luôn luôn được sử dụng cho các hệ thống thông qua việc thực hiện chẩn đoán 'nguyên nhân - kết quả' (hơn là chẩn đoán lập tức) để phòng ngừa việc tiếp diễn các nguy cơ?</p>	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; text-align: center;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;">A</td> <td style="width: 25%;">B</td> <td style="width: 25%;">C</td> <td style="width: 25%;">D</td> </tr> </table>	A	B	C	D	<p>6. Does your organisation ensure that the audits and results, are always used to improve the systems through the implementation of roof-cause cures (rather than just "quick-fixes") so preventing the recurrence of the problem?</p>
A	B	C	D			
<p>7. Những hoạt động hỗ trợ như kế toán, IT, thanh toán, xử lý dữ liệu, nhân sự, luật và thư ký) được văn bản hóa, kiểm soát và nâng cao cải tiến để ít nhất ngang tầm với các hoạt động sản xuất và dịch vụ chính hay không ?</p>	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; text-align: center;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;">A</td> <td style="width: 25%;">B</td> <td style="width: 25%;">C</td> <td style="width: 25%;">D</td> </tr> </table>	A	B	C	D	<p>7. Are the support ("back-room") activities (e.g. accounts, IT, dispatch, data processing, personnel, legal, and secretarial) documented, controlled, and continuously improved to at least the same level as the main product and service activities?</p>
A	B	C	D			

6 KẾT QUẢ HƯỚNG VỀ PHÍA KHÁCH HÀNG		6. CUSTOMER RESULTS
<p>5. Kết quả phân mảng khách hàng có chứng tỏ được những nhận thức những nhóm và loại khách hàng khác nhau không? (bao gồm cả khách hàng đã mất và khách hàng tiềm năng)?</p>	<p>A B C D</p>	<p>5. Are the customer results segmented to show the perceptions of the various groups and types of customers (including lost or potential customers)?</p>
<p>6. Kết quả từ khách hàng này có chứng tỏ được xu hướng cải thiện hoặc đạt đến mức độ cao không?</p>	<p>A B C D</p>	<p>6. Are these customer results showing improving trends or sustained high levels of performance?</p>
<p>7. Bạn có số liệu nào chứng tỏ kết quả khách hàng của bạn so sánh với/tốt hơn đối thủ cạnh tranh trực tiếp hoặc các tổ chức/DN tương ứng không?</p>	<p>A B C D</p>	<p>7. Do you have data that shows that your customer results are comparable/better than those of your direct competitors or equivalent organisation?</p>
<p>8. Tổ chức/DN của bạn có phương pháp để định kỳ đặt ra các mục tiêu cải thiện kết quả những tiêu chuẩn nội bộ và các quan niệm thực tế của sự thỏa mãn và lòng trung thành của khách hàng?</p>	<p>A B C D</p>	<p>8. Does your organisation have a method for routine setting targets/goals for improvement in the performance of its internal measures and actual perceptions of customer satisfaction and loyalty?</p>
<p>9. Tổ chức/DN của bạn có thể chứng tỏ kết quả nghiên cứu (từ khách hàng) luôn luôn thường hiệu quả để cải tiến sản phẩm và dịch vụ cung ứng không?</p>	<p>A B C D</p>	<p>9. Can your organisation show that the results of surveys are always effectively used to improve the products or services it provides?</p>

<p>7. THỎA MÃN NGƯỜI LAO ĐỘNG</p> <p>Lưu ý : Xu hướng và mức độ được yêu cầu này nên liên quan trong giai đoạn ít nhất là 3 năm và thường là 5 năm.</p>		<p>7. PEOPLE RESULTS</p> <p>Where trends and levels are requested these should relate to at least a three year period and preferably to a five year period</p>								
<p>1. Tổ chức/DN của bạn có định kỳ đo lường và đánh giá những khía cạnh mà nó phán đoán xu hướng và tác động đạo đức và sự thỏa mãn của nhân viên (ví dụ như : tỷ lệ vắng mặt, bệnh tật, doanh số nhân viên, mức độ rời làm sớm, mức độ đào tạo, khuyến khích nội bộ, mức độ tai nạn, mức độ công nhận(khen thưởng), sự bất bình); và nó có hành động trên các kết quả không?</p>	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; text-align: center;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;">A</td> <td style="width: 25%;">B</td> <td style="width: 25%;">C</td> <td style="width: 25%;">D</td> </tr> </table>	A	B	C	D	<p>1. Does the organisation regularly measure and evaluate aspects which predict trends or influence people satisfaction and morale such as absenteeism, sickness, staff turnover, early leavers, levels of training, internal promotions, accident levels, recognition levels, grievances, and does it act on the results?</p>				
A	B	C	D							
<p>2. a. Có tường xuyên thu thập những phúc đáp (thông qua câu hỏi trắc nghiệm, phỏng vấn, nhóm tập trung...) về nhận thức khác nhau của mọi người trên các mặt khác nhau như môi trường làm việc, vấn đề sức khỏe, an toàn, việc trao đổi thông tin, triển vọng công việc, trả lương, đánh giá, công nhận, đào tạo và thỏa mãn chung</p> <p>b. và tổ chức/DN có lập ra các tiêu chuẩn thích hợp không?</p>	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; text-align: center;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;">A</td> <td style="width: 25%;">B</td> <td style="width: 25%;">C</td> <td style="width: 25%;">D</td> </tr> </table> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; text-align: center;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;">A</td> <td style="width: 25%;">B</td> <td style="width: 25%;">C</td> <td style="width: 25%;">D</td> </tr> </table>	A	B	C	D	A	B	C	D	<p>2. Is regular feedback obtained (through questionnaires, interviews, focus group etc) of the perceptions of the people on various aspects of the organisation such as, working environment, health, safety, communications, career prospects, pay, appraisal, recognition, training, and overall satisfaction;</p> <p>and has the organisation established the relevance of its measures?</p>
A	B	C	D							
A	B	C	D							
<p>3. Kết quả của cả tiêu chuẩn nội bộ của tổ chức và nhận thức thực tế có được so sánh tương ứng với các tổ chức/DN khác hay không?</p>	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; text-align: center;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;">A</td> <td style="width: 25%;">B</td> <td style="width: 25%;">C</td> <td style="width: 25%;">D</td> </tr> </table>	A	B	C	D	<p>3. Are the results of both the organisation results made known to the people and actual perceptions compared with those of other organisation?</p>				
A	B	C	D							
<p>4. Tất cả kết quả thỏa mãn nhân viên có được mọi người biết và được làm theo sự quản lý hay không?</p>	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; text-align: center;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;">A</td> <td style="width: 25%;">B</td> <td style="width: 25%;">C</td> <td style="width: 25%;">D</td> </tr> </table>	A	B	C	D	<p>4. Are all the people satisfaction results made known to the people and acted upon by the management?</p>				
A	B	C	D							
<p>5. a. Những kết quả riêng biệt từ nhận thức sự thỏa mãn nhân viên thực tế nhìn chung có chứng tỏ được xu hướng cải thiện hoặc đạt được kết quả cao</p> <p>b. và nó có được so sánh với các tổ chức/DN tương ứng hoặc các đối sánh khác hay không?</p>	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; text-align: center;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;">A</td> <td style="width: 25%;">B</td> <td style="width: 25%;">C</td> <td style="width: 25%;">D</td> </tr> </table> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; text-align: center;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;">A</td> <td style="width: 25%;">B</td> <td style="width: 25%;">C</td> <td style="width: 25%;">D</td> </tr> </table>	A	B	C	D	A	B	C	D	<p>5. Are the results (particularly the actual perceptions of people satisfaction) generally showing an improving trend or sustained high level</p> <p>and can they be shown to be comparable with equivalent organisations and other benchmarks?</p>
A	B	C	D							
A	B	C	D							

8. KẾT QUẢ HƯỚNG VỀ PHÍA XÃ HỘI		8.SOCIETY RESULTS
<p>1. Bạn có thể xác định là tổ chức/DN của bạn đạt kết quả</p> <p>a. trong việc ngăn ngừa và giảm những tác động xấu hoặc những thiệt hại cho vùng lân cận và môi trường chung;</p> <p>b. trong việc bảo tồn và bảo vệ nguồn tự nhiên trái đất (ví dụ như năng lượng, tái chế, chất thải);</p> <p>c. và đóng góp tích cực cho cộng đồng (các hoạt động từ thiện ,giáo dục, thể thao và giải trí, tiên phong trong các lĩnh vực chuyên ngành)?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D</p>	<p>1.Can you demonstrate that your organisation has achieved results</p> <p>on preventing or reducing harm or nuisance to neighbours and the general environment,</p> <p>or conserving and protecting global resources (e.g. energy, recycling, waste)</p> <p>and on positively contributing to the community (charitable, education, sports and leisure, leadership in professional matters)?</p>
<p>2. Các hoạt động trong lĩnh vực trên có chứng tỏ được xu hướng cải thiện và các kết quả có thể so sánh với chỗ khác trong khu vực, hoặc trong ngành?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D</p>	<p>2. Are the activities in the above areas showing a positive trend and can the results be shown to be comparable with others in the locale, or business sector?</p>
<p>3. Tổ chức/DN có chứng tỏ thông qua kết quả nghiên cứu (hoặc phương tiện khác) là những đối tượng lân cận và xã hội nhìn chung là đánh giá cao về họ và danh tiếng của DN đang cải thiện</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D</p>	<p>3. Can the organisation show, through results of surveys or other means, that neighbours and society in general think highly of them and that their reputation is improving</p>

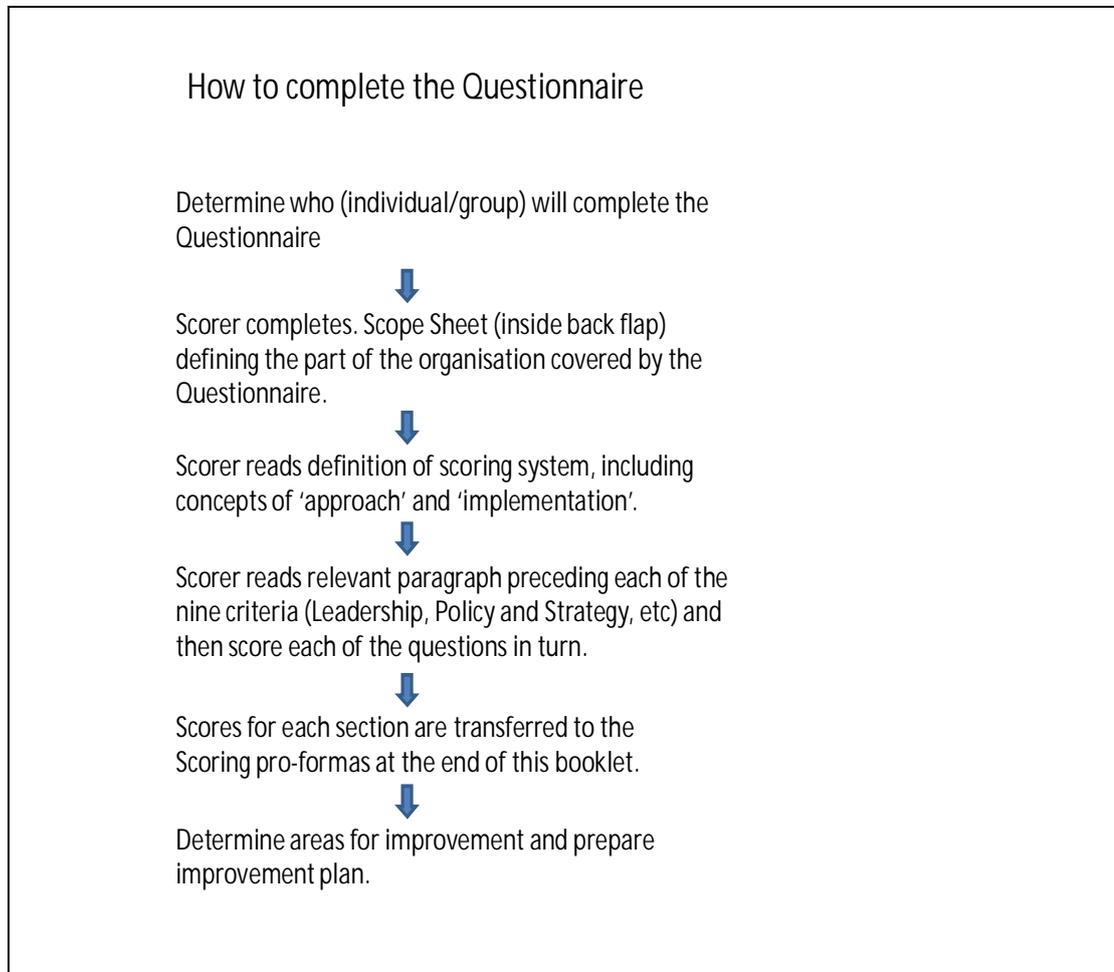
9. KẾT QUẢ KINH DOANH CHÍNH Kết quả và xu hướng nên liên quan trong giai đoạn ít nhất là 3 năm và thường là 5 năm.		9.KEY PERFORMANCE RESULTS The results and trends should relate to at least a three year period and preferably to a five year period.
1. Kết quả tài chính và phi tài chính cuối cùng của tổ chức/DN (ví dụ như Lợi nhuận, sản lượng, số lượng, tỉ trọng thị phần) có chứng tỏ xu hướng cải thiện không?	<input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D	1. Do the results of your organisation's key financial and non-financial outcomes (e.g. profits, margins, volumes, market share etc) show an improving trend?
2. Những kết quả này có được so sánh/tốt hơn đối thủ trực tiếp hoặc những tổ chức/DN tương ứng không?	<input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D	2. Do these key financial and non-financial outcomes have results that are comparable with/better than direct competitors or equivalent organisations?
3. Những kết quả này được phân mảng bởi từng phần khác nhau của tổ chức/DN, và/hoặc theo sản phẩm và dịch vụ thể hiện thành tích khác nhau không?	<input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D	3. Are there results segmented by the various parts of the business, markets, and/or products and services to show differences in performance?
4. Kết quả của tất cả các hoạt động (quá trình) có trực tiếp đóng góp vào việc nhận biết và đo lường sản phẩm dịch vụ không?	<input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D	4. Is the performances of all activities (processes) that directly contribute to a product or service measured and know?
5. Những kết quả của hoạt động sản phẩm dịch vụ này có chứng tỏ xu hướng cải thiện không?	<input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D	5. Are the results of the products and service activities showing an improving trend?
6. a. Những kết quả của hoạt động sản phẩm dịch vụ này có được so sánh với chỗ khác b. và nó có chứng tỏ là ngang bằng hay tốt hơn không?	<input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D	6.Are the results of these product and service activities compared with others, and can be shown to be comparable/better?
7. a. Kết quả của các hoạt động hỗ trợ và quản trị hành chính (ví dụ như IT, kế hoạch, an toàn, kế toán) đang chứng tỏ xu hướng cải thiện b. và chúng có được coi là ngang bằng hay tốt hơn không tổ chức/DN khác hay không?	<input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D	7. Are the results of the support and administration activities (e.g. IT, planning, legal, security, accounts) showing an improving trend and can they be shown to be comparable/better than other organisations?

Thông tin cá nhân	PERSONAL DETAILS
Vui lòng điền các thông tin dưới đây :	Please fill in the areas below:
Họ và tên (không bắt buộc):	Name (optional):
Giới tính :	Sex:
Tuổi :	Age:
Chức danh công việc :	Title/Position:
Đơn vị công tác :	Department/Business unit:
Thời gian đảm nhiệm chức vụ hiện tại:	Number of years working with your position :
Thời gian công tác tại Công ty :	Number of years working with department/business unit:
Bằng cấp (cao nhất cuối cùng) :	Education Information(final degree attained):

Thank you for your time filling the questionnaire

Appendix K. How to complete the (EFQM) questionnaire

Source: EFQM, *Determining Excellence: A questionnaire approach*, 1999-2003, p.5



Appendix L. Self-assessment report of Company A

SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT
USING THE EUROPEAN FOUNDATION FOR
QUALITY MANAGEMENT (EFQM) EXCELLENCE
MODEL QUESTIONNAIRE
IN COMPANY A

TABLE OF CONTENT

Overview

Demographics

Overall Results

Item results

Leadership

Policy and Strategy

People

Partnerships and Resources

Processes

Customer Results

People Results

Society Results

Key Performance Results

OVERVIEW

I - Overview of participants

1. Date and venue

The EFQM self-assessment was undertaken at 8 am – 10 am, Thu 23rd Sep 2008

Venue: Conference room, A Textile and Garment Joint Stock company, Hue, Viet nam.

2. Participants:

CEO, the director board, senior managers of functional departments, and director/deputy directors of mills and factory.

3. The EFQM questionnaire participation.

Total preliminary survey questionnaires distributed:	27
Total preliminary survey questionnaires collected:	27
Response rate (%):	100%

II – Feedback report using the EFQM self-assessment questionnaire approach

This report is arranged within 3 sessions:

Demographics

Overall performance against the EFQM standards.

Results evaluation following by both each criterion and sub-items in functional and management groups.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Table A1 Management level Profile

POSITION	Number of participants	% response (n=27)
Board of Directors	4	15%
Departmental Managers	15	56%
Plant/Factory Director	8	30%
TOTAL	27	100%

Table A2 Individual Profile

Category		Numbers of response	Response rate %
Gender	Male	22	81%
	Female	5	19%
	Total	27	
Age	<40	2	7%
	41-50	15	56%
	> 50	7	26%
	No answer	3	11%
	Total	27	
Department	Planning Import – Export	3	
	Sales	2	
	Engineering	2	
	Administration - HR	3	
	Quality Assurance	3	
	Financ	2	
	Total	15	

SUMMARY RESULTS

ORGANISATIONAL OVERALL PERFORMANCE AGAINST THE EFQM QUESTIONNAIRE APPROACH

1 Overall performance

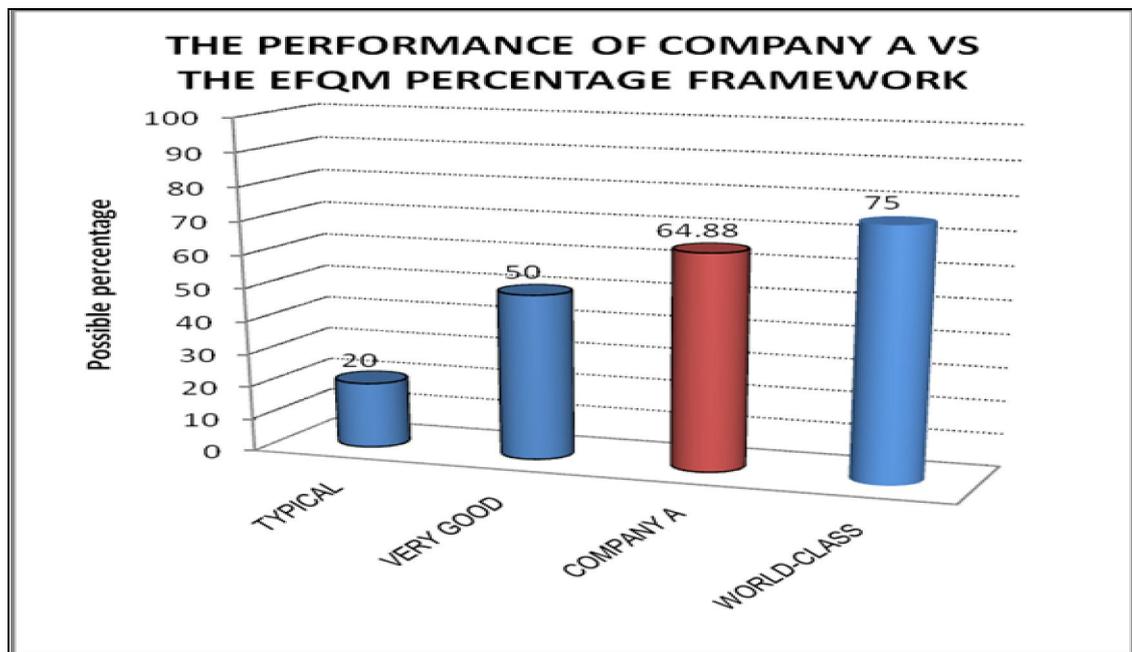
Table A3: Overall performance against the EFQM questionnaire tool

Category	Total Scores	Scores Scored	% of Total Scores
Leadership	50	30.3	60.59
Policy and Strategy	40	26.5	66.19
People	50	32.2	64.44
Partnerships and Resources	50	32.4	64.81
Processes	70	46.1	65.86
Customer Results	90	54.5	60.55
People Results	50	30.1	60.18
Society Results	30	21.6	71.90
Key performance Results	70	48.6	69.39
TOTAL	500		64.88

Table 1 shows valuable figures of overall score with regards to particular criteria. It suggests several recommendations, as follows:

- The result of A in terms of the organisational average score is 64.88%. This concluded its position as a company in a high-level category against the 50% performance score of very good companies in the world, as shown in Figure A1. That concerned standard was provided by EFQM material (EFQM, 1999-20003)

Figure A1: THE PERFORMANCE OF COMPANY A VS THE EFQM FRAMEWORK



The final performance of Company A is displayed below in two ways, one based on each criterion (Figure A2) and the other on the Results-Approach- Deployment-Assessment and Review (RADAR) charts (Figure A3). The performance of A can be seen clearly in Figure A2, in which weak areas are very close to the core of the diagram.

Figures A2 and A3 indicate the results of the analysis for each set of questionnaires. They suggest strong and weak segments depending on performance level and particular scores in terms of organisational capacity and achievement. They also address specific areas of effectiveness involving the optimal use of resources in achieving aims.

FIGURE A2: OVERALL CATEGORY LEVEL PERCENT SCORES

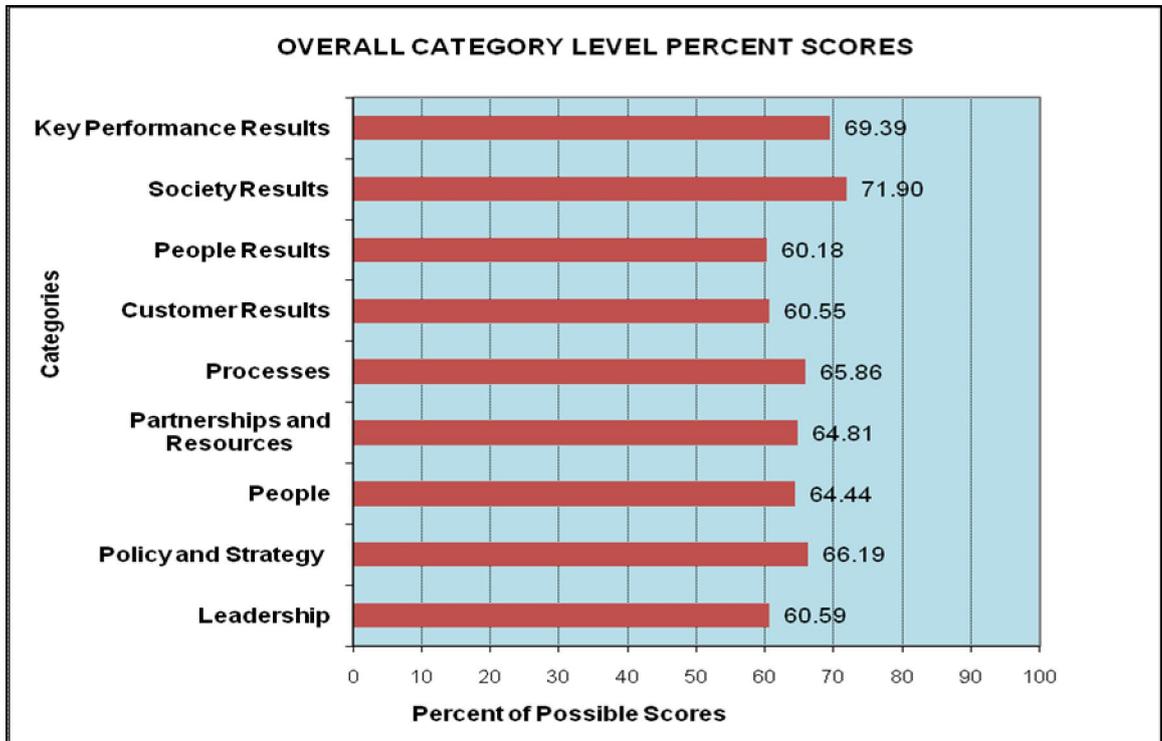


Figure A3: ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE IN RADAR DISPLAY

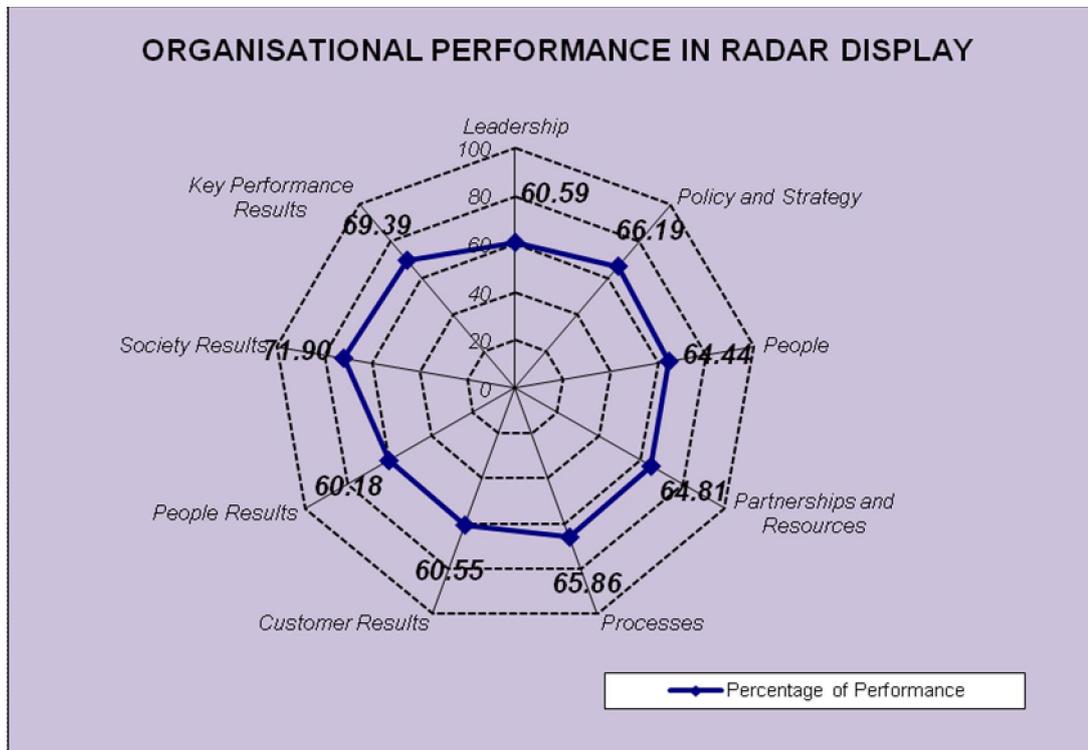


Figure A4a: The assessing gap in scoring organisational performance of Company A among participants

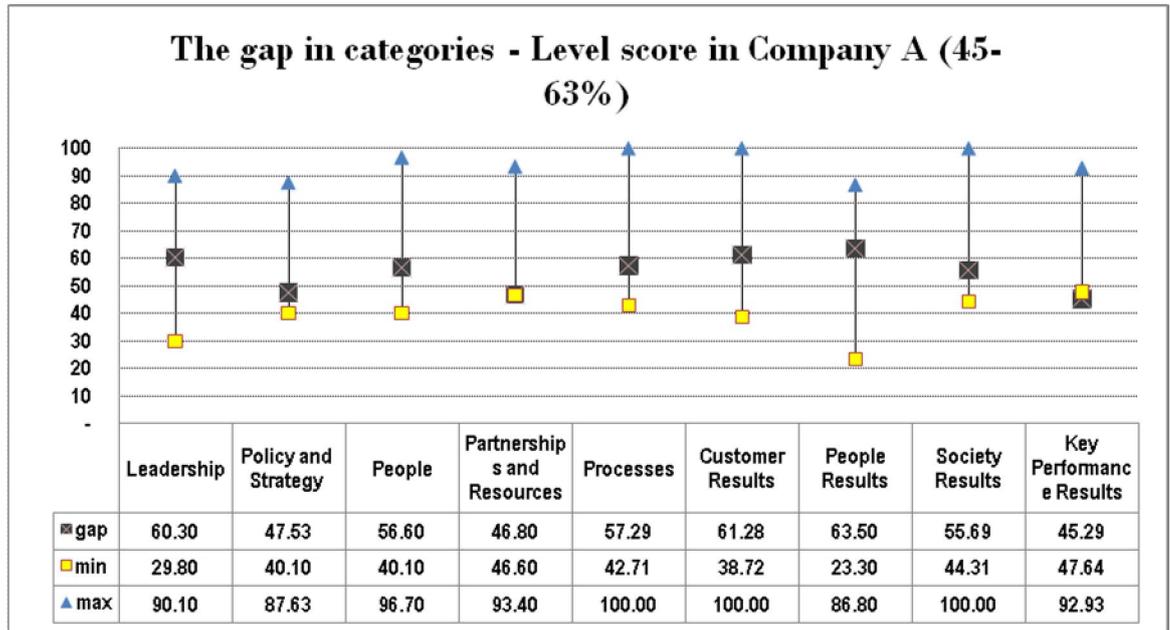
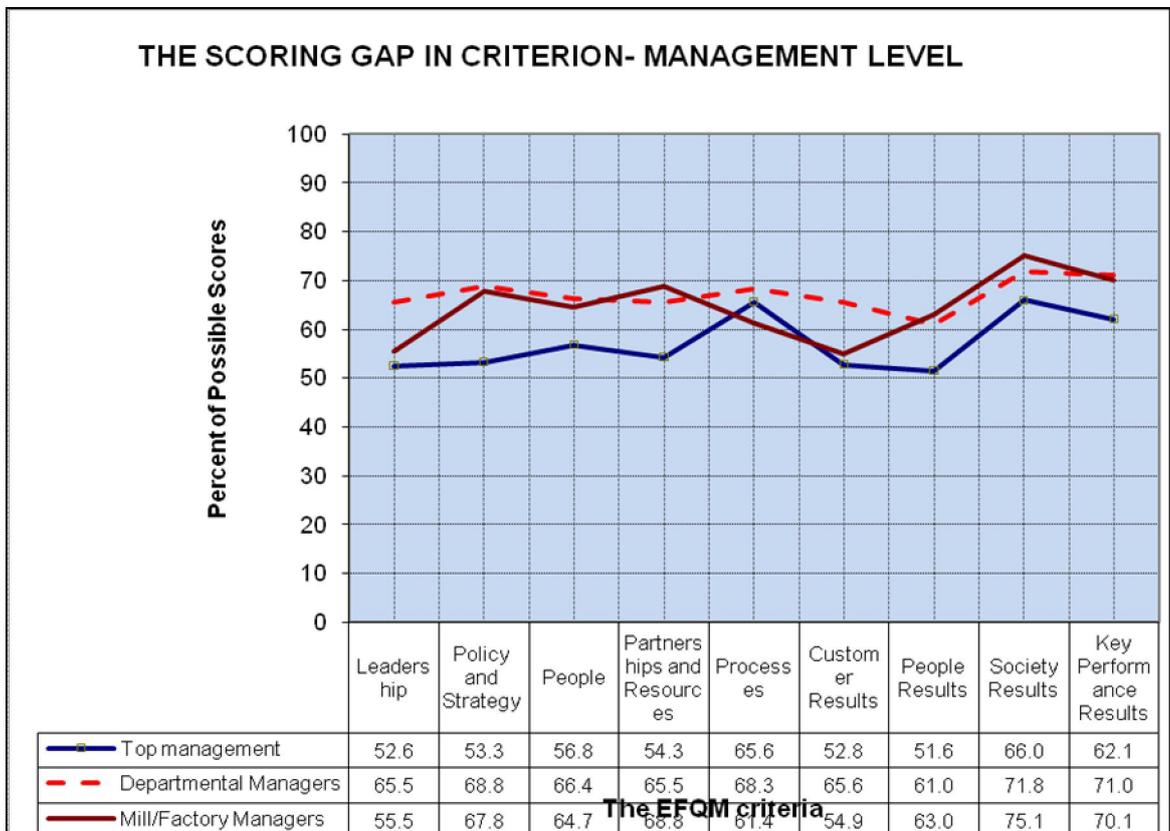


Figure A4b: The scoring in scoring organisational performance of Company A among management groups



OVERALL CATEGORY LEVEL PERCENT SCORES

In general, the overall level could be determined, at a glance, organisational strengths and weaknesses by items. The category – Level scores in bellow figures show the gap for each demographic (position level) view.in three various segments: overall management level, within functional segment and plant area.

CRITERION 1 – LEADERSHIP

Table A4. Leadership Item scores in Company A

	<i>Items</i>	<i>% percent</i>
1.1	<i>Are all the senior managers personally involved and visible in generating and communicating a strategic statement for the purpose, direction and culture of organisation (including its quality values and priorities)</i>	64.33
1.2	<i>Have the senior managers ensured the implementation of an organisational structure and process management system that is respected and is effective in delivering consistent and improving results</i>	55.63
1.3	<i>a. Do the senior managers, by example and action, demonstrate support and emphasize the values of their organisation</i>	70.56
	<i>b. and are these values widely accepted and practiced throughout the organisation?</i>	61.78
1.4	<i>Do all managers make themselves available to staff and involve themselves in the positive and timely recognition of the efforts made by individuals and teams who generate improvement?</i>	60.63
1.5	<i>a. Are all the managers taking actions to meet with customers, suppliers and others outside the organisation,</i>	50.56
	<i>b. and be actively involved in promoting partnerships and improvement initiatives with them?</i>	61.85

The overall Leadership Item level could be determined, at a glance, organisational strengths and weaknesses by items.

Figure A5. Leadership Item Level Percent Scores

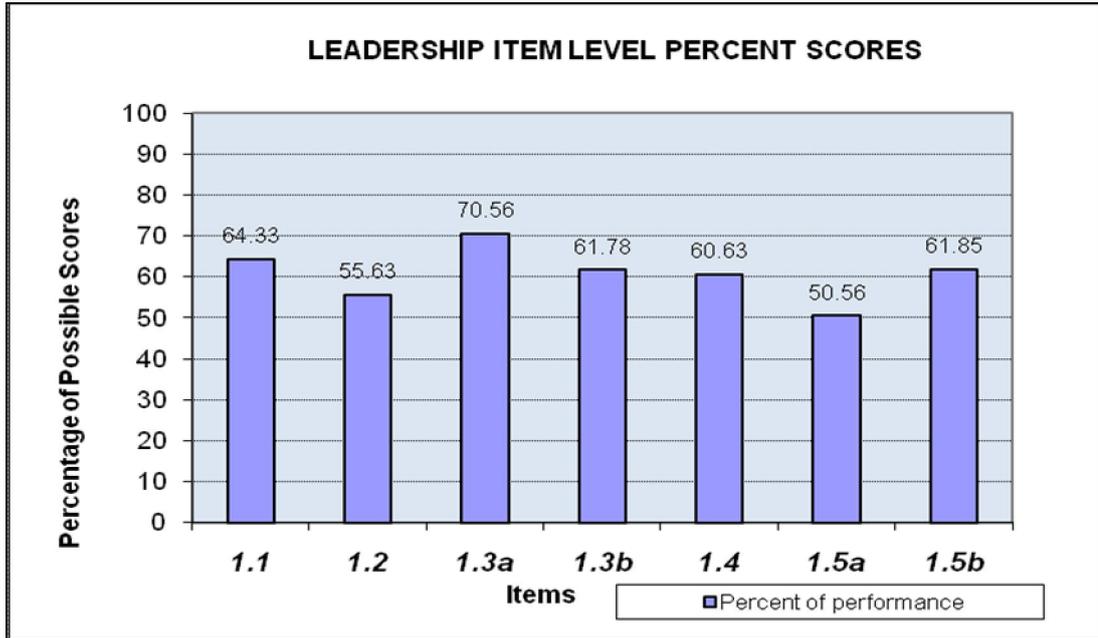


Figure A5a. Leadership Item Level Percent Scores – Management group

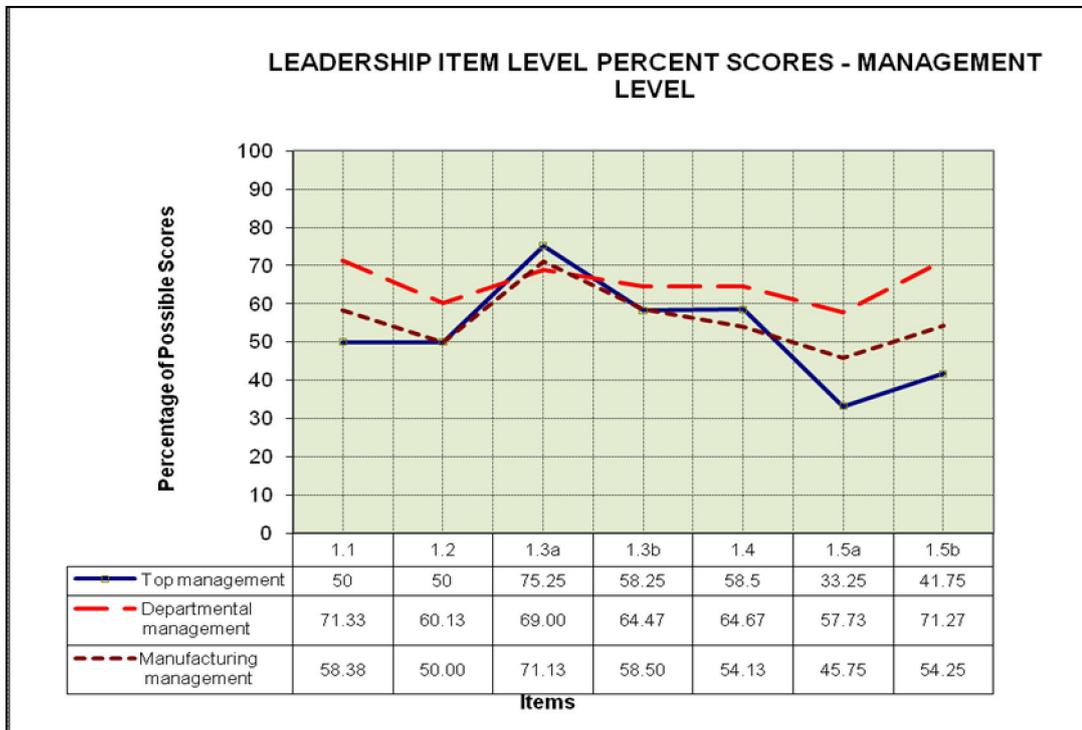


Figure A5b. Leadership Item Level Percent Scores – Functional Department

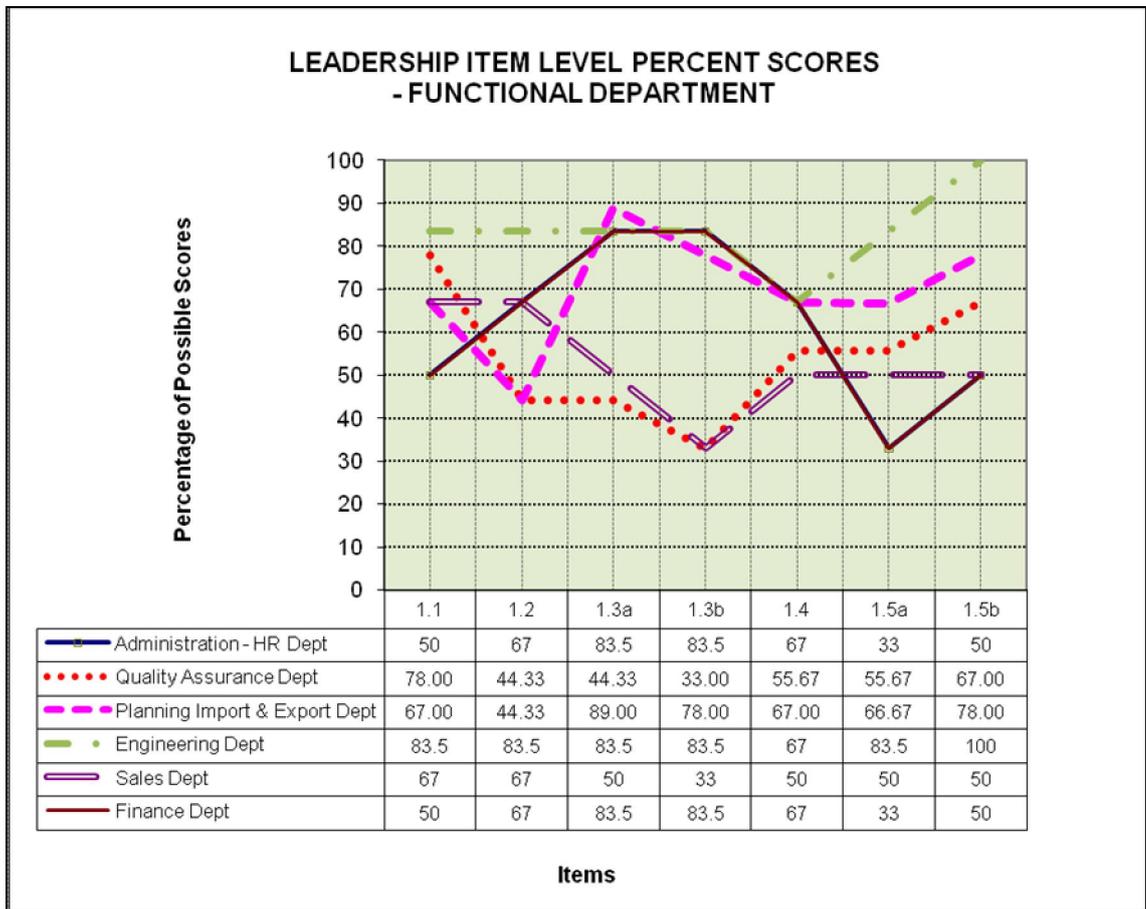
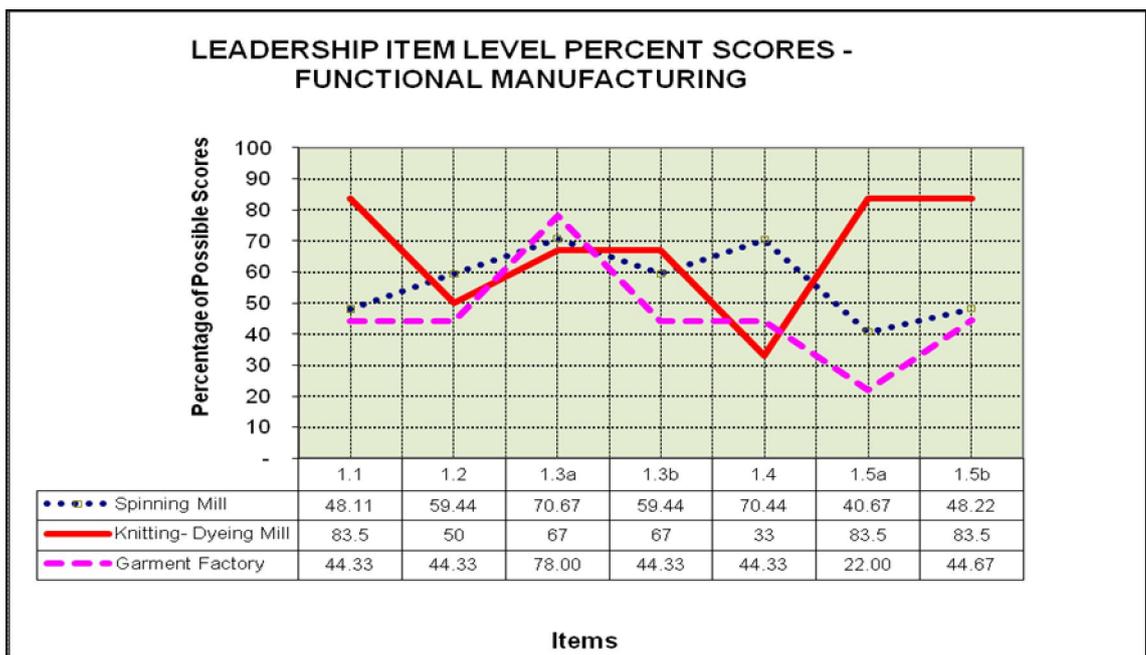


Figure A5c. Leadership Item Level Percent Scores – Functional Manufacturing



CRITERION 2 – POLICY AND STRATEGY

Table A5. Policy and Strategy Item scores in Company A

	<i>Items</i>	% percent
2.1	<i>a. Does your organisation use widespread and appropriate data inputs to develop its strategy and business plans</i>	70.59
	<i>b. and does this data include the performance of internal processes, supplier performance, customer requirements and satisfaction, competitor and benchmark data?</i>	64.41
2.2	<i>a. Are you strategic aims and value fully supported by your policies, plans, targets and allocation of resources,</i>	69.19
	<i>b. and do you ensure that top-level targets and plans feasible, accepted and deployed into realistic lower level targets and plans</i>	85.33
2.3	<i>a. Could most staff list the organisation’s goals relevant to their activities,</i>	66.89
	<i>b. and are they familiar with the plans to achieve them in their own areas</i>	61.93
2.4	<i>Is there good evidence that the organisation has the ability and methods to recognise when to change its strategies, policies, markets and offerings – even if the CEO of the organisation were to depart?</i>	55.59

Figure A6. Policy and Strategy Item Group Percent Scores

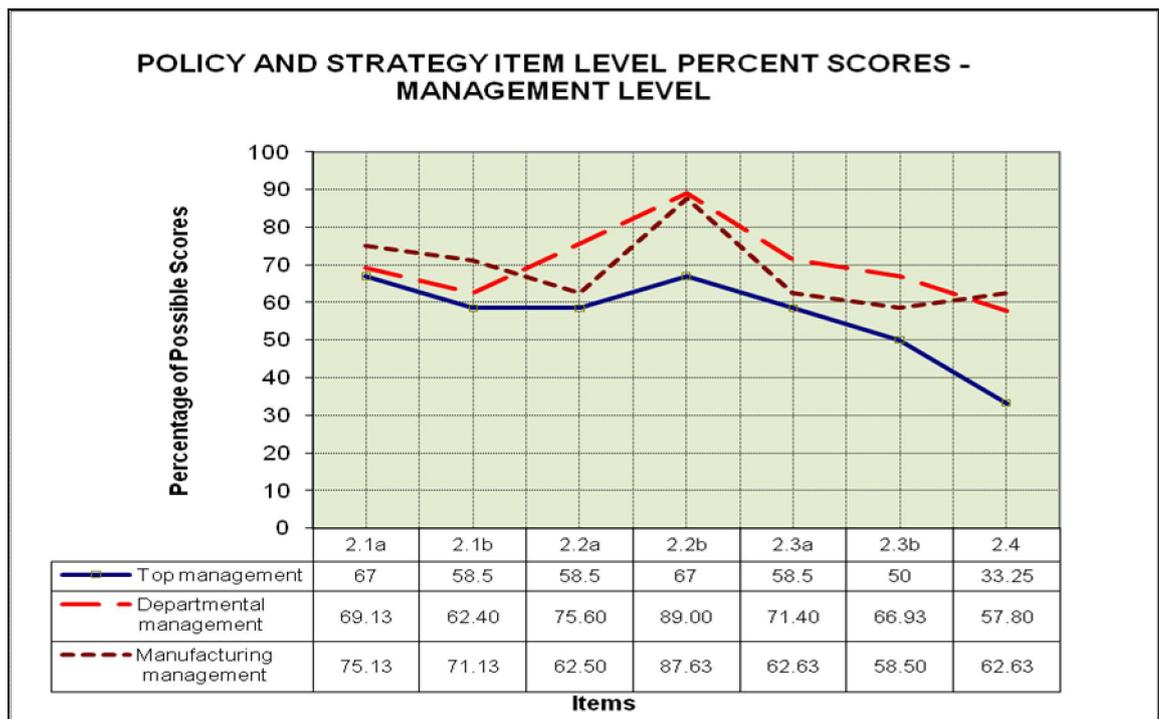


Figure A6a. Policy and Strategy Item Level Percent Scores – Management group



Figure A6b. Policy and Strategy Item Level Percent Scores – Functional Department

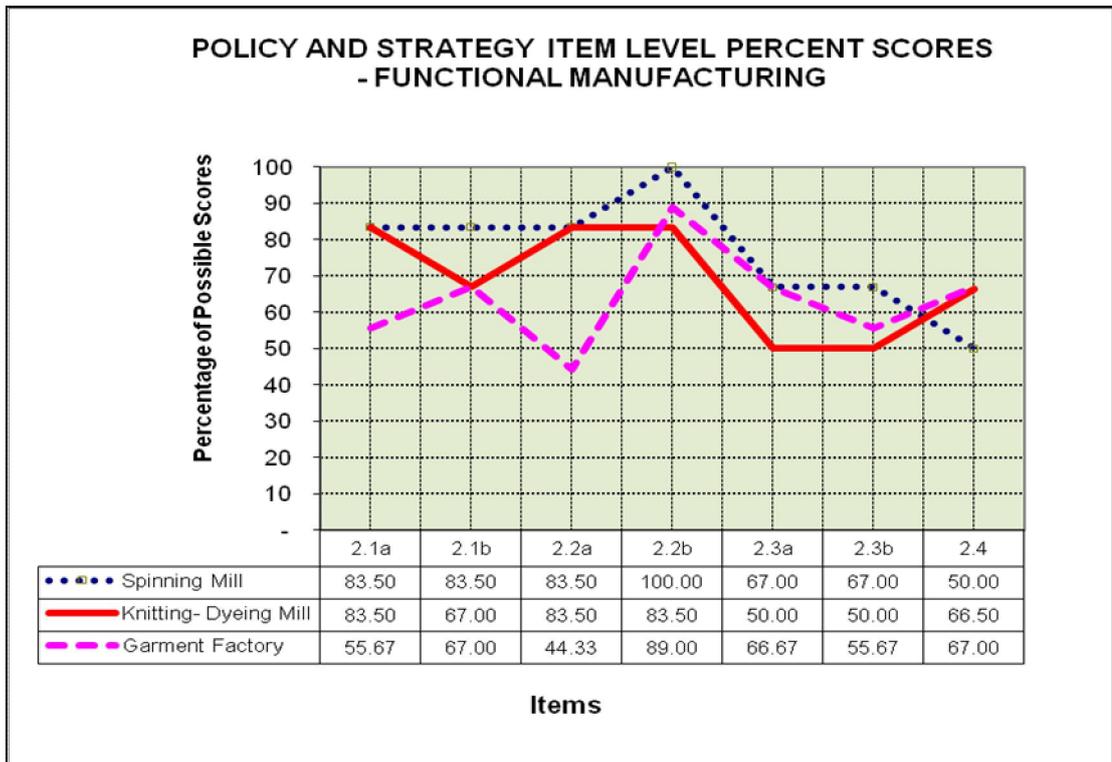
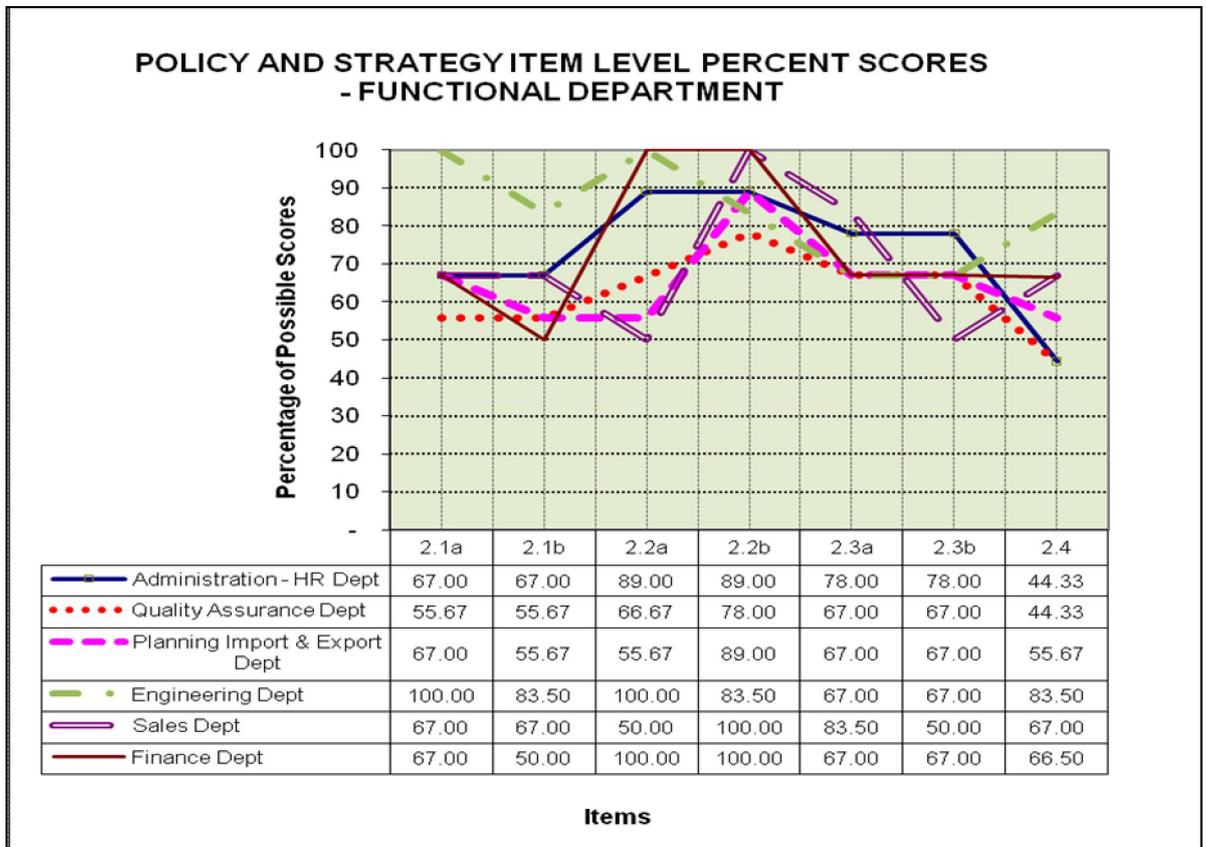


Figure A6c. Policy and Strategy Item Level Percent Scores – Functional Manufacturing



CRITERION 3: PEOPLE

Table A6. People Item scores in Company A

	<i>Items</i>	<i>% percent</i>
3.1	<i>a. Are the people plans (e.g. hiring, training, development) directly derived from the needs of the strategic plans and goals</i>	73.04
	<i>b and capable of ensuring that plans and goals will be achieved?</i>	70.52
3.2	<i>a. Does your organisation ensure that the people it recruits match the organisation's values and needs</i>	63.11
	<i>b. and is there an appraisal process (which is respected by the people) for aligning an individual's goals and training with the organisation's needs?</i>	55.59
3.3	<i>a. Does your organisation have a process that involves all employees in generating improvement;</i>	65.59
	<i>b. and are its employees becoming increasingly empowered and competent to make decisions and changes without creating risk to the organisation?</i>	61.81
3.4	<i>a. Have effective two way communications been achieved with the employees</i>	63.04
	<i>b. and would the employees agree that they are well informed and that their opinions are valued?</i>	58.11
3.5	<i>Are people's efforts in generating improvement and contributing to the organisation's success recognised, valued and rewarded comparably to other factors (e.g. sales commission, length of service, qualification)</i>	66.81

Figure A7. People Item Level Percent Scores

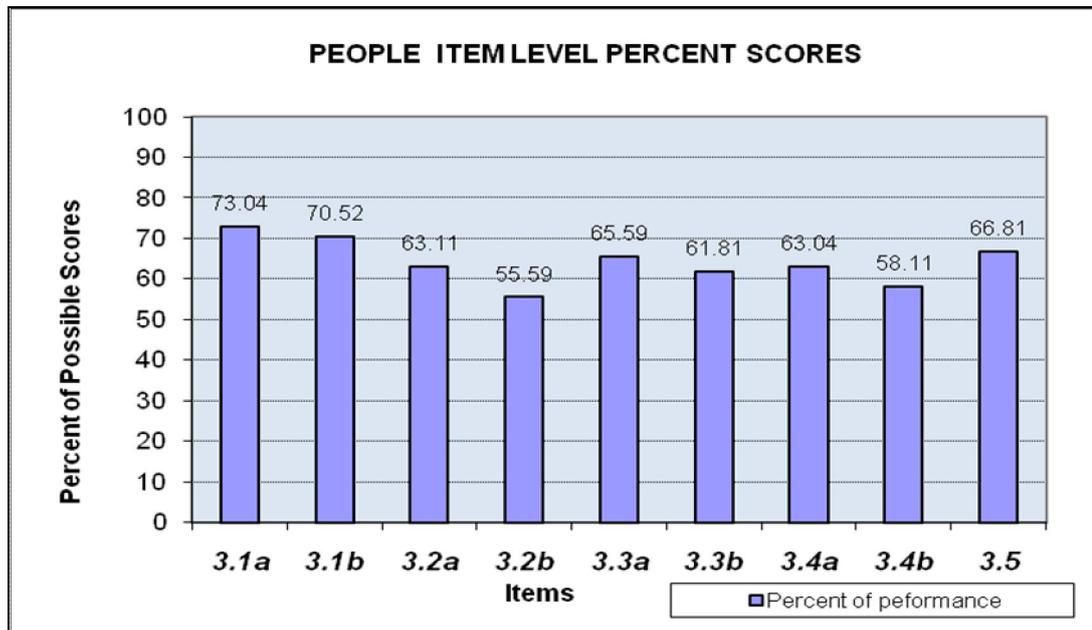


Figure A7a. People Item Level Percent Scores – Management group

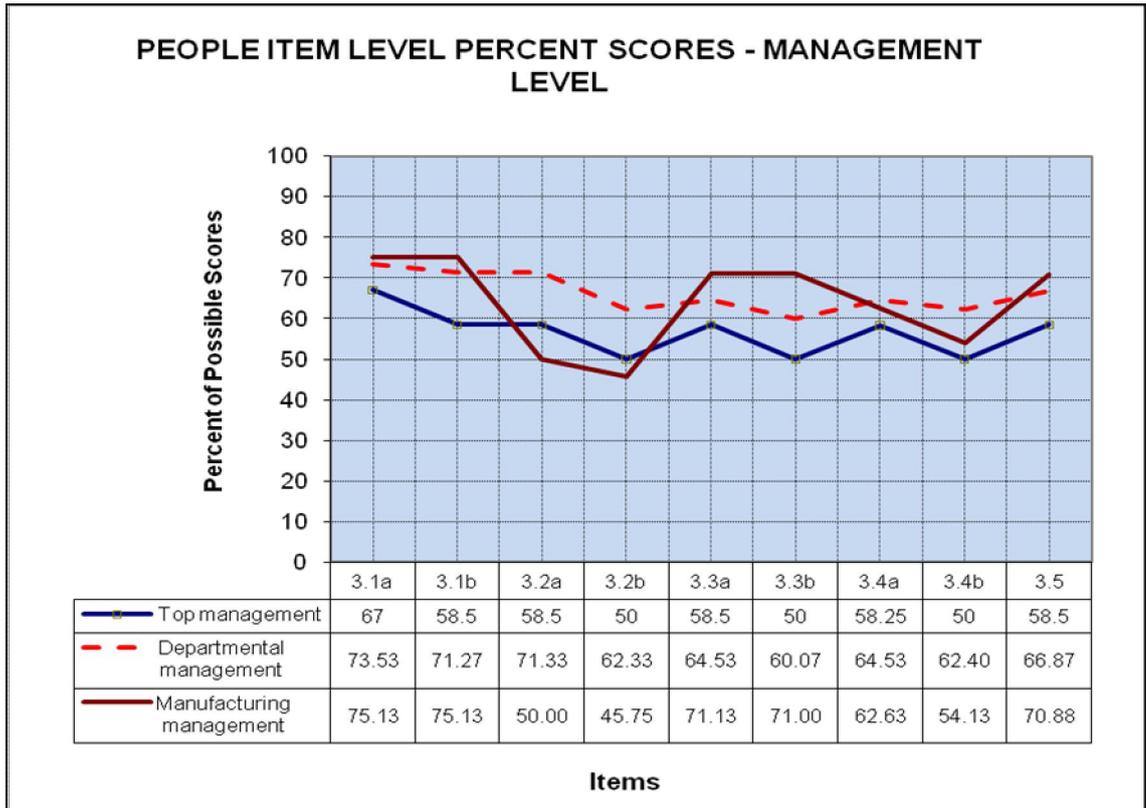


Figure A7b. People Item Level Percent Scores – Functional Department

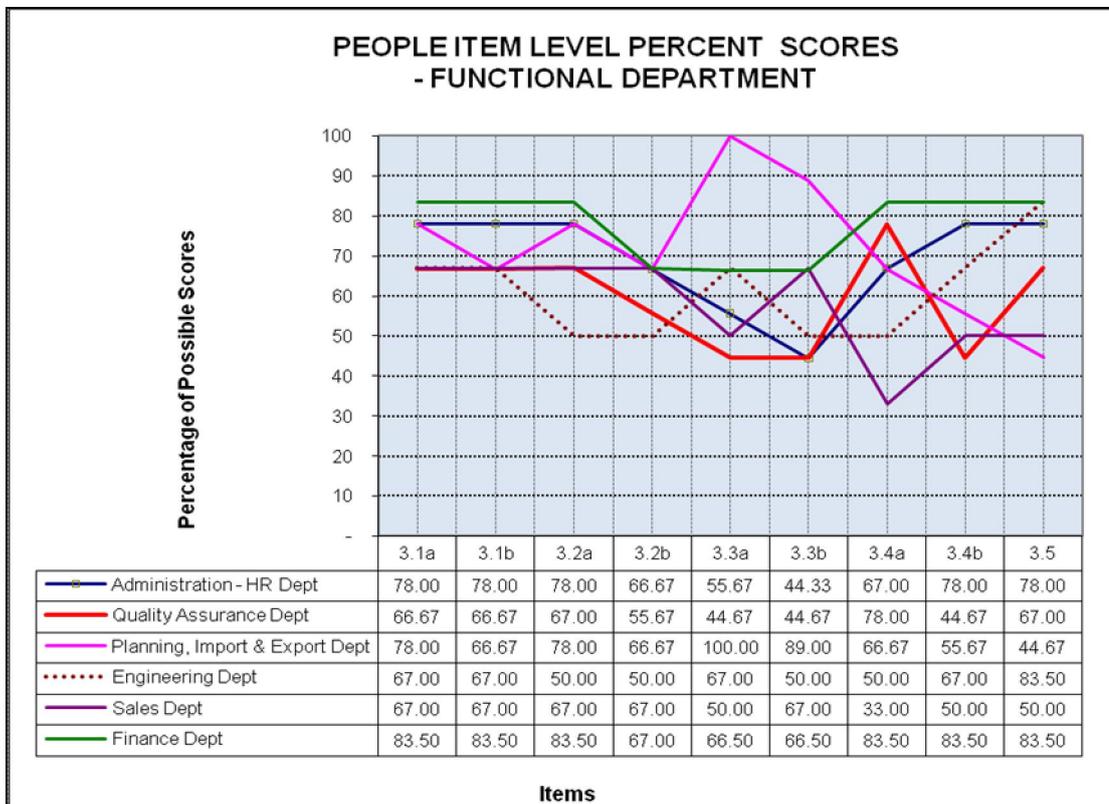
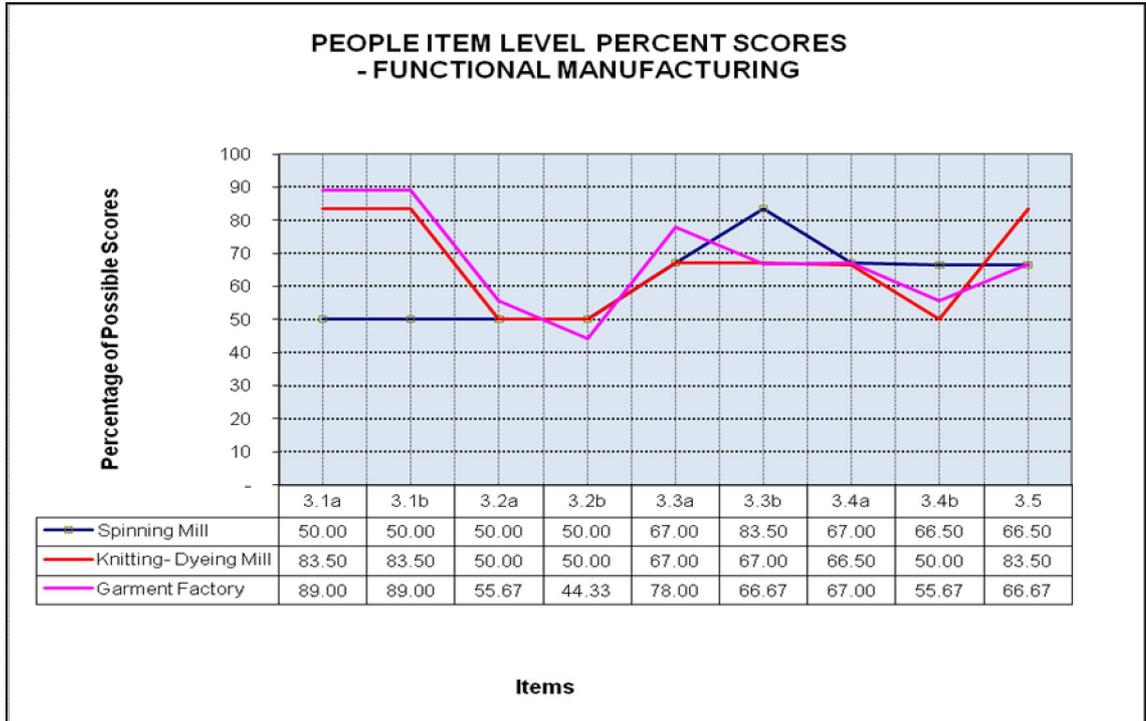


Figure A7c. People Item Level Percent Scores – Functional Manufacturing



CRITERION 4 : PARTNERSHIPS AND RESOURCES

Table A7. Partnerships and Resources Item scores in Company A

	<i>Items</i>	<i>% percent</i>
4.1	<i>a. Are Partnership relationships developed through a proactive and structure approach</i>	69.26
	<i>b. and do these partnerships identify and achieve extra opportunities in products, services, markets and financial performance?</i>	69.33
4.2	<i>Does your organisation ensure that all relevant information, including data on process performance, suppliers (including supplier performance), customers(including customer satisfaction)and benchmarks, is reliable, up to date, and quickly available and easily useable by appropriate personnel (including supplies/ distributors/ customers where appropriate)?</i>	60.67
4.3	<i>Does your organisation have approach that ensure that the allocation and use of its financial resources reflects and supports its strategic goals, aims and values and ensures the lasting success oh the organisation?</i>	68.11
4.4	<i>Are physical assets such as building, equipment, materials and stock managed and continually improved to the benefit of the organisation and the enhancement of its strategic aims, and goals, and to the conservation of resources?</i>	77.93
4.5	<i>Is there a routine method for ensuring that alternative and new technologies are developed and implemented, and the use of intellectual property and knowledge optimised in order to gain an advantage on both products and services?</i>	48.07

Figure A8. Partnerships and Resources Item Level Percent Scores

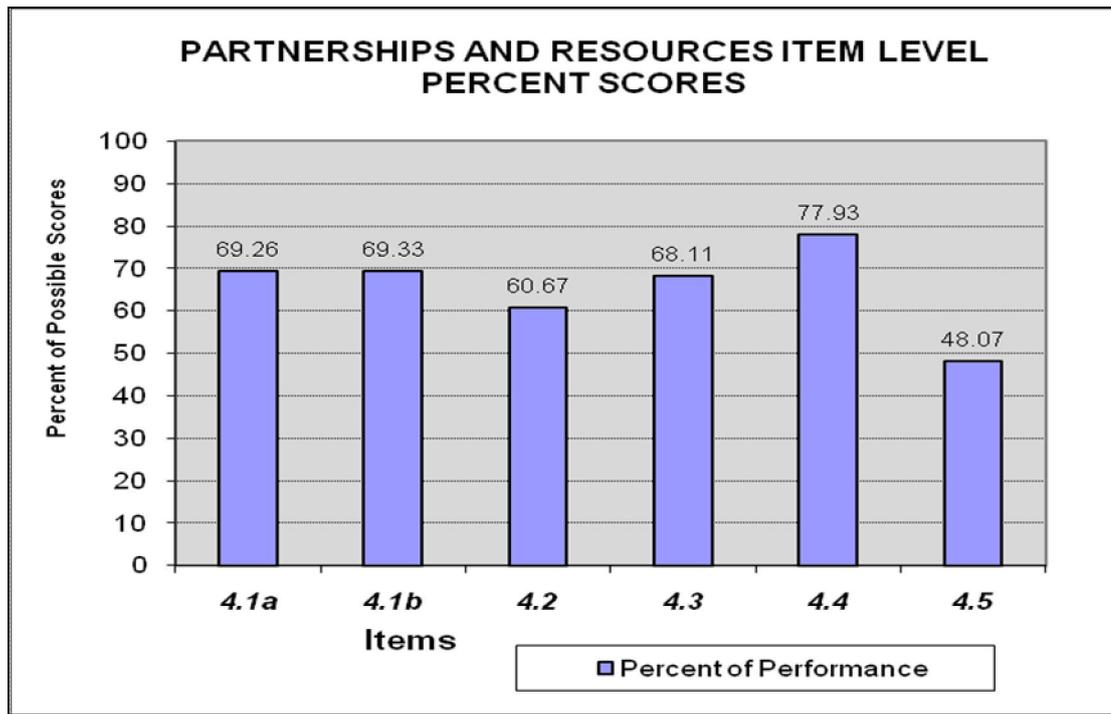


Figure A8a. Partnerships and Resources Item Level Percent Scores – Management group

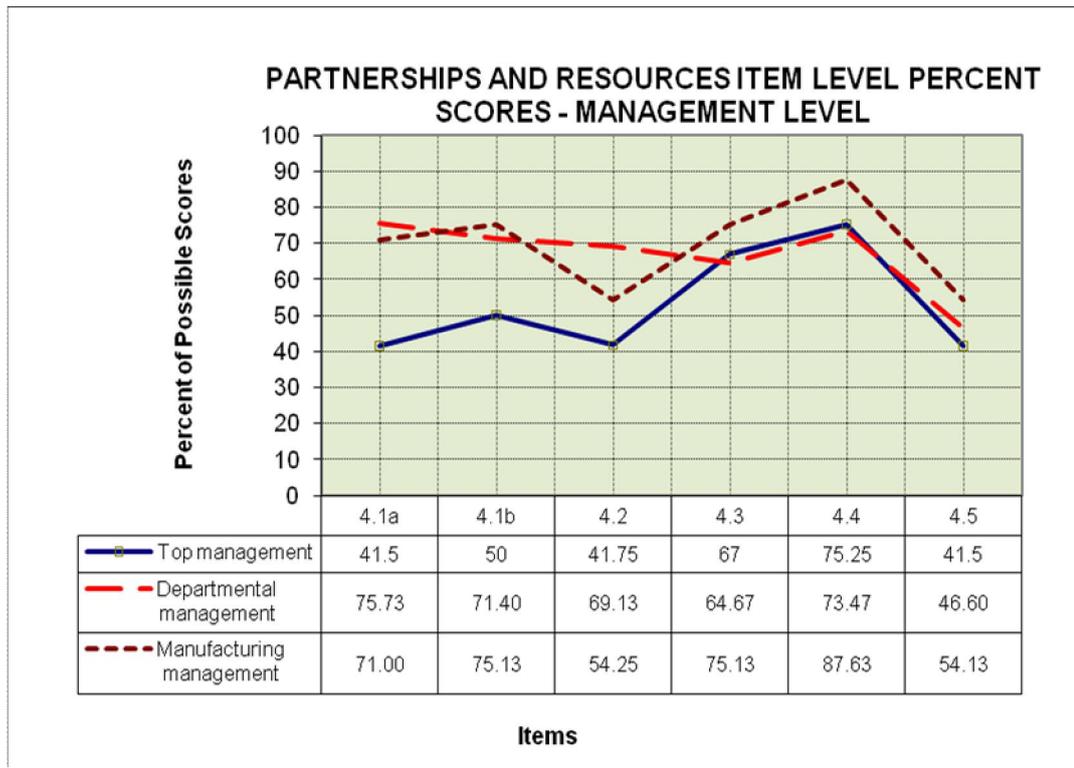


Figure A8b. Partnerships and Resources Item Level Percent Scores – Functional Department

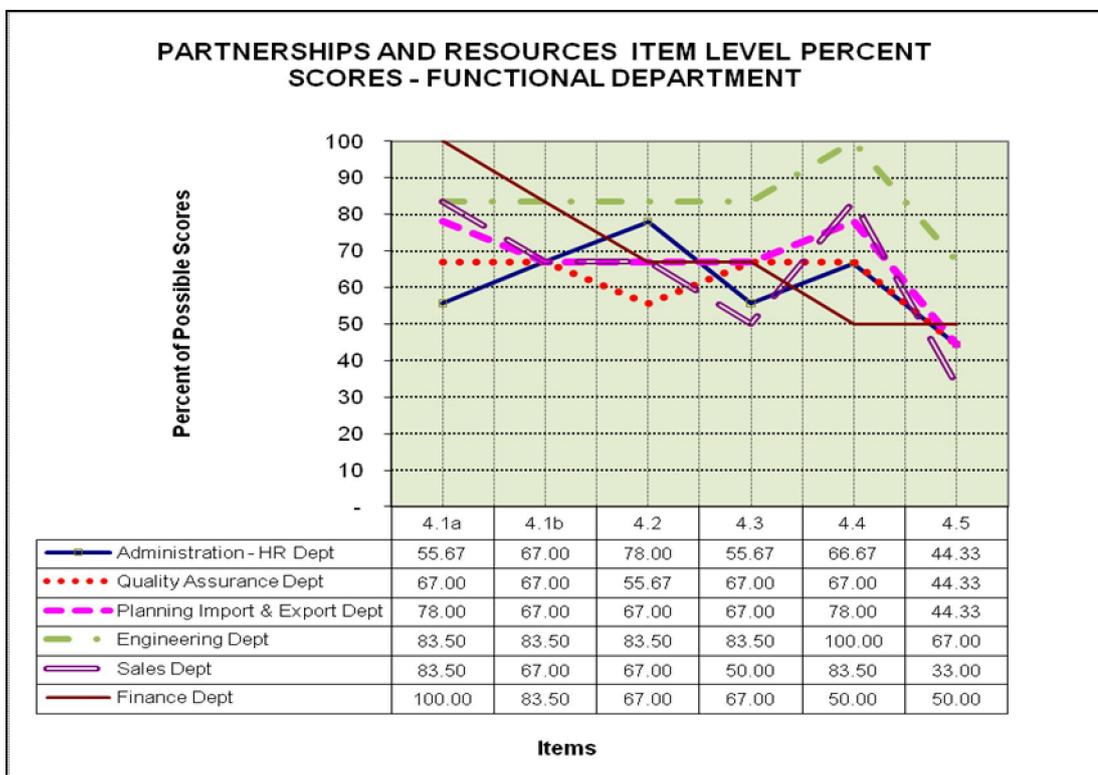
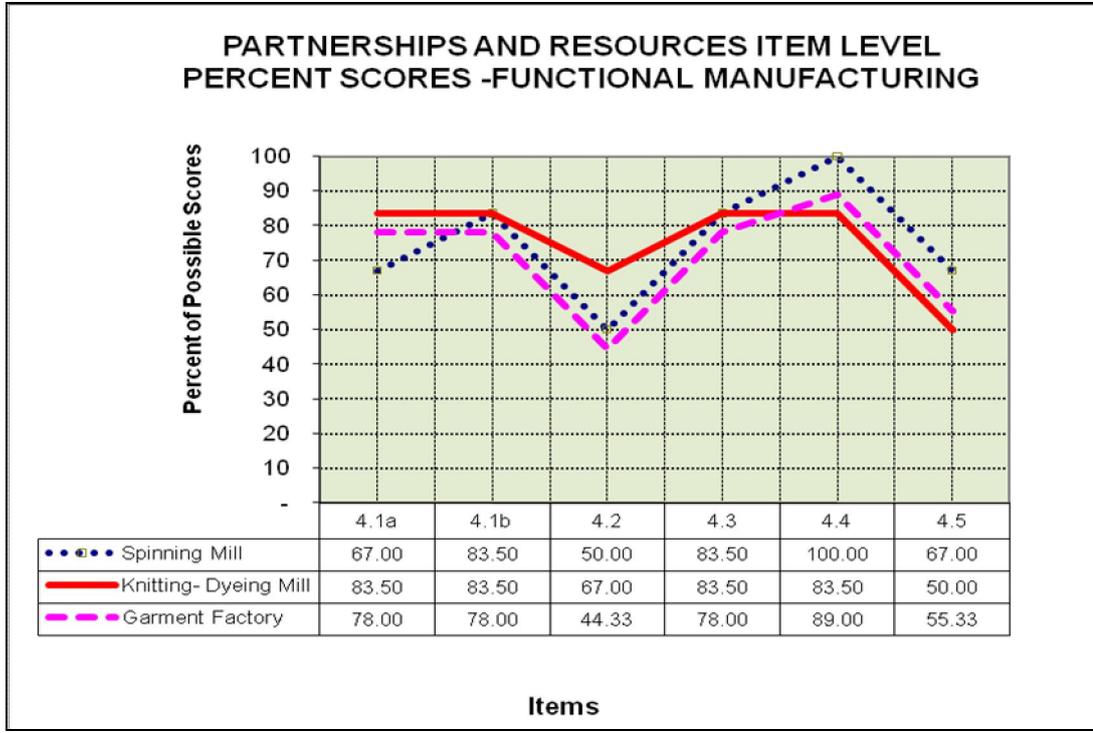


Figure A8c. Partnerships and Resources Item Level Percent Scores – Functional Manufacturing



CRITERION 5: PROCESSES

Table A8. Processes Item scores in Company A

	<i>Items</i>	<i>% percent</i>
5.1	<i>Does your organisation have a system to ensure that all activities used to produce products and services operate, and are controlled, to the prescribed standards or requirements (e.g. through the use of ISO 9000 and ISO 14000)</i>	84.11
5.2	<i>Is there a comprehensive and reliable method for understanding customer's perceptions, needs, and expectations and the markets in which it operates?</i>	49.33
5.3	<i>Is there a comprehensive and viable system for ensuring that customer requirements are translated into the timely availability of new products and services?</i>	61.78
5.4	<i>Is there continuous improvement of processes based on positively identifying opportunities and needs through analyzing customer data, operational data, and external benchmarks?</i>	71.74
5.5	<i>Does your organisation have a thorough and routine method, by audit or otherwise, for assessing the implementation and effectiveness of all the system that are used to drive and control its activities?</i>	64.22
5.6	<i>Does your organisation ensure that the audits and results, are always used to improve the systems through the implementation of root-cause cures (rather than just "quick-fixes") so preventing the recurrence of the problem?</i>	64.30
5.7	<i>Are the support ("back-room") activities (e.g. accounts, IT, dispatch, data processing, personnel, legal, and secretarial) documented, controlled, and continuously improved to at least the same level as the main product and service activities</i>	65.56

Figure A9. Processes Item Level Percent Scores

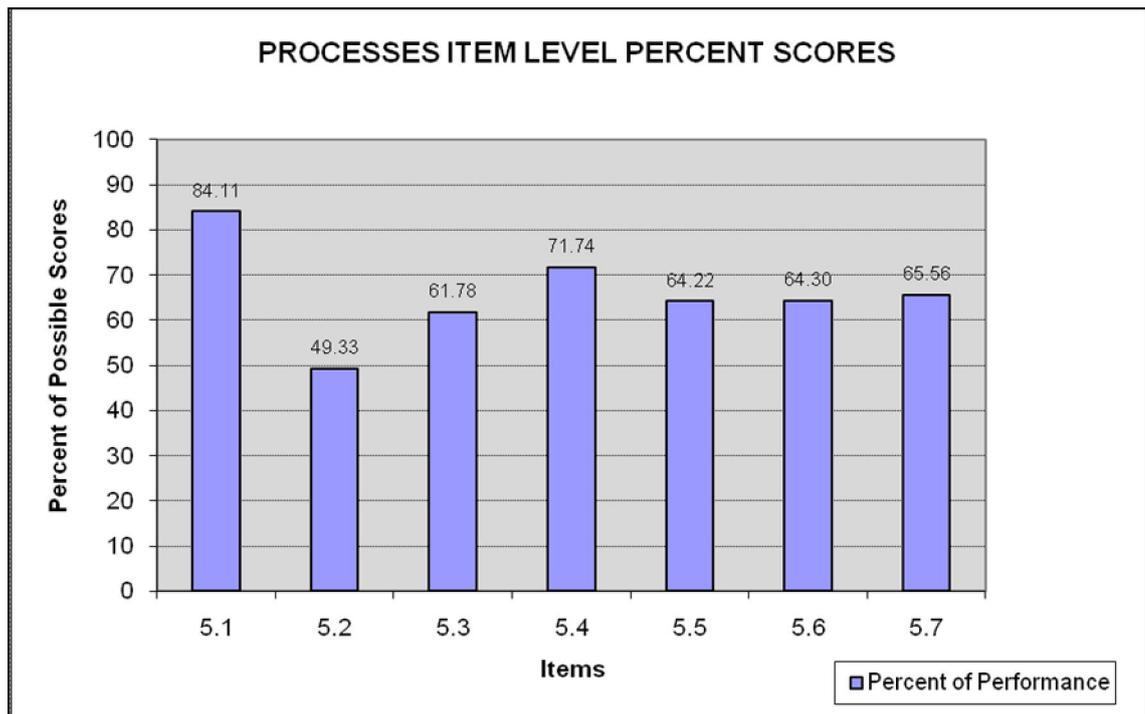


Figure A9a. Processes Item Level Percent Scores – Management group

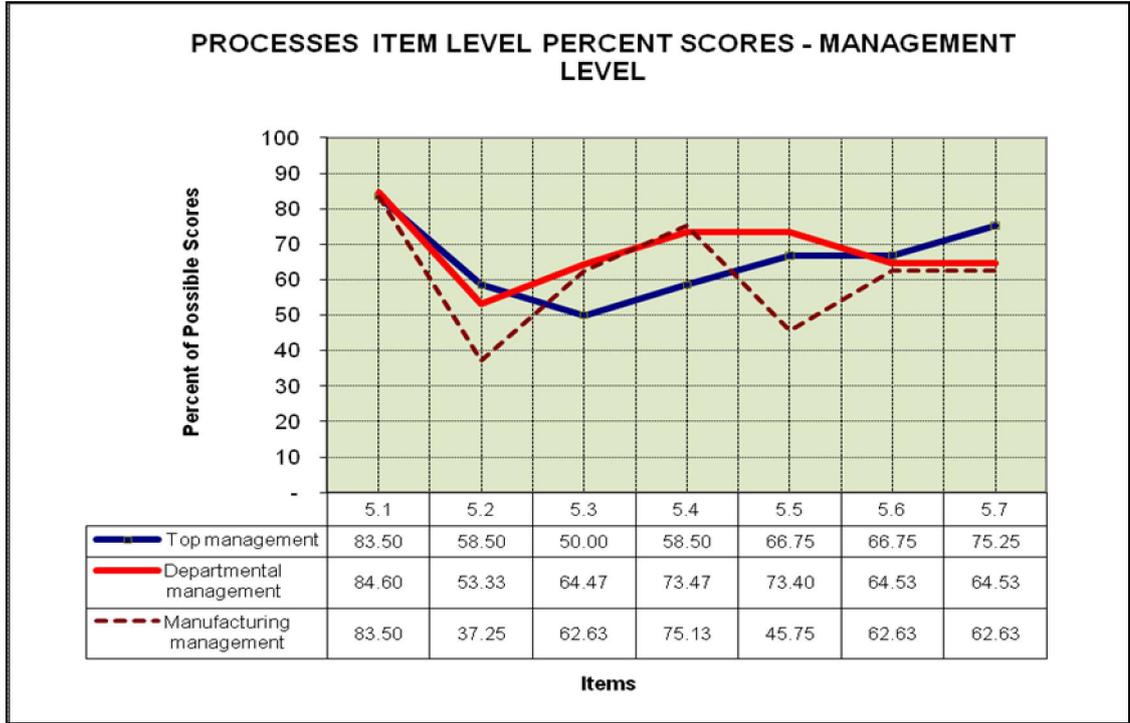


Figure A9b. Processes Item Level Percent Scores – Functional Department

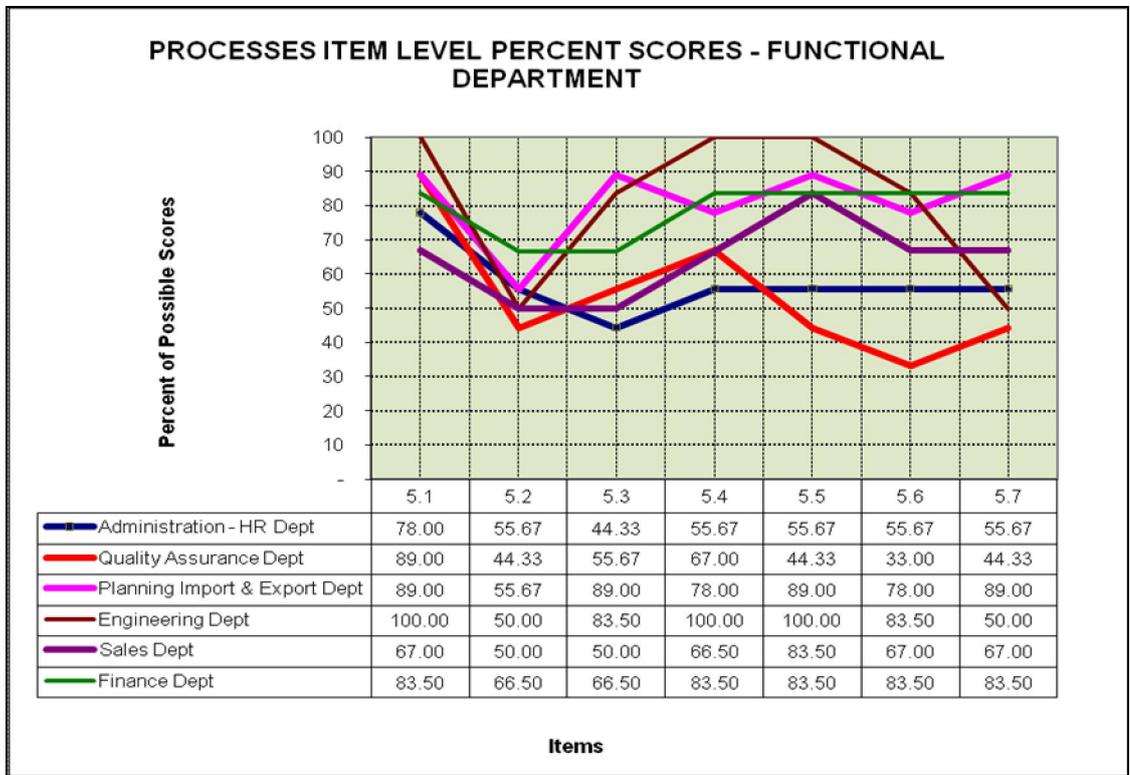
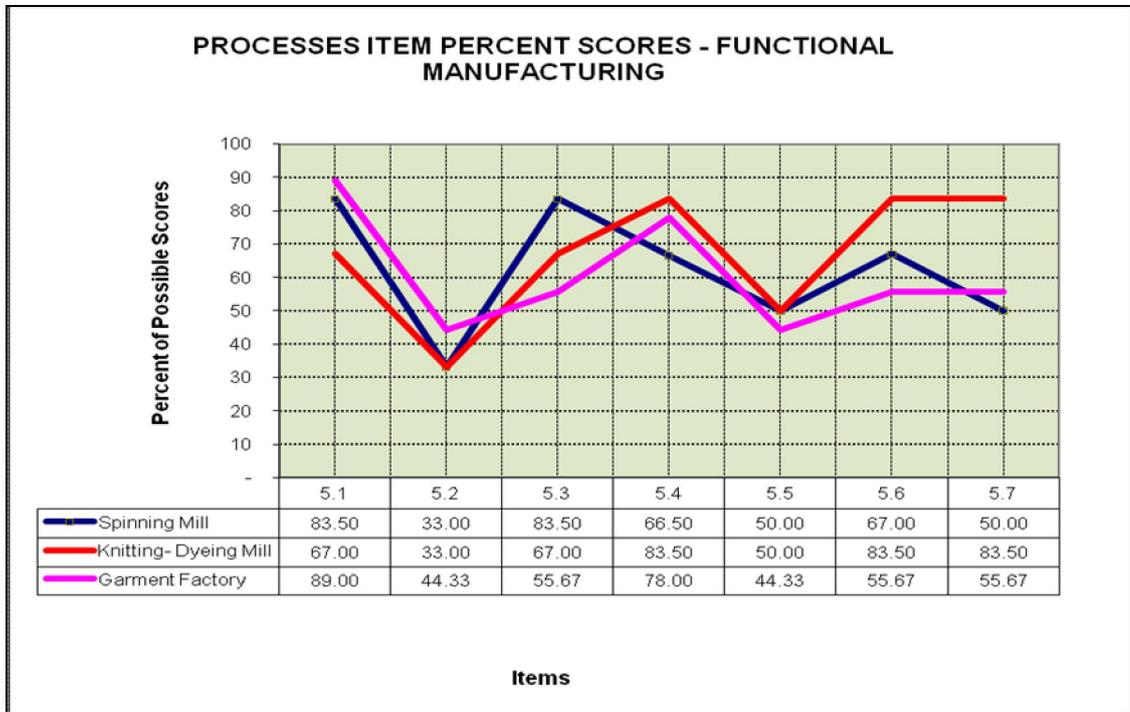


Figure A9c. Processes Item Level Percent Scores – Functional Manufacturing



CRITERION 6: CUSTOMER RESULTS

Table A9. Customer Results Item scores in Company A

	<i>Items</i>	% percent
6.1	<i>a. Does your organisation evaluate its management of the customer relationship through relevant measures that predict trends or influence customer satisfaction and loyalty such as response accuracy and timeliness, returns, loss customers, customer gains, warranty claims, complains and praises etc,</i>	69.26
	<i>b. and which effective predict the likely trends in customer loyalty?</i>	64.33
6.2	<i>Are the measure in (1) above (the internal organisation measures relating to customer satisfaction and loyalty) showing an improving trend or sustained high level of performance?</i>	64.33
6.3	<i>Can you show that the results of these internal organisation measures relating to customer satisfaction and loyalty are comparable with/better than those of direct competitors or equivalent organisation?</i>	54.33
6.4	<i>Does your organisation regularly survey its customer to determine their satisfaction with its products and services and has it fully established the relevance and coverage of the parameters its measures to determine customer satisfaction and loyalty?</i>	66.74
6.5	<i>Are the customer results segmented to show the perceptions of the various groups and types of customers (including lost or potential customers)?</i>	56.85
6.6	<i>Are these customer results showing improving trends or sustained high levels of performance?</i>	61.81
6.7	<i>Do you have data that shows that your customer results are comparable/better than those of your direct competitors or equivalent organisation?</i>	64.33
6.8	<i>Does your organisation have a method for routine setting targets/goals for improvement in the performance of its internal measures and actual perceptions of customer satisfaction and loyalty?</i>	44.33
6.9	<i>Can your organisation show that the results of surveys are always effectively used to improve the products or services it provides?</i>	62.96

Figure A10. Customer Results Item Level Percent Scores

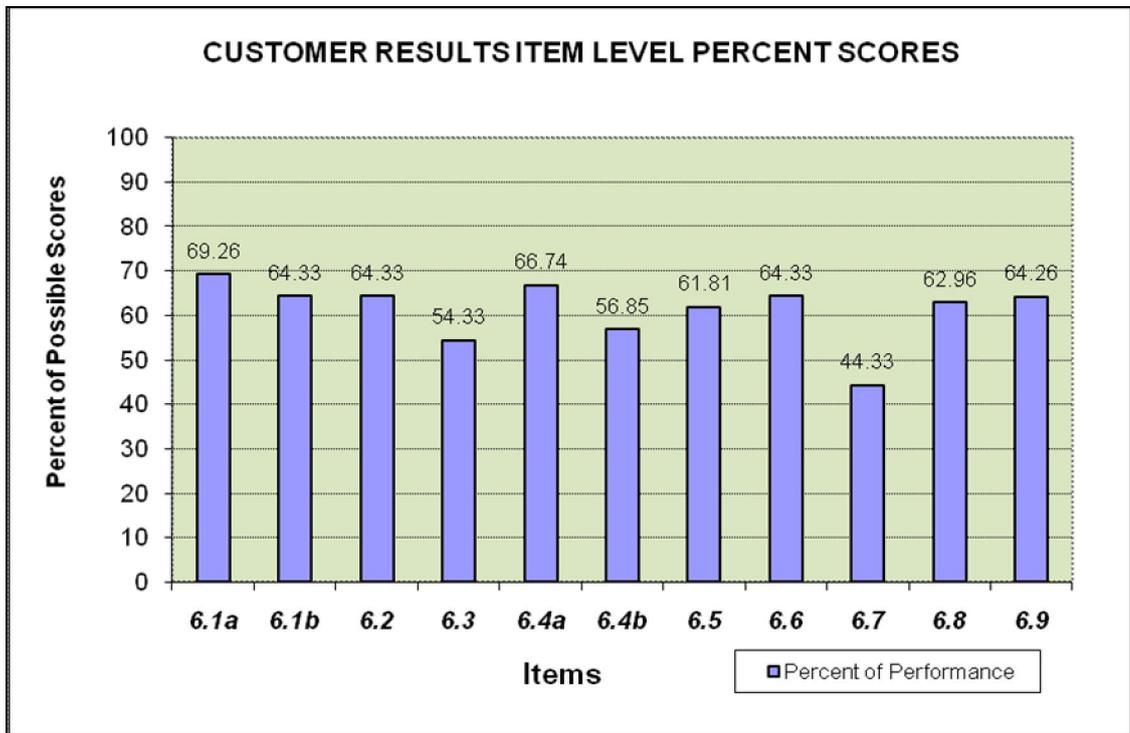


Figure A10a. Customer Results Item Level Percent Scores – Management group

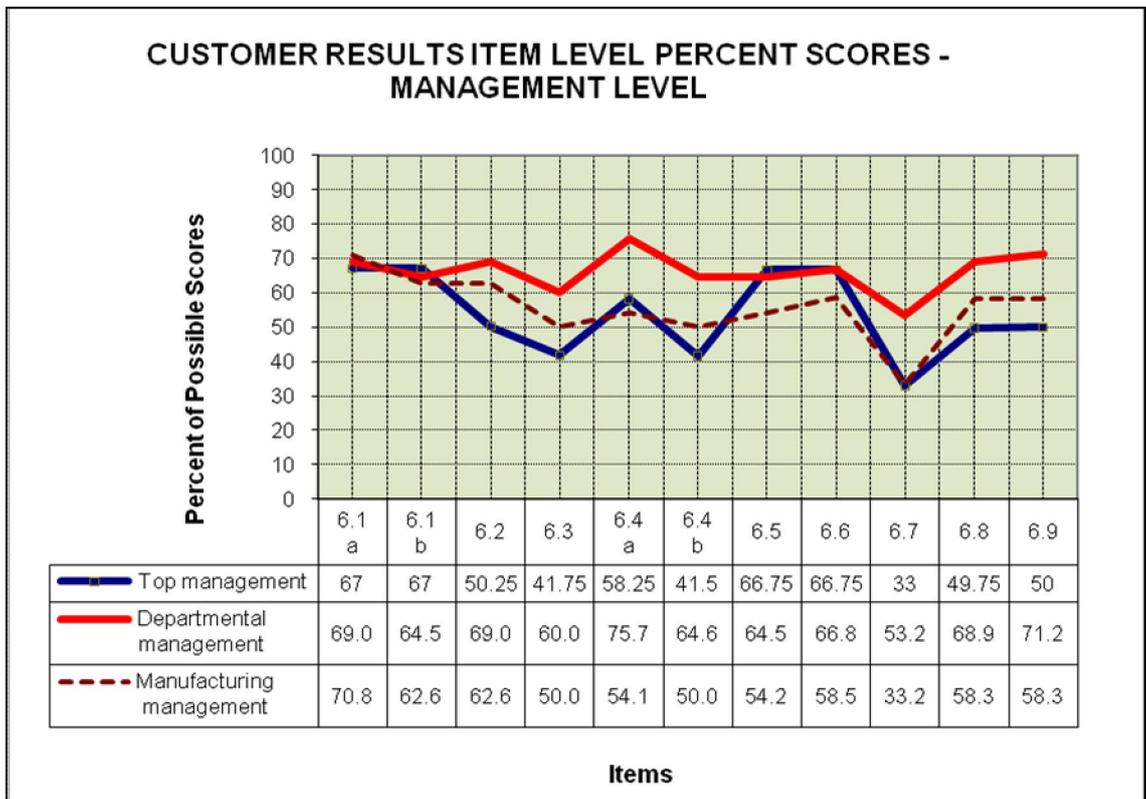


Figure A10b. Customer Results Item Level Percent Scores – Functional Department

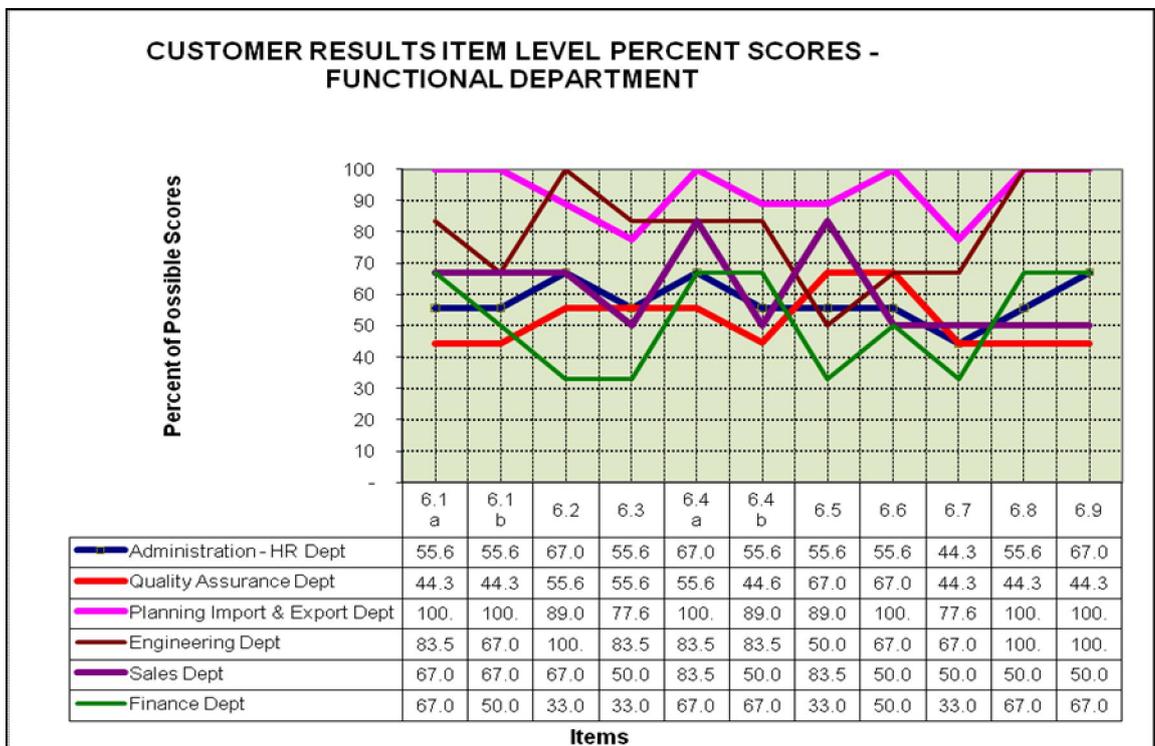
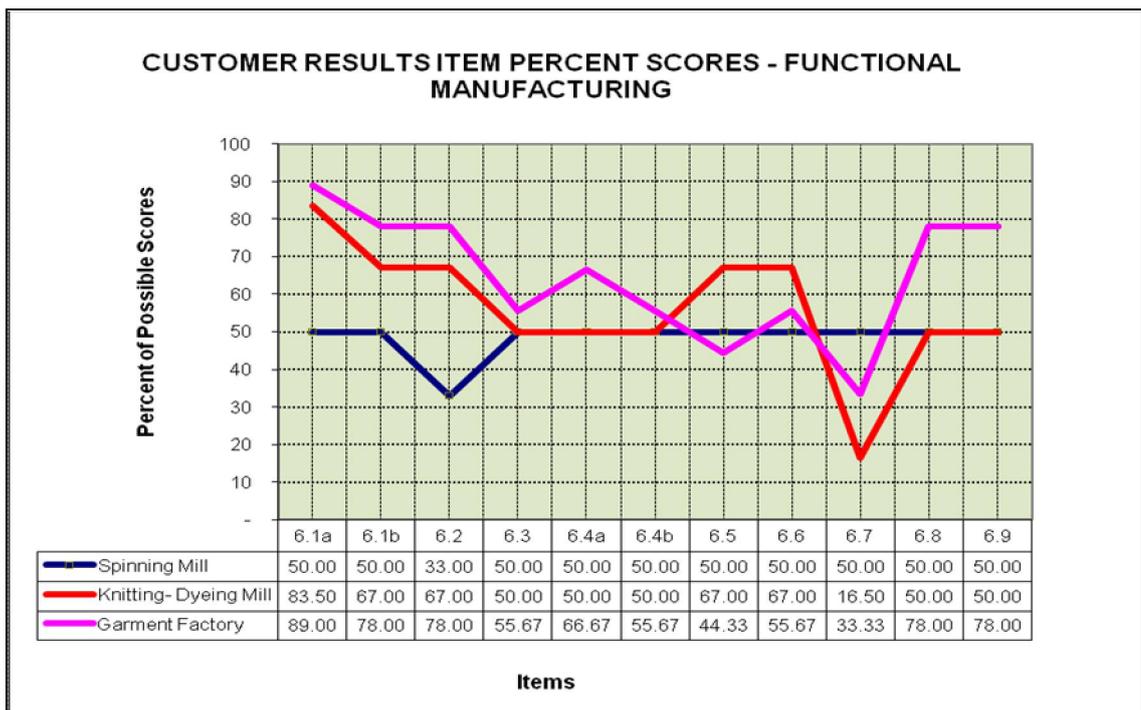


Figure A10c. Customer Results Item Level Percent Scores – Functional Manufacturing



CRITERION 7: PEOPLE RESULTS

Table A10. People Results Item scores in Company A

	<i>Items</i>	% percent
7.1	<i>Does the organisation regularly measure and evaluate aspects which predict trends or influence people satisfaction and morale such as absenteeism, sickness, staff turnover, early leavers, levels of training, internal promotions, accident levels, recognition levels, grievances, and does it act on the results?</i>	70.44
7.2	<i>a. Is regular feedback obtained (through questionnaires, interviews, focus group etc) of the perceptions of the people on various aspects of the organisation such as, working environment, health, safety, communications, career prospects, pay, appraisal, recognition, training, and overall satisfaction;</i>	54.30
	<i>b. and has the organisation established the relevance of its measure?</i>	63.04
7.3	<i>Are the results of both the organisation results made known to the people and actual perceptions compared with those of other organisation?</i>	55.63
7.4	<i>Are all the people satisfaction results made known to the people and acted upon by the management?</i>	60.56
7.5	<i>a. Are the results (particularly the actual perceptions of people satisfaction) generally showing an improving trend or sustained high level</i>	61.89
	<i>b. and can they be shown to be comparable with equivalent organisations and other benchmarks?</i>	49.33

Figure A11. People Results Item Level Percent Scores

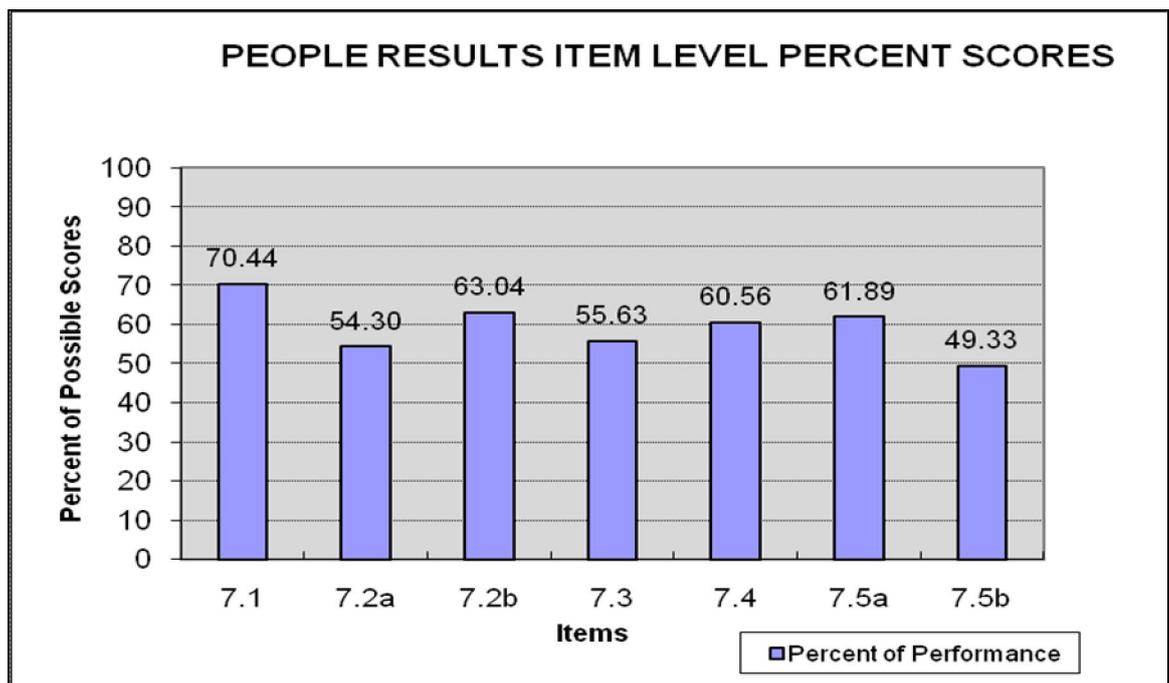


Figure A11a. People Results Item Level Percent Scores – Management group

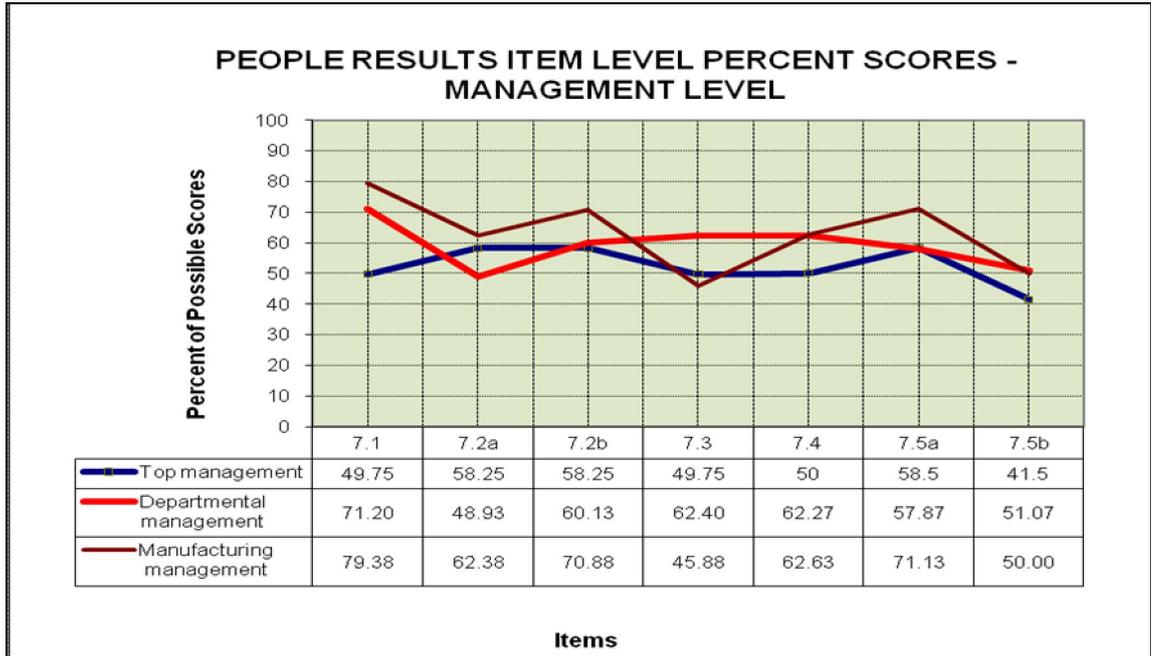


Figure A11b. People Results Item Level Percent Scores – Functional Department

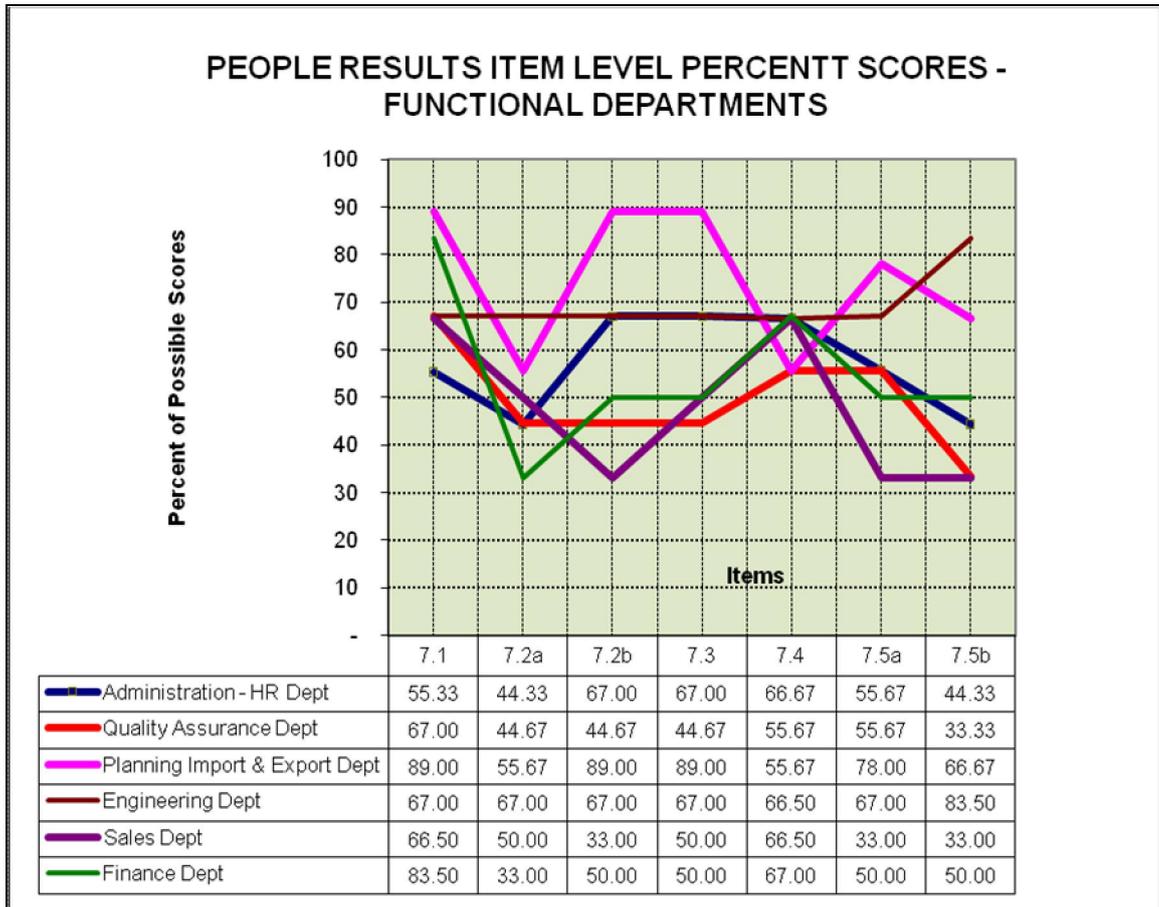
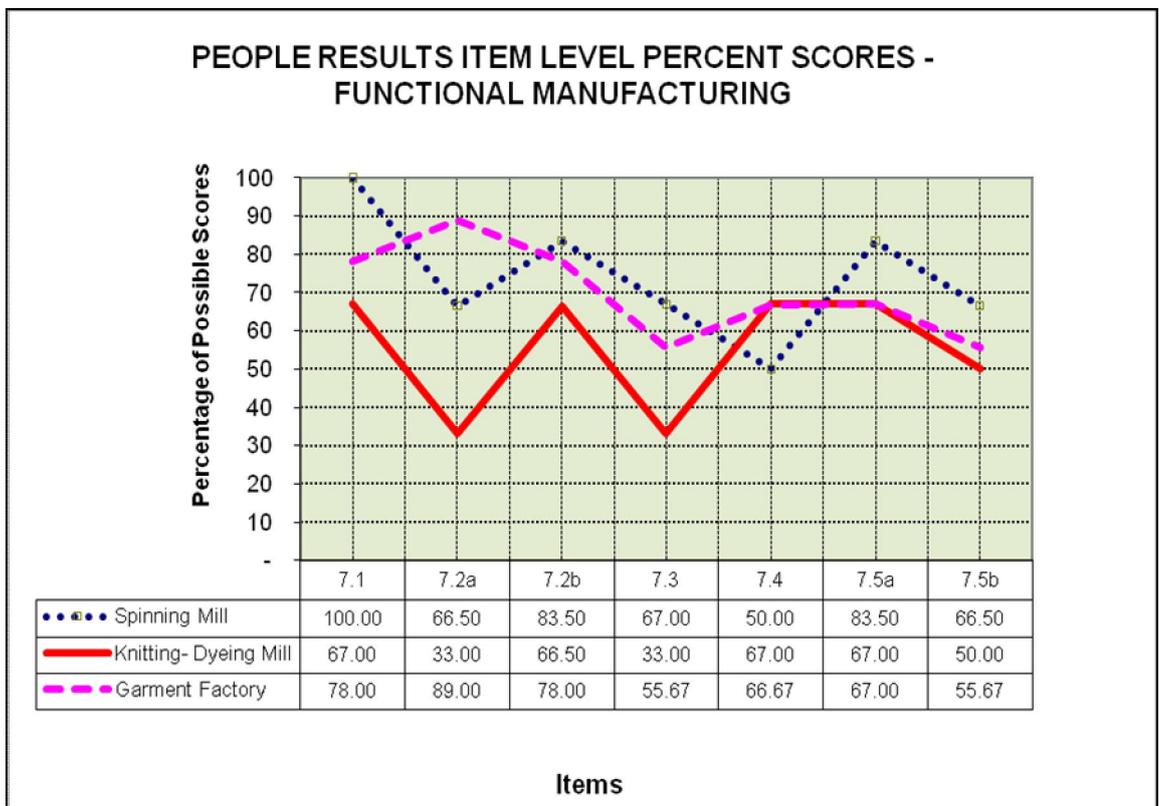


Figure A11c. People Results Item Level Percent Scores – Functional Manufacturing



CRITERION 8: SOCIETY RESULTS

Table A11. Society Results Item scores in Company A

	<i>Items</i>	<i>% percent</i>
8.1	<i>Can you demonstrate that your organisation has achieved results</i>	
	<i>a. on preventing or reducing harm or nuisance to neighbours and the general environment,</i>	76.7
	<i>b. or conserving and protecting global resources (e.g. energy, recycling, waste)</i>	68.1
	<i>c. and on positively contributing to the community (charitable, education, sports and leisure, leadership in professional matters)</i>	79.2
8.2	<i>Are the activities in the above areas showing a positive trend and can the results be shown to be comparable with others in the locale, or business sector?</i>	71.81
8.3	<i>Can the organisation show, through results of surveys or other means, that neighbours and society in general think highly of them and that their reputation is improving</i>	69.3

Figure A12. Society Results Item Level Percent Scores

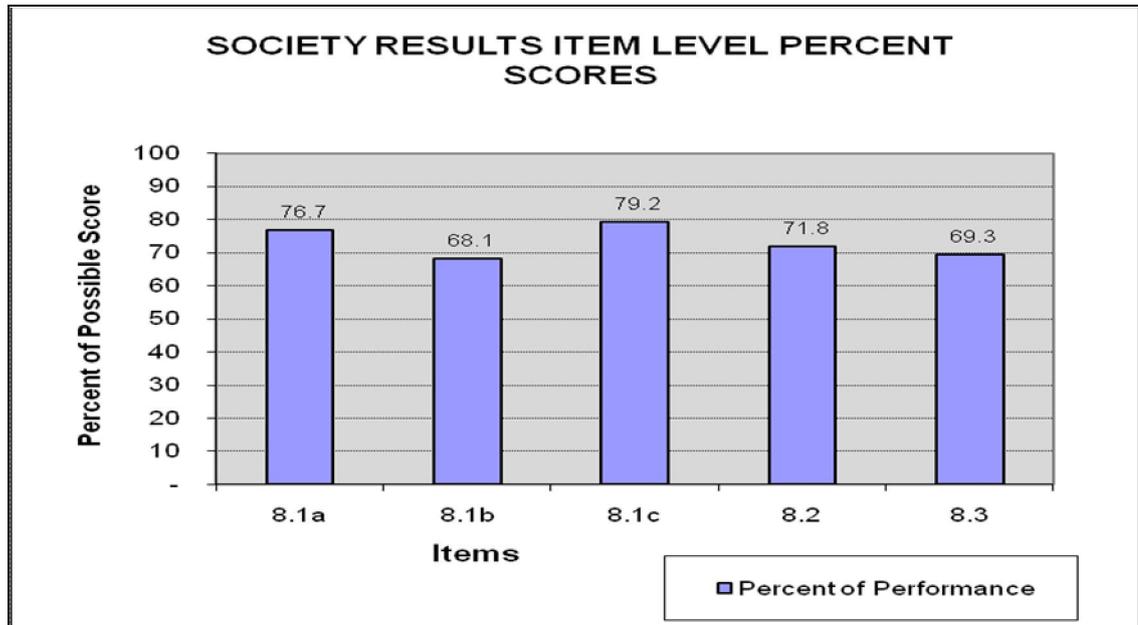


Figure A12a. Society Results Item Level Percent Scores – Management group

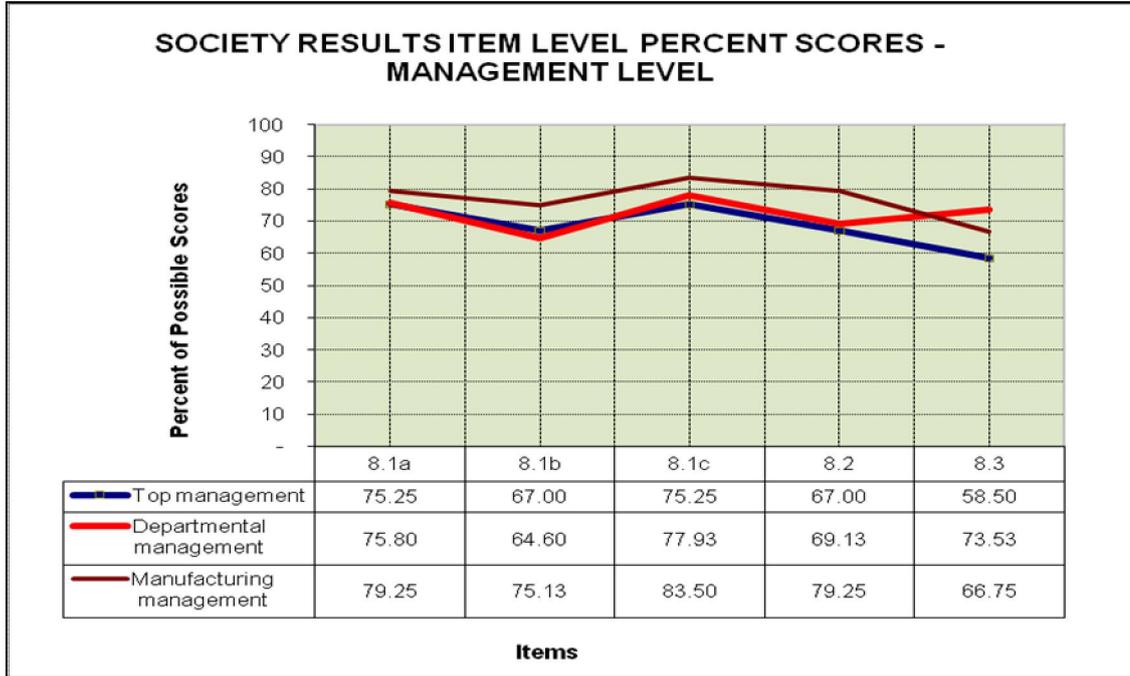


Figure A12b. Society Results Item Level Percent Scores – Functional Department

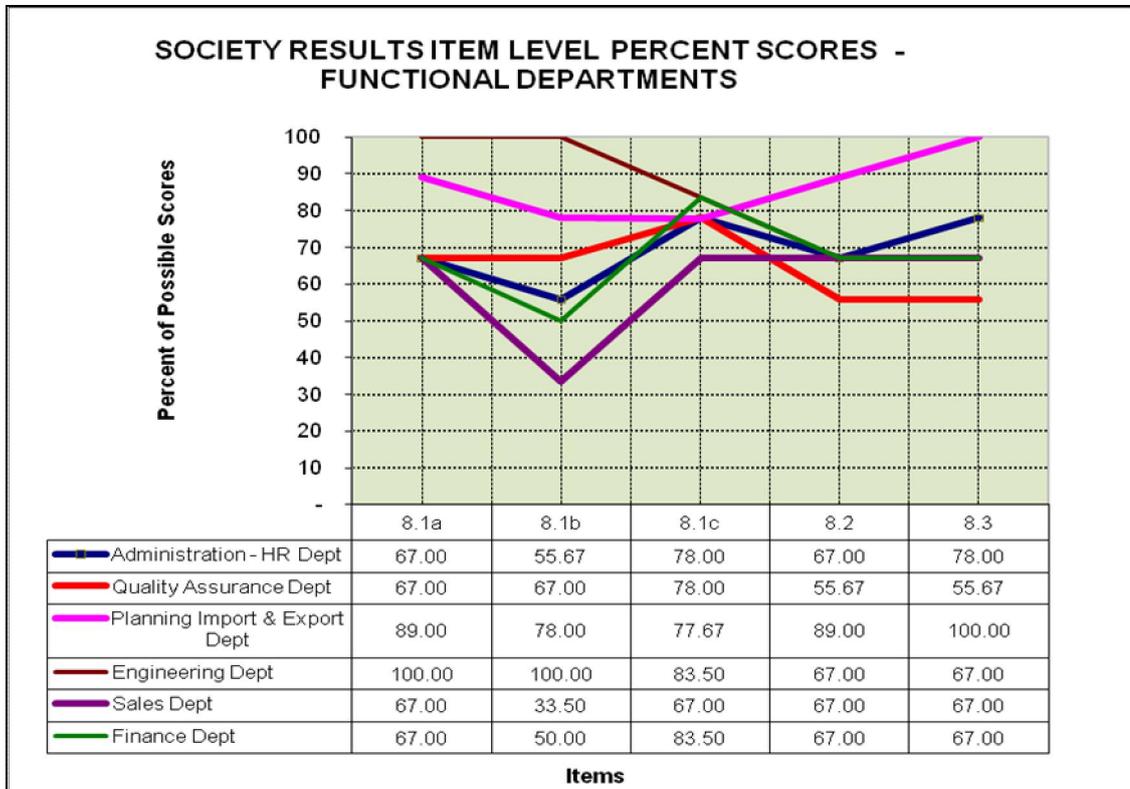
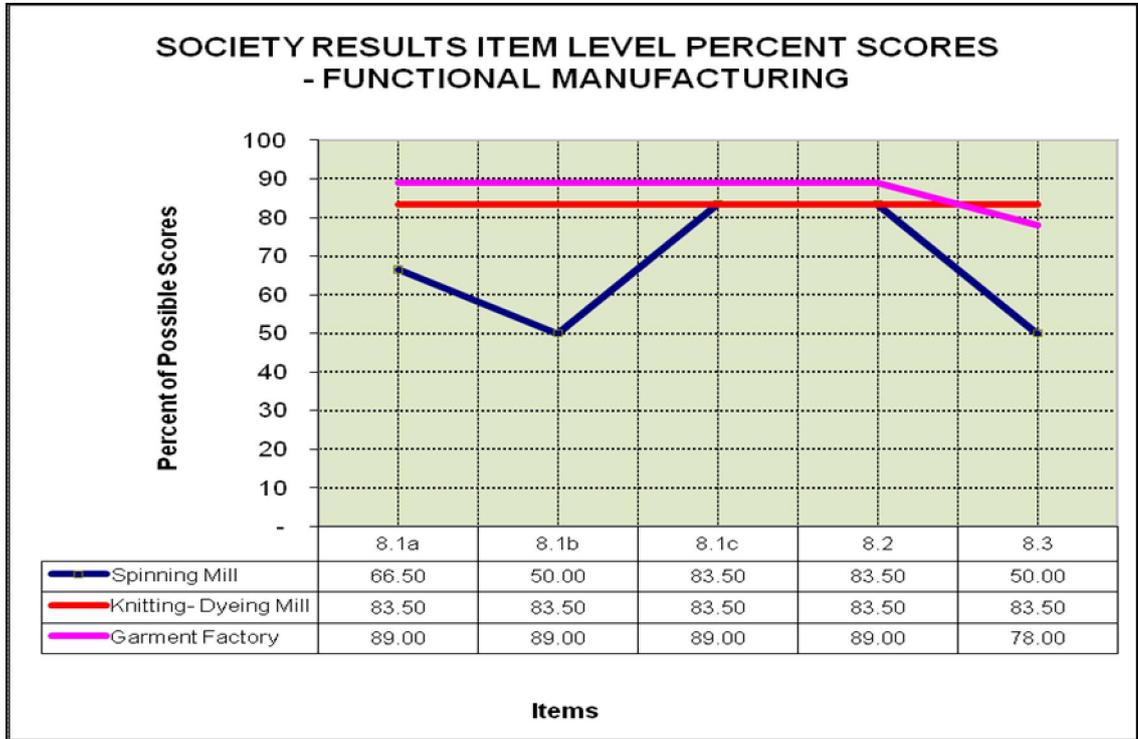


Figure A12c. Society Results Item Level Percent Scores – Functional Manufacturing



CRITERION 9: KEY PERFORMANCE RESULTS

Table A12. Key Performance Results Item scores in Company A

	<i>Items</i>	<i>% percent</i>
9.1	<i>Do the results of your organisation's key financial and non-financial outcomes (e.g. profits, margins, volumes, market share etc) show an improving trend?</i>	79.2
9.2	<i>Do these key financial and non-financial outcomes have results that are comparable with/better than direct competitors or equivalent organisations?</i>	63.0
9.3	<i>Are there results segmented by the various parts of the business, markets, and/or products and services to show differences in performance?</i>	69.3
9.4	<i>Is the performances of all activities (processes) that directly contribute to a product or service measured and know?</i>	71.8
9.5	<i>Are the results of the products and service activities showing an improving trend?</i>	71.9
9.6	<i>a. Are the results of these product and service activities compared with others</i>	66.8
	<i>b. and can be shown to be comparable/better?</i>	63.1
9.7	<i>a. Are the results of the support and administration activities (e.g. IT, planning, legal, security, accounts) showing an improving trend</i>	70.6
	<i>b. . and can they be shown to be comparable/better than other organisations?</i>	60.6

Figure A13. Key Performance Results Item Level Percent Scores

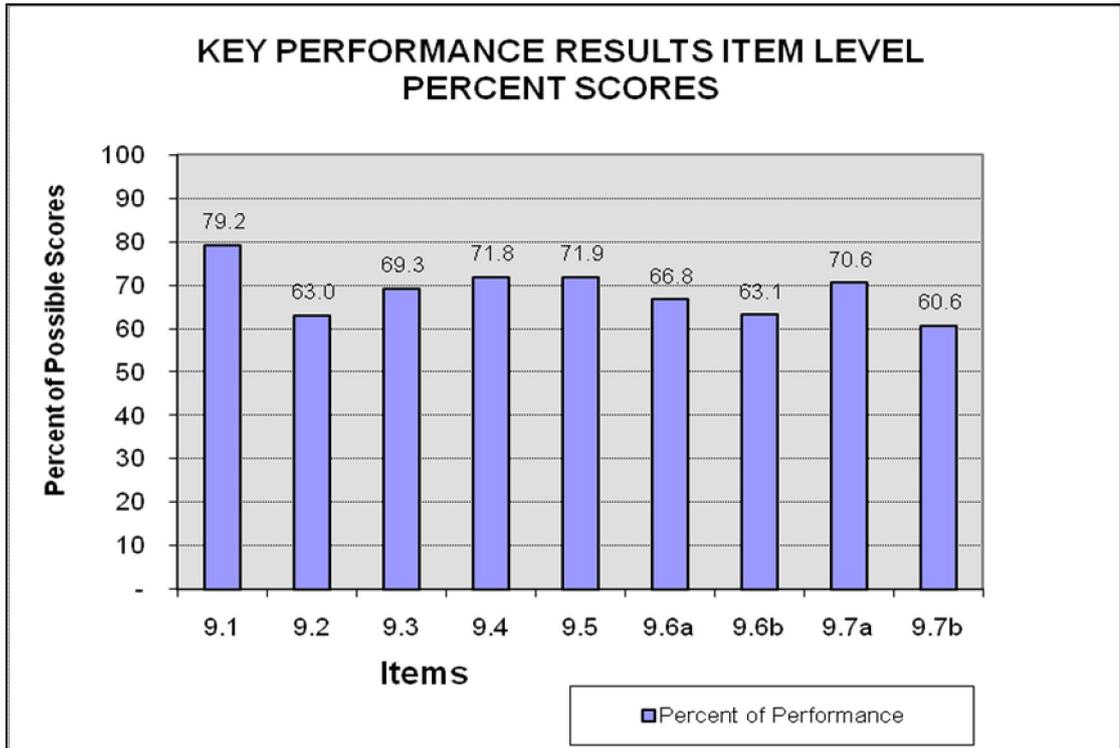


Figure A13a. Key Performance Results Item Level Percent Scores- Management group

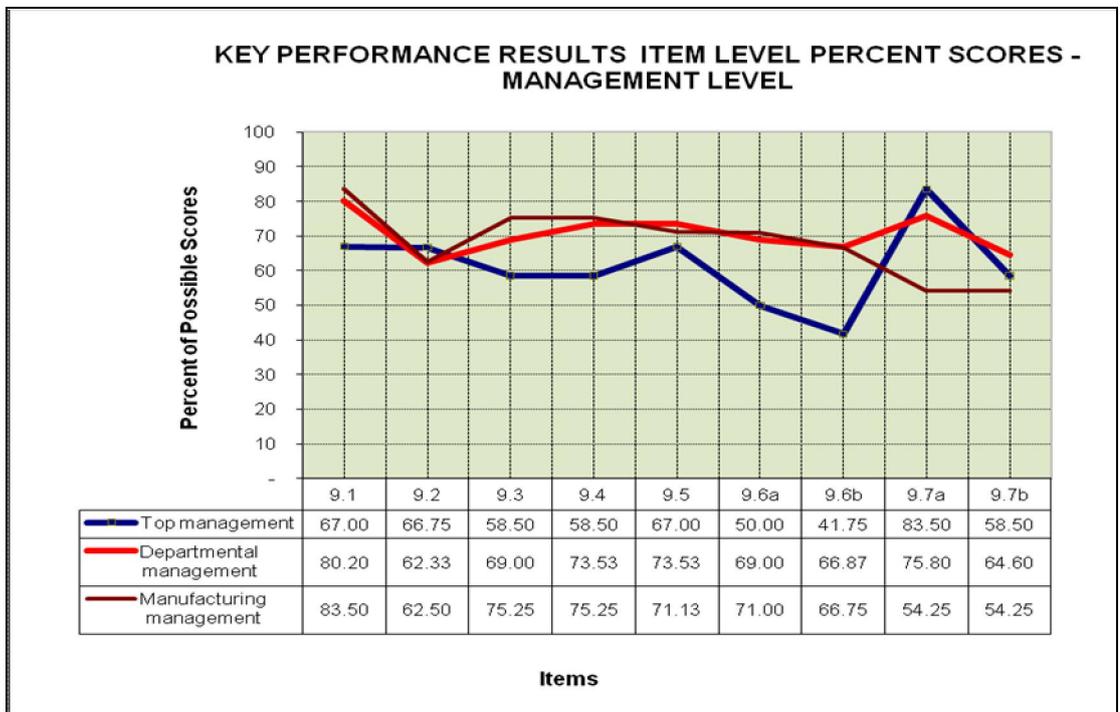


Figure A13b .Key Performance Results Item Level Percent Scores- Functional Department

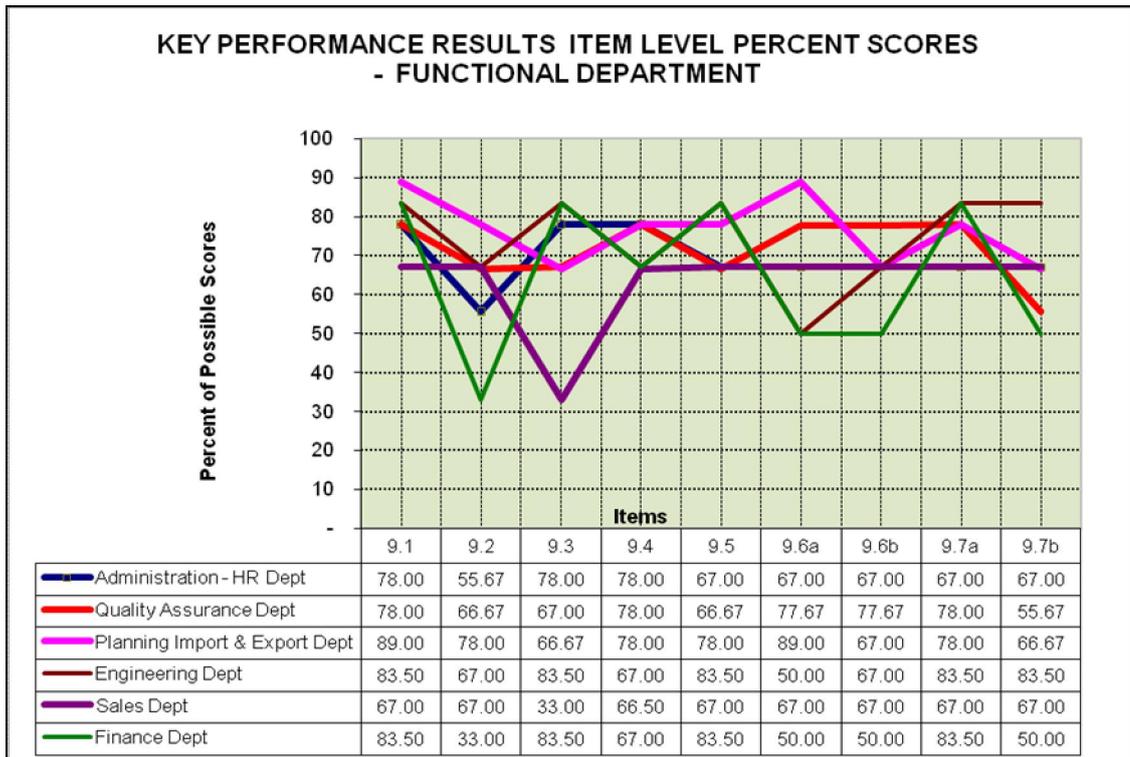
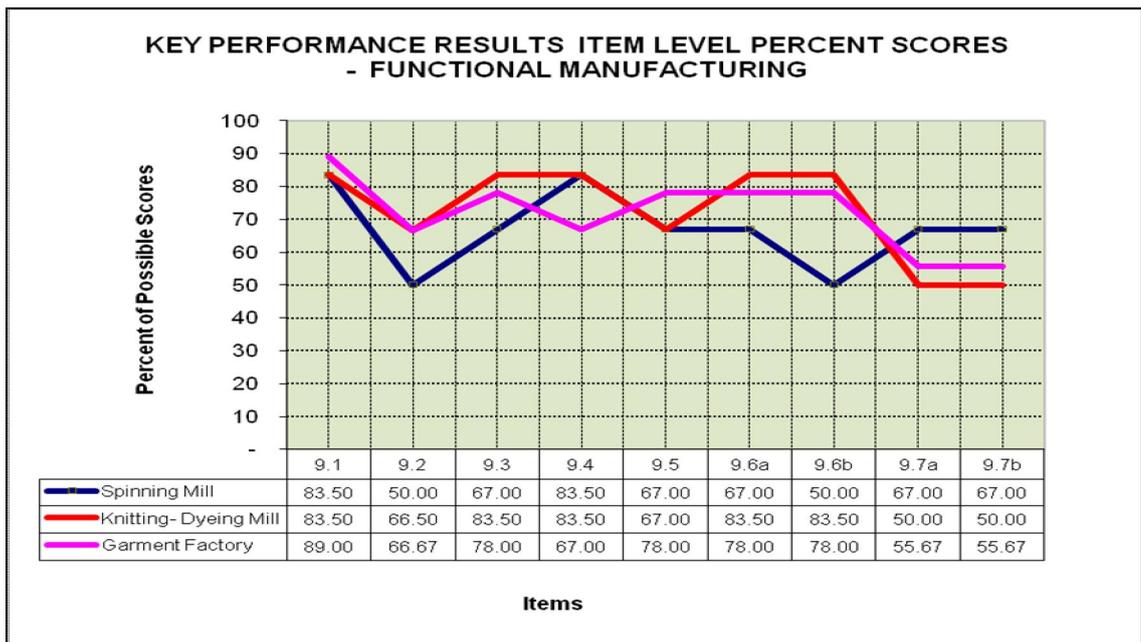


Figure A13c. Key Performance Results Item Level Percent Scores- Functional Manufacturing



LIST OF INDIVIDUAL SCORES

	CR1	CR2	CR3	CR4	CR5	CR6	CR7	CR8	CR9
Scorer 1	53.4	62.63	43.2	66.80	47.57	40.56	70.00	48.10	69.14
Scorer 2	53.4	62.63	60.2	66.80	52.43	42.56	70.00	66.98	57.29
Scorer 3	67.00	67.00	83.5	80.20	90.57	100.00	83.50	96.30	71.71
Scorer 4	70.2	66.75	60.2	53.40	52.43	51.89	70.20	77.87	62.14
Scorer 5	60.2	50.00	56.8	60.20	62.14	48.11	50.00	66.98	57.29
Scorer 6	63.6	66.75	60.2	56.70	57.29	46.22	70.20	66.87	62.14
Scorer 7	63.4	54.13	46.6	56.90	76.29	75.94	56.70	74.20	66.79
Scorer 8	39.8	54.13	76.8	80.00	62.00	77.89	86.80	100.00	85.71
Scorer 9	66.9	75.25	73.4	73.40	71.57	59.44	63.50	88.97	66.86
Scorer 10	50.00	50.00	63.6	67.00	57.14	55.67	63.60	70.64	81.14
Scorer 11	73.6	83.50	80.2	83.50	76.29	55.67	76.80	85.30	67.00
Scorer 12	63.4	66.75	40.1	53.40	62.00	38.72	23.30	44.31	47.64
Scorer 13	60.00	79.25	96.7	73.60	100.00	51.89	46.60	66.98	71.36
Scorer 14	70.1	71.13	76.9	60.20	76.43	100.00	86.80	100.00	92.93
Scorer 15	90.1	87.63	56.8	93.40	85.71	79.72	60.20	77.97	85.86
Scorer 16	66.6	87.63	80.1	86.80	71.43	61.39	60.10	100.00	90.57
Scorer 17	76.9	83.50	90.1	73.40	57.14	67.00	43.20	66.98	67.00
Scorer 18	56.8	75.25	53.4	56.70	76.43	76.17	33.00	59.54	66.86
Scorer 19	53.4	66.88	53.4	46.60	52.29	44.33	40.10	44.31	57.29
Scorer 20	36.6	41.75	50	46.80	52.43	40.78	46.60	66.98	55.00
Scorer 21	73.6	79.38	70.2	73.60	76.29	81.67	76.90	74.30	64.57
Scorer 22	70.2	58.50	60.2	56.80	62.14	53.78	63.40	66.98	81.14
Scorer 23	29.8	62.75	53.4	53.40	47.57	51.89	56.80	66.98	67.00
Scorer 24	53.4	62.75	76.9	60.20	42.71	63.22	67.00	66.98	85.86
Scorer 25	43.2	58.50	56.8	53.40	62.14	53.78	36.40	55.64	52.43
Scorer 26	70.2	54.25	63.5	60.00	62.00	64.83	63.20	66.98	64.50
Scorer 27	60.2	58.50	56.8	56.80	85.86	51.78	60.00	74.30	76.43

Note : CR - Criterion

Appendix M. Self-assessment report of Company B

SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT

**USING THE EUROPEAN FOUNDATION FOR
QUALITY MANAGEMENT (EFQM) EXCELLENCE
MODEL QUESTIONNAIRE**

IN COMPANY B

COMPANY B

TABLE OF CONTENT

Overview

Demographics

Overall Results

Item results

Leadership

Policy and Strategy

People

Partnerships and Resources

Processes

Customer Results

People Results

Society Results

Key Performance Results

OVERVIEW

I - Overview of participants

1. Time to undertaken

The seminar and the EFQM assessment were undertaken on Saturday 1st November 2008

Venue: Conference room, B joint-stock company, Hung yen province, Vietnam.

The second assessment was conduct on Monday and Tuesday (3rd and 4th Novemver 2008)

The third assessment was conduct from Monday until Wednesday (10th – 12th Novemver 2008)

2. Participants:

CEO, Director Board, Senior Managers of Functional Department (Managers and Deputy Managers) and factories (Director and Deputy Directors).

3. The EFQM questionnaire participation.

Total the EFQM survey questionnaires distributed:	30
Total the EFQM survey questionnaires collected:	27
Response rate (%):	90%

DEMOGRAPHICS

Table B1. Management group Profile

POSITION	Number of participants	% response (n=30)
Board of Directors	2	7%
Functional Manager (Direct Managers)	16	53%
Plant/Factory Directors	9	30%
TOTAL	27	90

Table B2. Individual Profile

Category	Description	Numbers of response	Response rate %
Gender	Male	15	56
	Female	12	44
	Total	27	100
Age	< 40	14	51%
	< 50 and > 40	8	30%
	> 50	5	19%
	Total	27	100
Department	Quality Assurance	2	13%
	Sales	1	6%
	Planning	2	13%
	Engineering	4	25%
	Accounting	2	13%
	Personnel	1	6%
	Administration	2	13%
	Import and Export	2	13%
	Total	16	100

Table B2(continued). Individual Profile			
Category	Description	Numbers of response	Response rate %
Factory	Garment factory No1	2	22%
	Garment factory No2	2	22%
	Garment factory No3	2	22%
	Garment factory No4	1	11%
	Garment factory No5	2	22%
	Total		9

SUMMARY RESULTS

ORGANISATIONAL OVERALL PERFORMANCE AGAINST THE EFQM QUESTIONNAIRE APPROACH

1 Overall performance

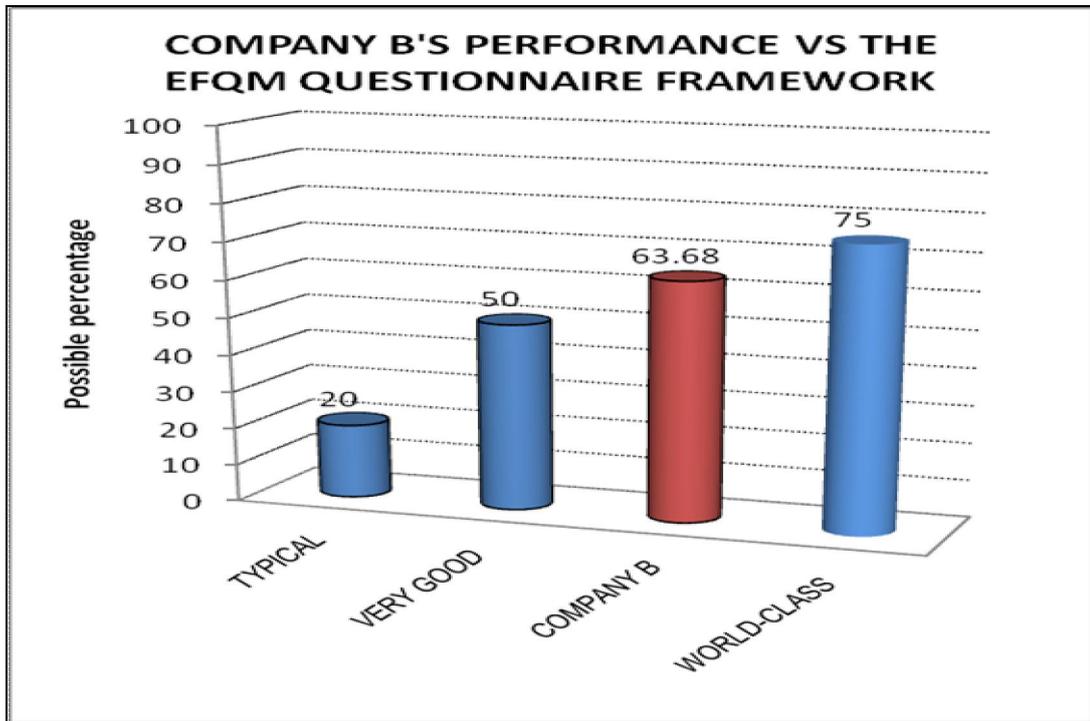
Table B3. Overall performance against the EFQM questionnaire tool

Category	Total Scores	Scores Scored	% of Total Scores
Leadership	50	30.49	60.98
Policy and Strategy	40	23.09	57.73
People	50	31.77	63.53
Partnerships and Resources	50	33.47	66.94
Processes	70	42.27	60.38
Customer Results	90	55.69	61.88
People Results	50	33.16	66.33
Society Results	30	20.96	69.88
Key performance Results	70	47.48	67.83
TOTAL	500		63.68

Table B3 shows valuable figures of overall score with regards to particular criteria. It suggests several recommendations, as follows:

- The result of company B in terms of the organisational average score is 63.68%. This concluded its position as a company in a high-level category against the 50% performance score of very good companies in the world, as shown in Figure B1. That concerned standard was provided by EFQM material (EFQM, 1999-2003)

Figure B1. THE PERFORMANCE OF COMPANY B VS THE EFQM FRAMEWORK



The final performance of Company B is displayed below in two ways, one based on each criterion (Figure B2) and the other on the Results-Approach- Deployment-Assessment and Review (RADAR) charts (Figure B3). The performance of B can be seen clearly in Figure B2, in which weak areas are very close to the core of the diagram.

Figures B2 and B3 indicate the results of the analysis for each set of questionnaires. They suggest strong and weak segments depending on performance level and particular scores in terms of organisational capacity and achievement. They also address specific areas of effectiveness involving the optimal use of resources in achieving aims.

Figure B2. OVERALL CATEGORY LEVEL PERCENT SCORES

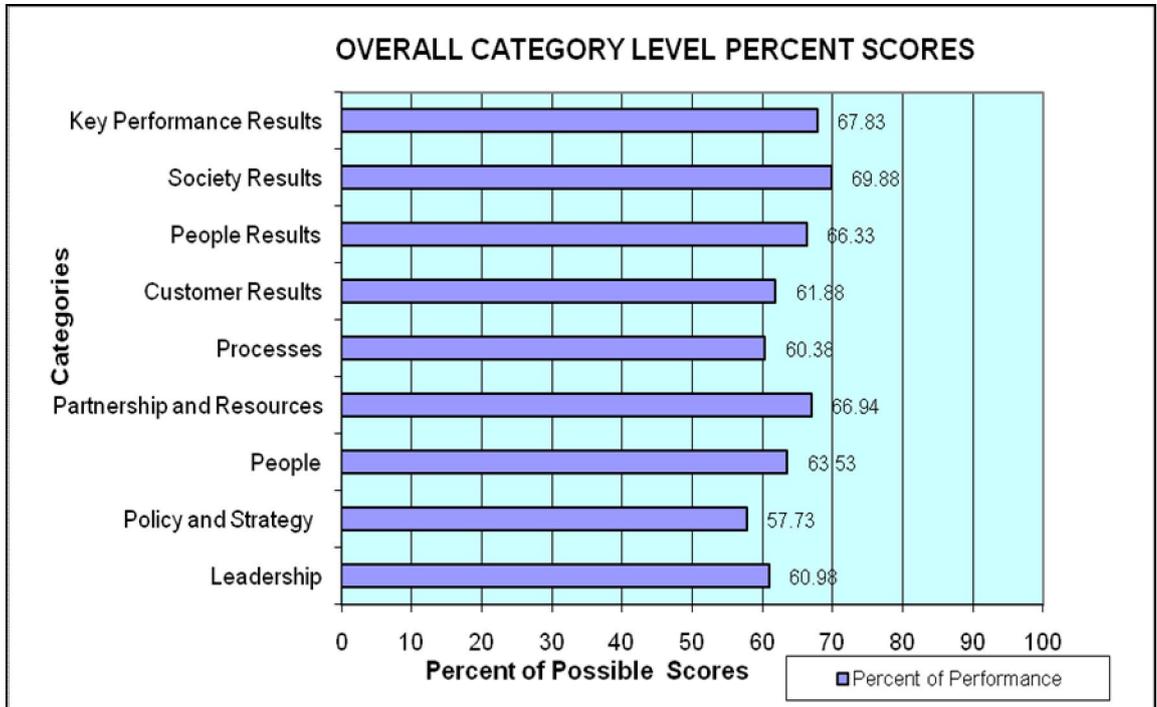


Figure B3. ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE IN RADAR DISPLAY

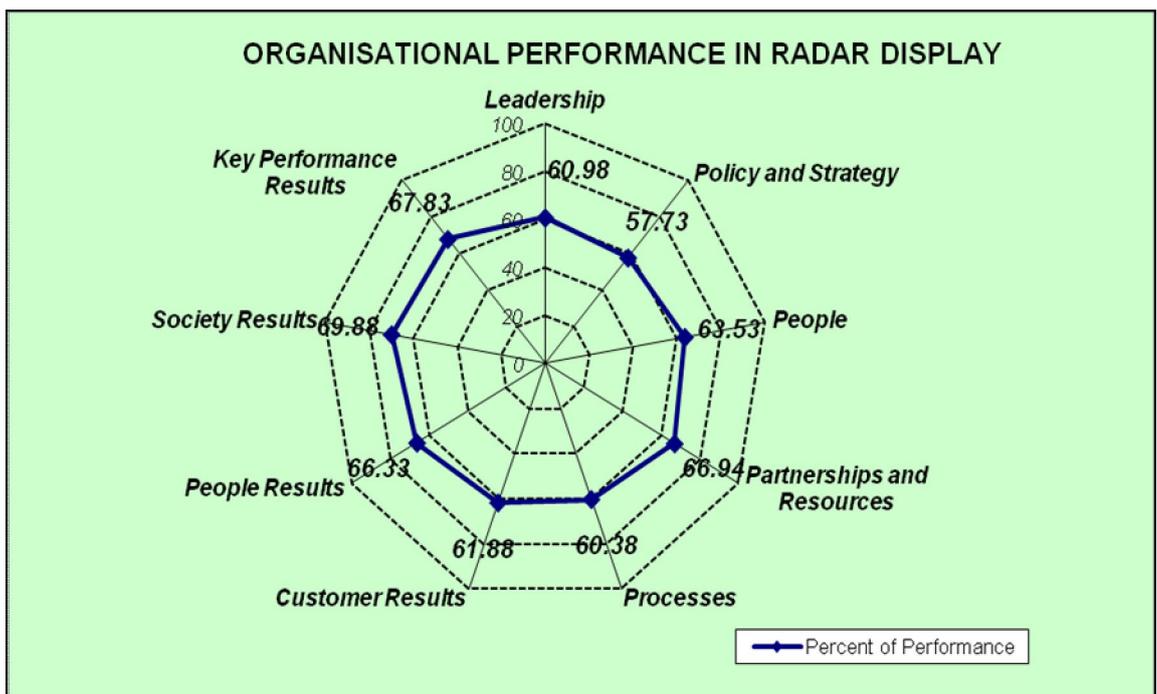


Figure B4a. The assessment gap in scoring organisational performance of Company B among participants

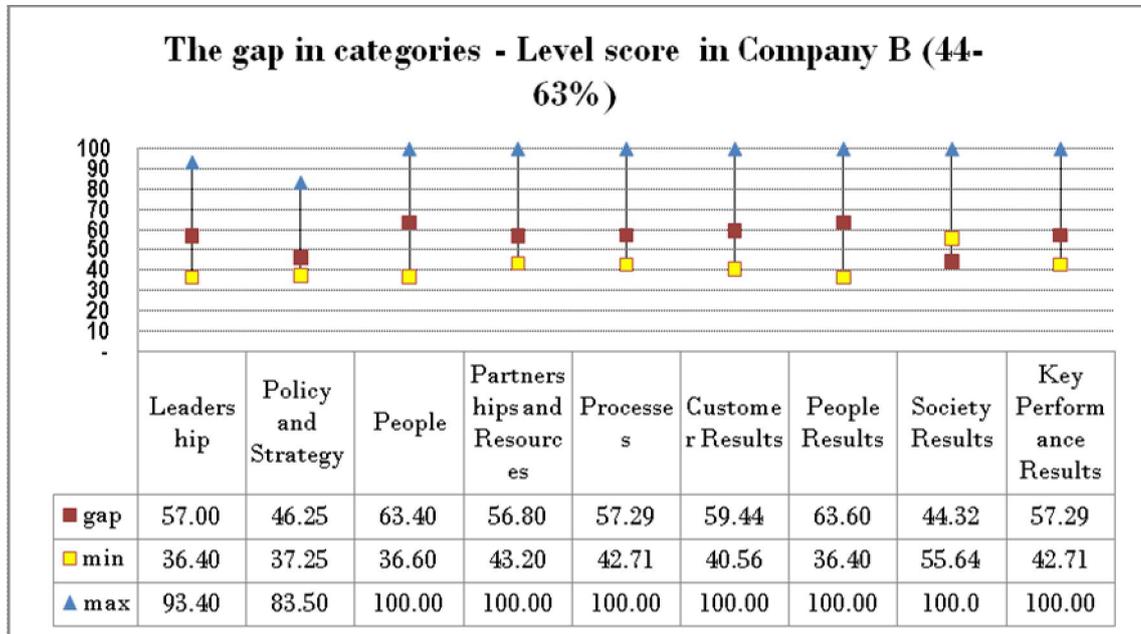
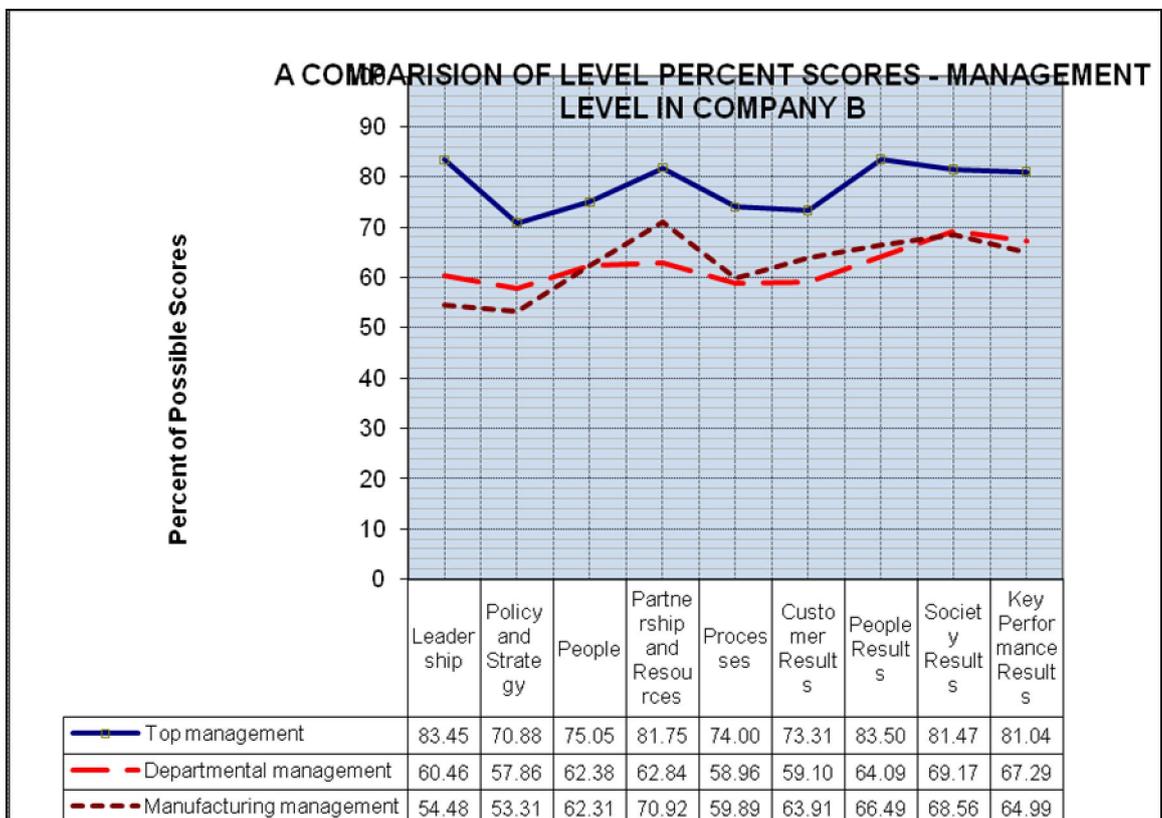


Figure B4a. The comparison gap in scoring organisational performance of Company B among management group



OVERALL CATEGORY LEVEL PERCENT SCORES

In general, the overall level could be determined, at a glance, organisational strengths and weaknesses by items. The category – Level scores in bellow figures show the gap for each demographic (management group) view in three various segments: overall management level, within functional segment and manufacturing area.

CRITERION 1 – LEADERSHIP

Table B4. Leadership Item scores in Company B

	<i>Items</i>	% percent
1.1	<i>Are all the senior managers personally involved and visible in generating and communicating a strategic statement for the purpose, direction and culture of organisation (including its quality values and priorities)</i>	63.0
1.2	<i>Have the senior managers ensured the implementation of an organisational structure and process management system that is respected and is effective in delivering consistent and improving results</i>	56.81
1.3	<i>a. Do the senior managers, by example and action, demonstrate support and emphasize the values of their organisation</i>	73.00
	<i>b. and are these values widely accepted and practiced throughout the organisation?</i>	66.85
1.4	<i>Do all managers make themselves available to staff and involve themselves in the positive and timely recognition of the efforts made by individuals and teams who generate improvement?</i>	70.48
1.5	<i>a. Are all the managers taking actions to meet with customers, suppliers and others outside the organisation,</i>	39.62
	<i>b. and be actively involved in promoting partnerships and improvement initiatives with them?</i>	49.24

The overall Leadership Item level could be determined, at a glance, organisational strengths and weaknesses by items.

Figure B5. Leadership Item Level Percent Scores

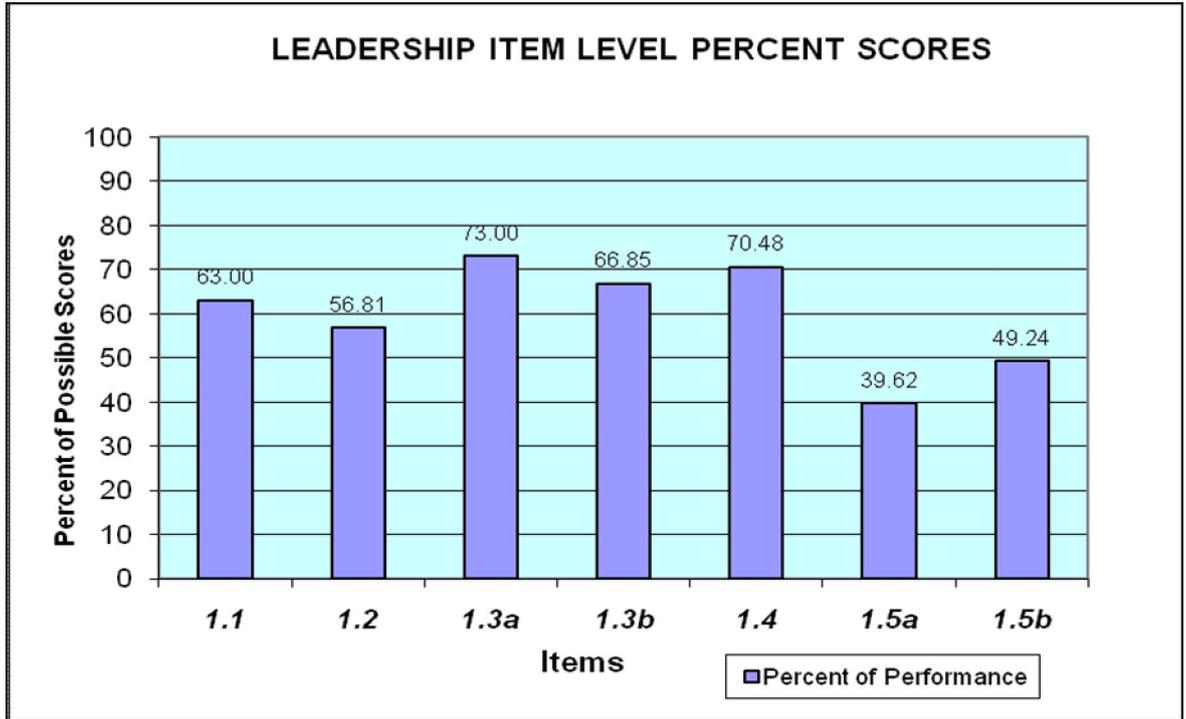


Figure B5a. Leadership Item Level Percent Scores – Management Group

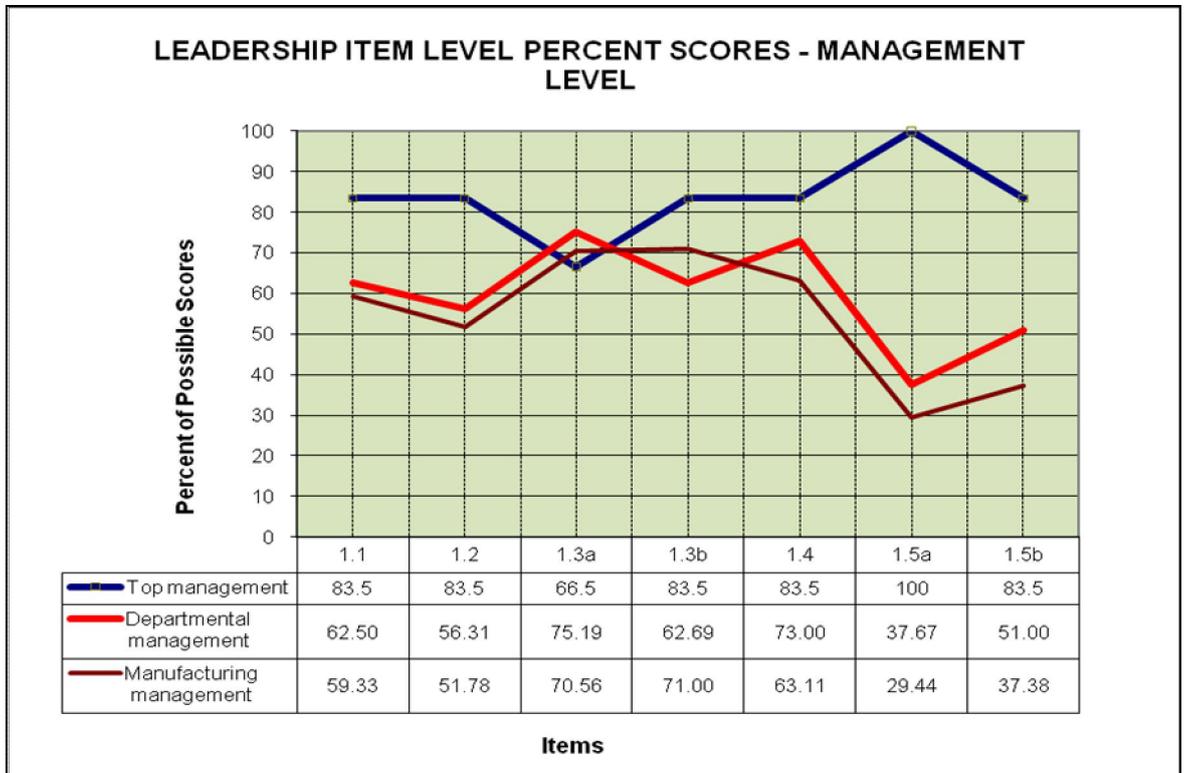


Figure B5b. Leadership Item Level Percent Scores – Functional Department

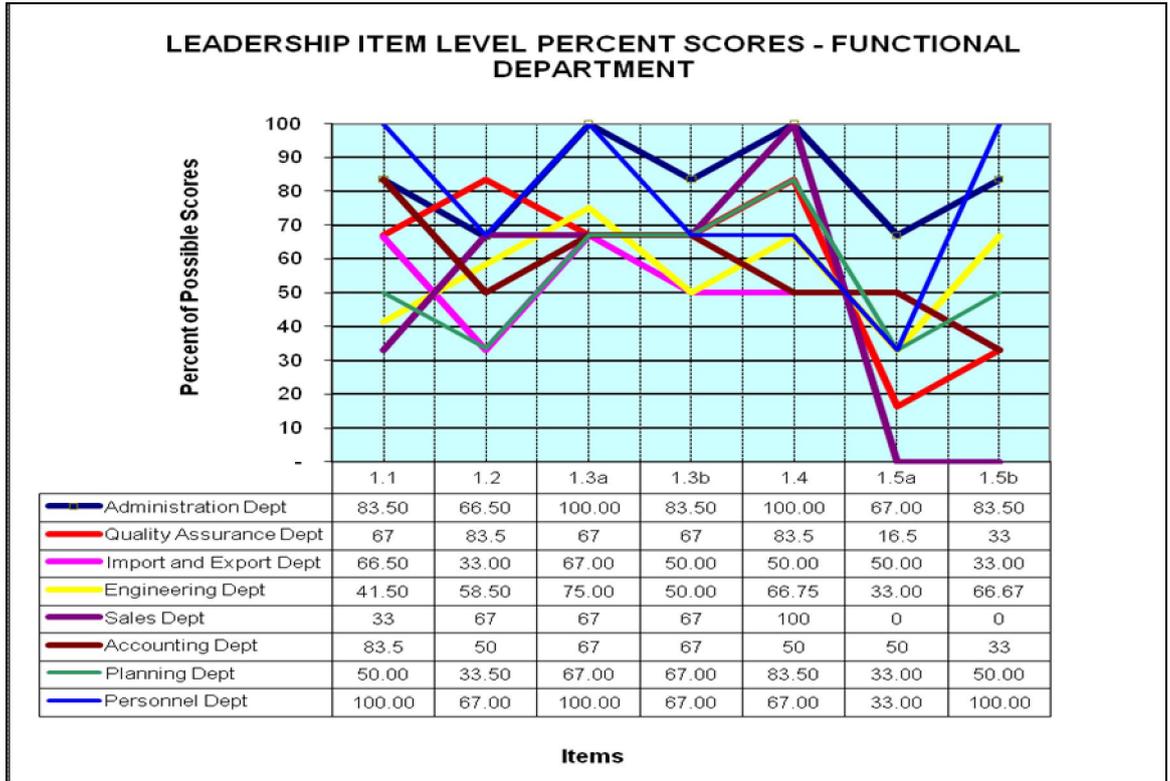
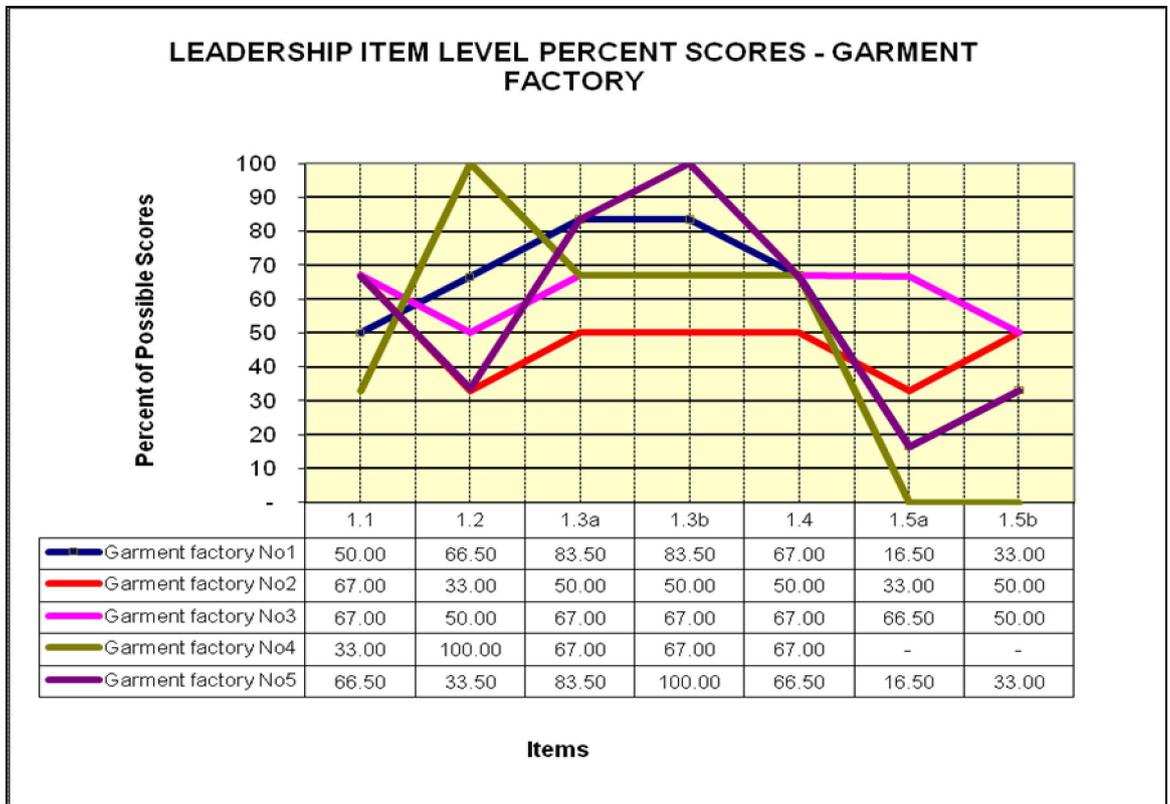


Figure B5c. Leadership Item Level Percent Scores – Garment factory



CRITERION 2 – POLICY AND STRATEGY

Table B5. Policy and Strategy Item scores in Company B

	<i>Items</i>	<i>% percent</i>
2.1	<i>a. Does your organisation use widespread and appropriate data inputs to develop its strategy and business plans</i>	74.26
	<i>b. and does this data include the performance of internal processes, supplier performance, customer requirements and satisfaction, competitor and benchmark data?</i>	64.33
2.2	<i>a. Are you strategic aims and value fully supported by your policies, plans, targets and allocation of resources,</i>	53.11
	<i>b. and do you ensure that top-level targets and plans feasible, accepted and deployed into realistic lower level targets and plans</i>	64.37
2.3	<i>a. Could most staff list the organisation’s goals relevant to their activities,</i>	58.00
	<i>b. and are they familiar with the plans to achieve them in their own areas</i>	55.56
2.4	<i>Is there good evidence that the organisation has the ability and methods to recognise when to change its strategies, policies, markets and offerings – even if the CEO of the organisation were to depart?</i>	46.12

Figure B6. Policy and Strategy Item Level Percent Scores

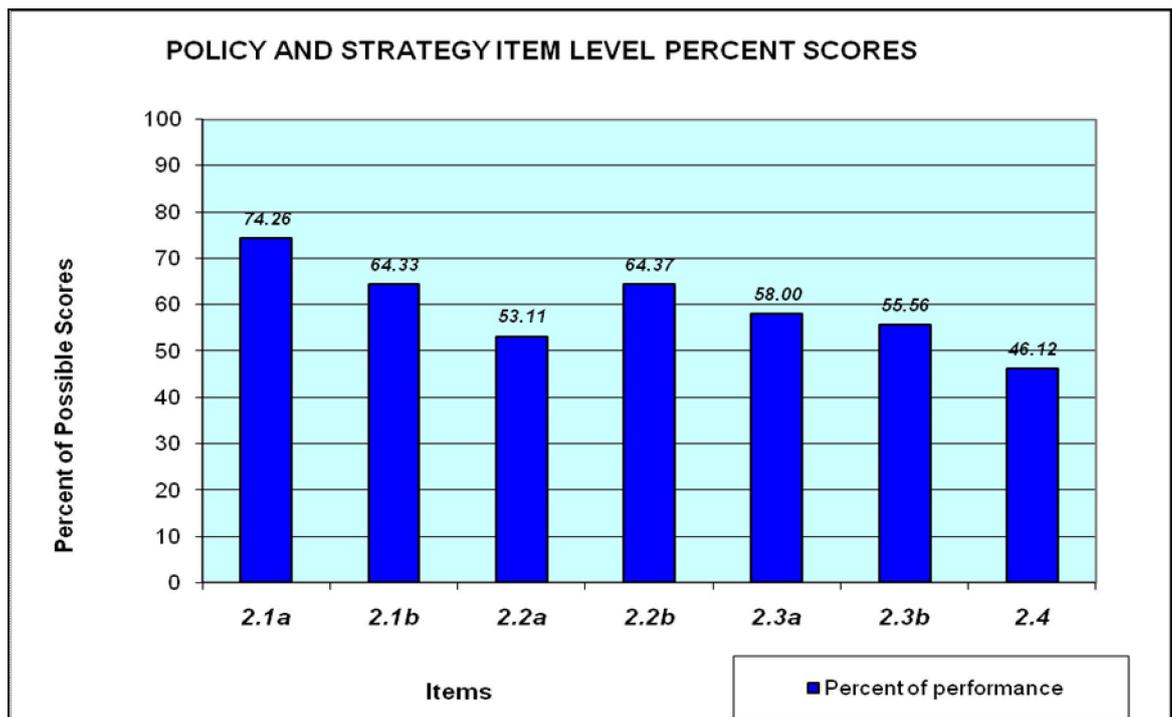


Figure B6a. Policy and Strategy Item Level Percent Scores – Management group

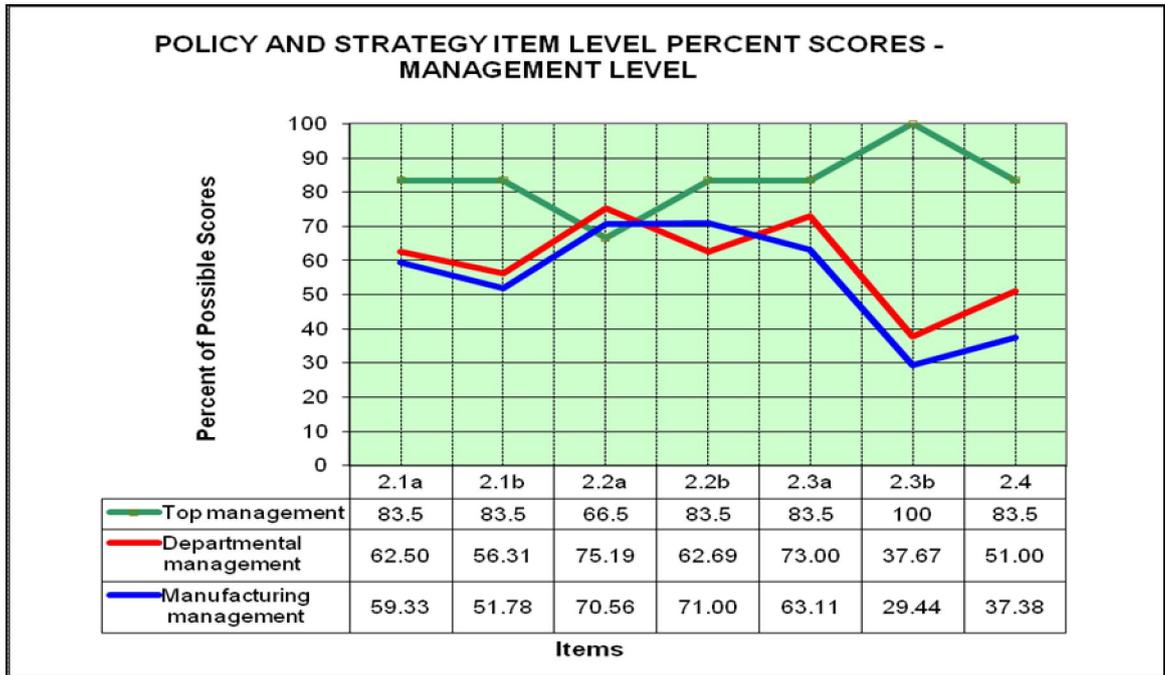


Figure B6b. Policy and Strategy Item Level Percent Scores – Functional Department

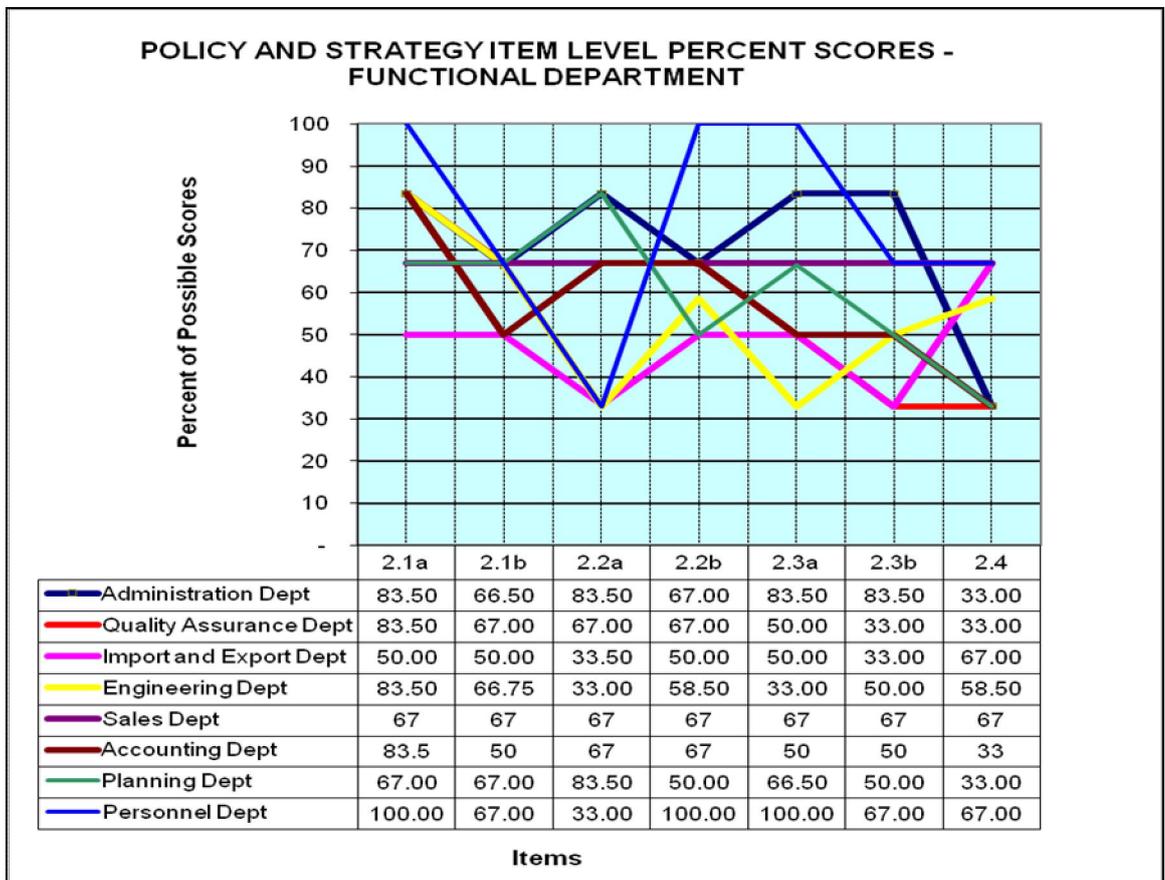
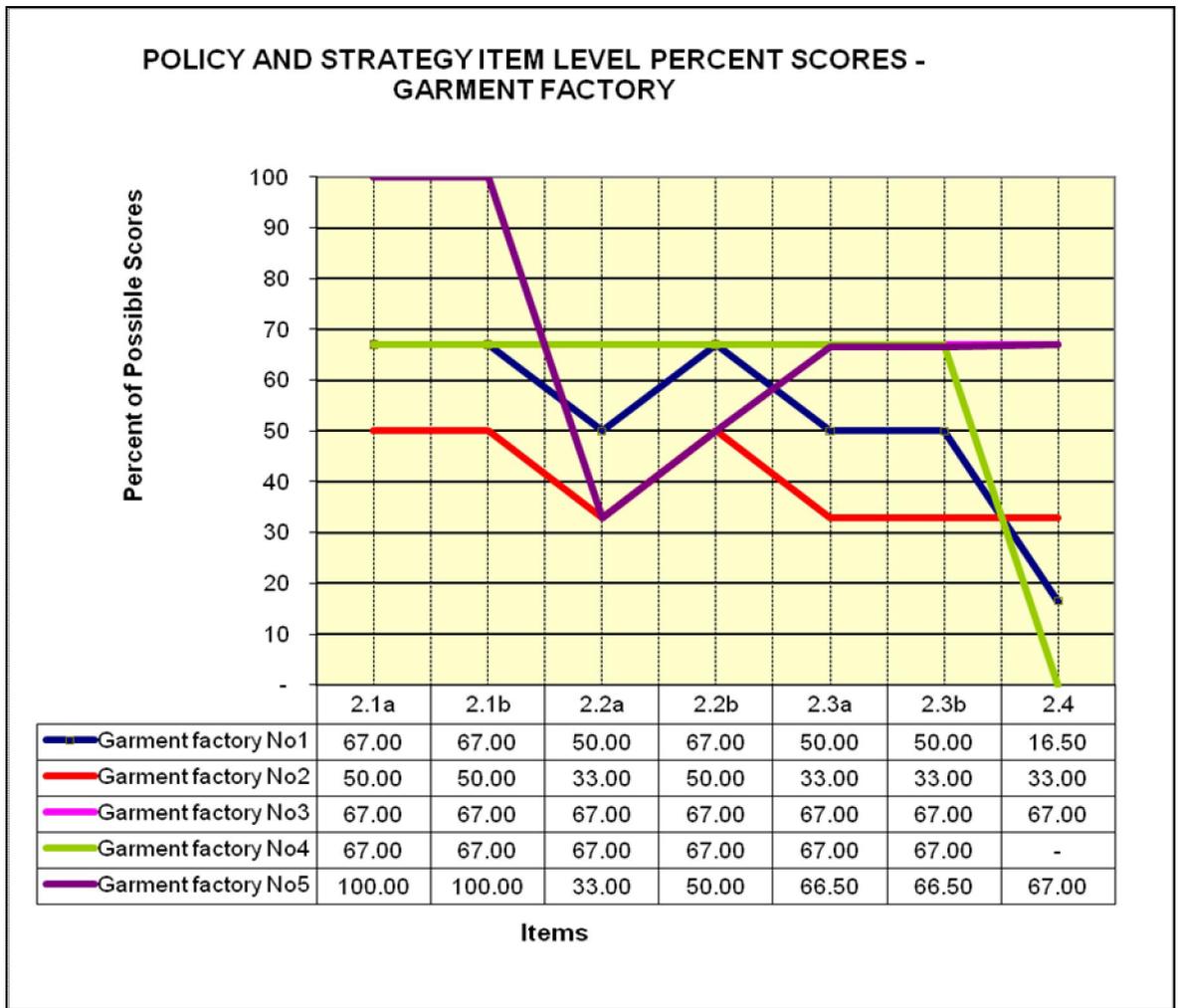


Figure B6c .Policy and Strategy Item Level Percent Scores – Garment factory



CRITERION 3: PEOPLE

Table B6. People Item scores in Company B

	<i>Items</i>	<i>% percent</i>
3.1	<i>a. Are the people plans (e.g. hiring, training, development) directly derived from the needs of the strategic plans and goals</i>	69.26
	<i>b and capable of ensuring that plans and goals will be achieved?</i>	64.19
3.2	<i>a. Does your organisation ensure that the people it recruits match the organisation's values and needs</i>	54.33
	<i>b. and is there an appraisal process (which is respected by the people) for aligning an individual's goals and training with the organisation's needs?</i>	60.59
3.3	<i>a. Does your organisation have a process that involves all employees in generating improvement;</i>	74.19
	<i>b. and are its employees becoming increasingly empowered and competent to make decisions and changes without creating risk to the organisation?</i>	56.89
3.4	<i>a. Have effective two way communications been achieved with the employees</i>	61.81
	<i>b. and would the employees agree that they are well informed and that their opinions are valued?</i>	53.07
3.5	<i>Are people's efforts in generating improvement and contributing to the organisation's success recognised, valued and rewarded comparably to other factors (e.g. sales commission, length of service, qualification)</i>	70.48

Figure B7a. People Item Level Percent Scores – Management group

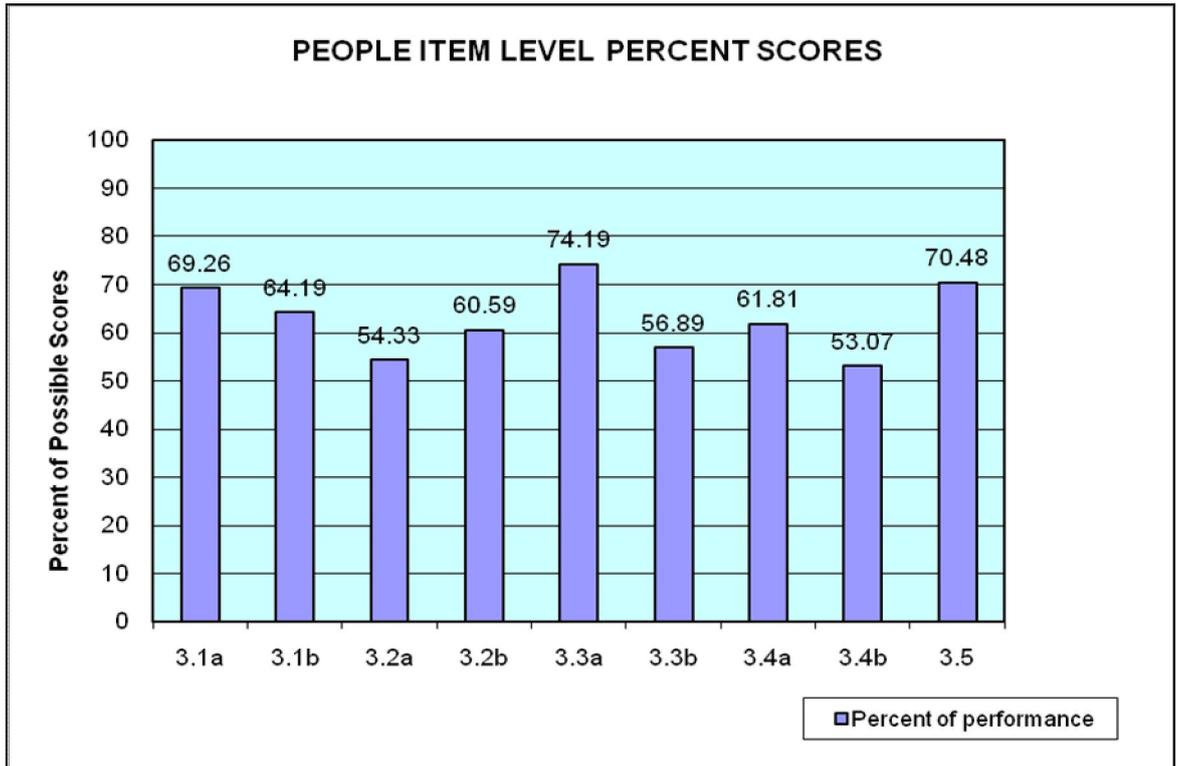


Figure B7. People Item Level Percent Scores

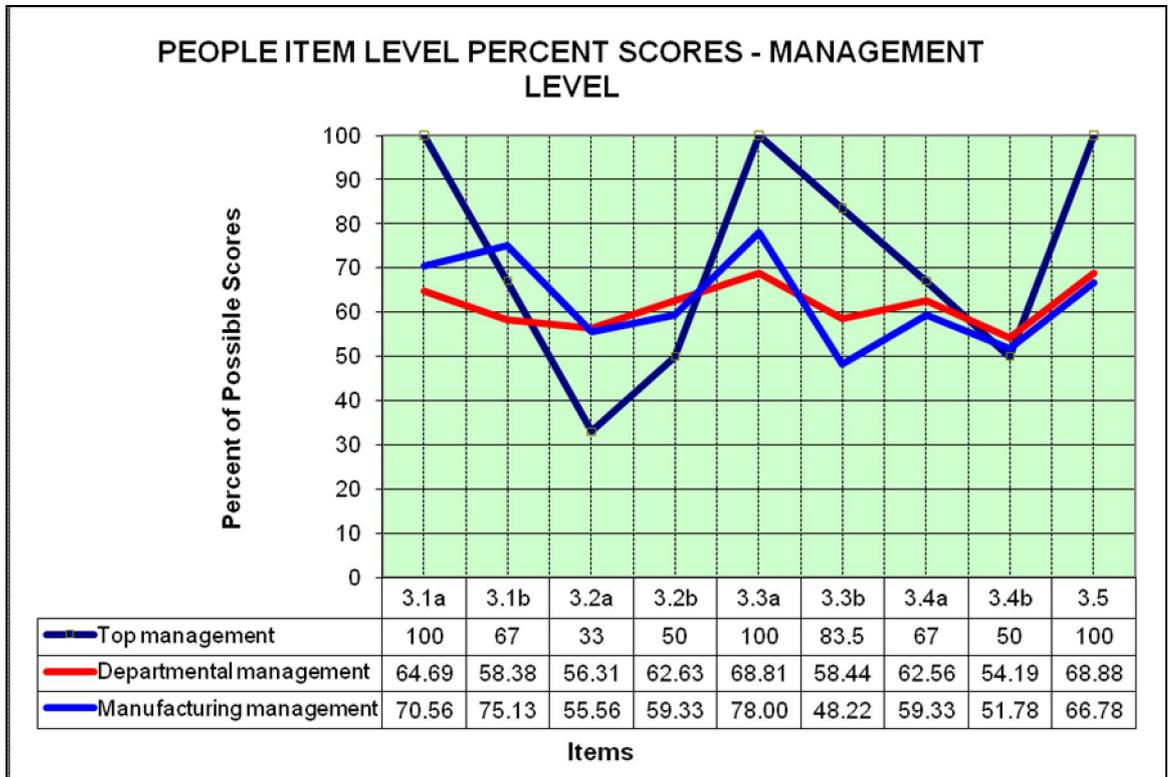


Figure B7b. People Item Level Percent Scores – Functional Department

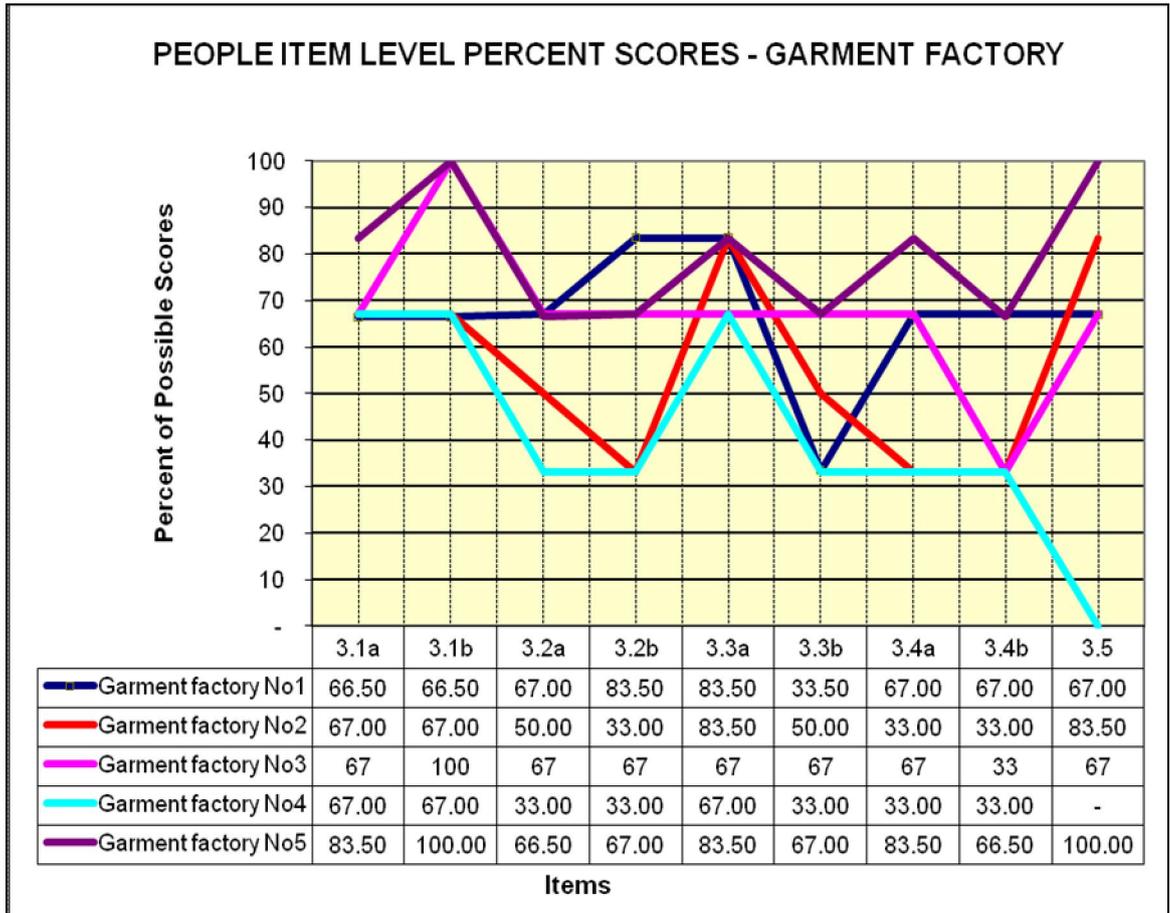
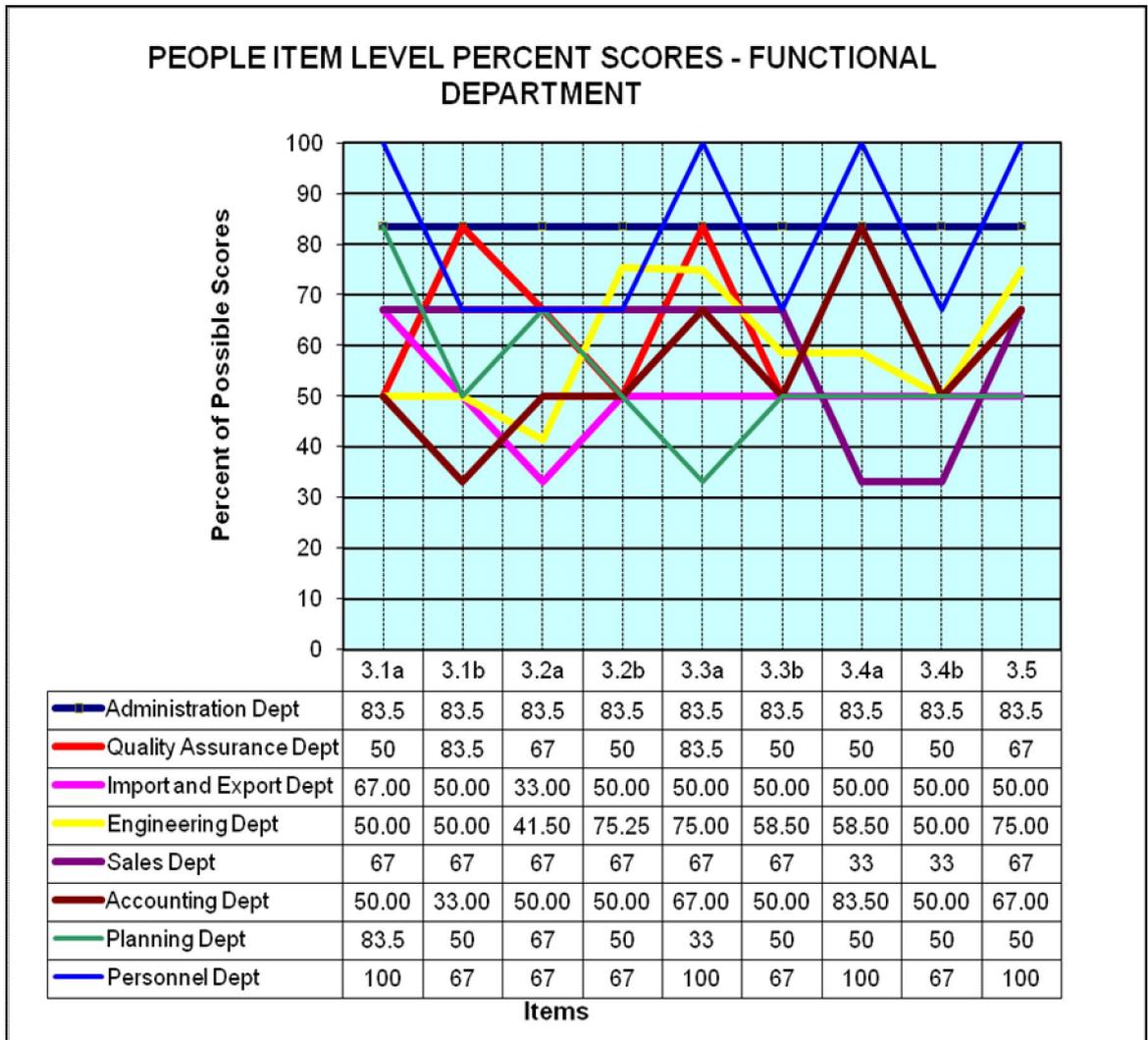


Figure B7c. People Item Level Percent Scores – Garment factory



CRITERION 4 : PARTNERSHIPS AND RESOURCES

Table B7. Partnerships and Resources Item scores in Company B

	<i>Items</i>	<i>% percent</i>
4.1	<i>a.Are Partnership relationships developed through a proactive and structure approach</i>	69.26
	<i>b.and do these partnerships identify and achieve extra opportunities in products, services, markets and financial performance?</i>	70.56
4.2	<i>Does your organisation ensure that all relevant information, including data on process performance, suppliers (including supplier performance), customers(including customer satisfaction)and benchmarks, is reliable, up to date, and quickly available and easily useable by appropriate personnel (including supplies/ distributors/ customers where appropriate)?</i>	63.07
4.3	<i>Does your organisation have approach that ensure that the allocation and use of its financial resources reflects and supports its strategic goals, aims and values and ensures the lasting success oh the organisation?</i>	69.33
4.4	<i>Are physical assets such as building, equipment, materials and stock managed and continually improved to the benefit of the organisation and the enhancement of its strategic aims, and goals, and to the conservation of resources?</i>	71.74
4.5	<i>Is there a routine method for ensuring that alternative and new technologies are developed and implemented, and the use of intellectual property and knowledge optimised in order to gain an advantage on both products and services?</i>	60.63

Figure B8. Partnerships and Resources Item Level Percent Scores

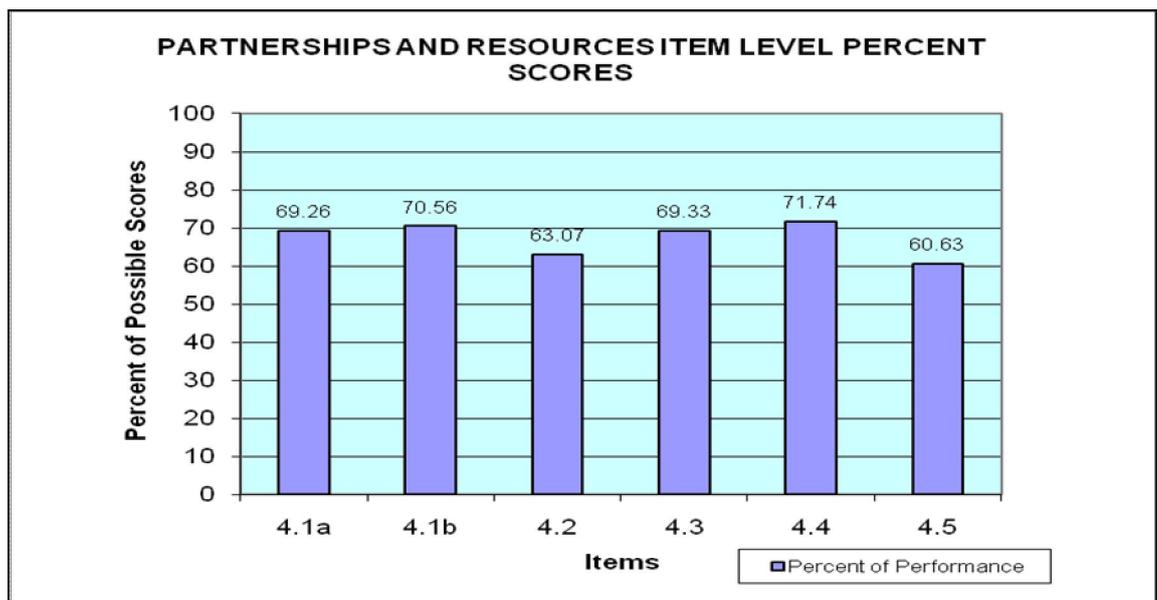


Figure B8a. Partnerships and Resources Item Level Percent Scores – Management group

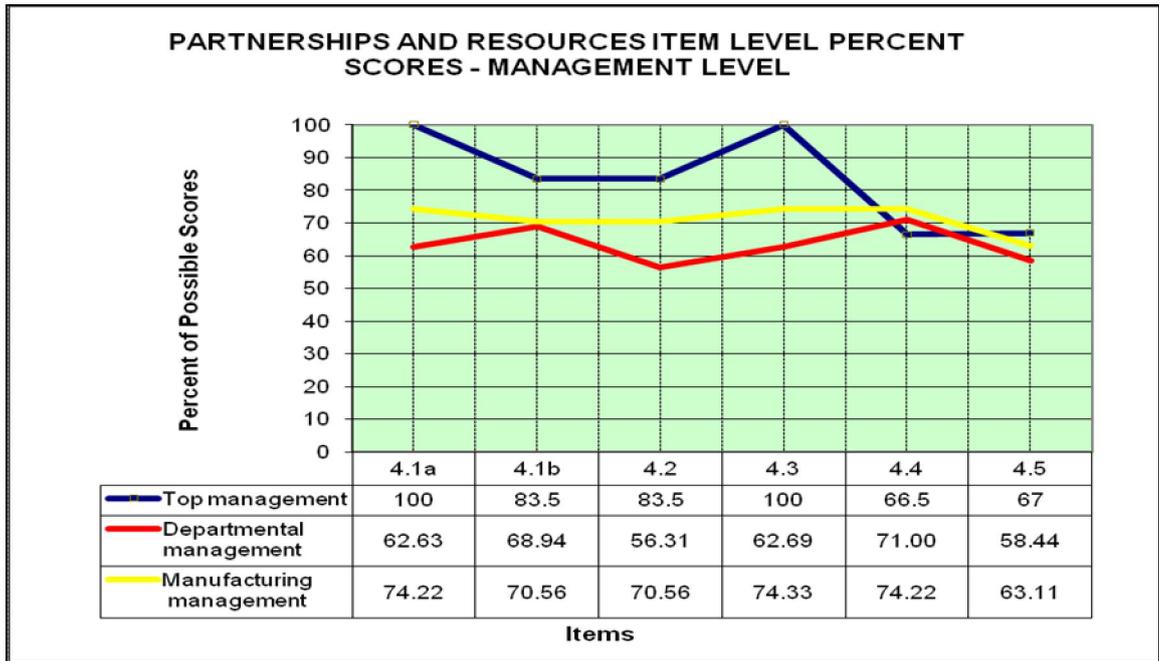


Figure B8b. Partnerships and Resources Item Level Percent Scores – Functional Department

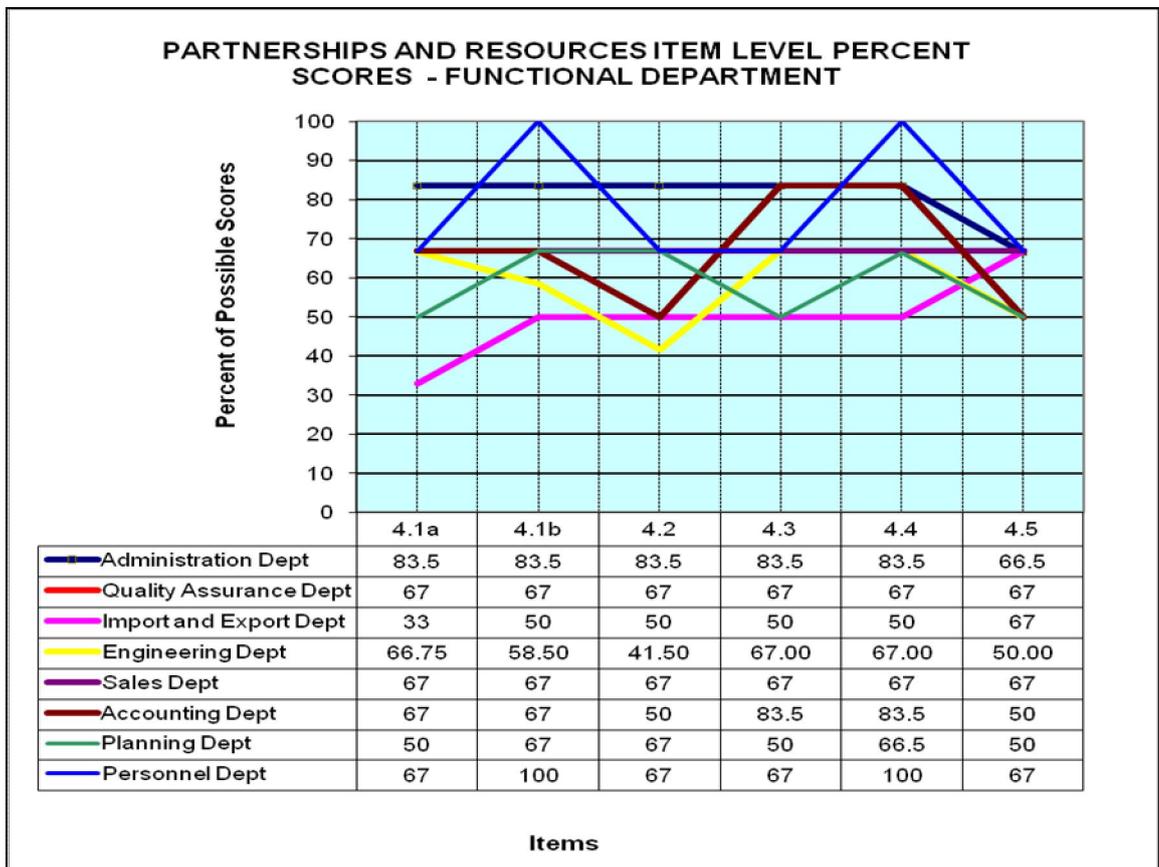
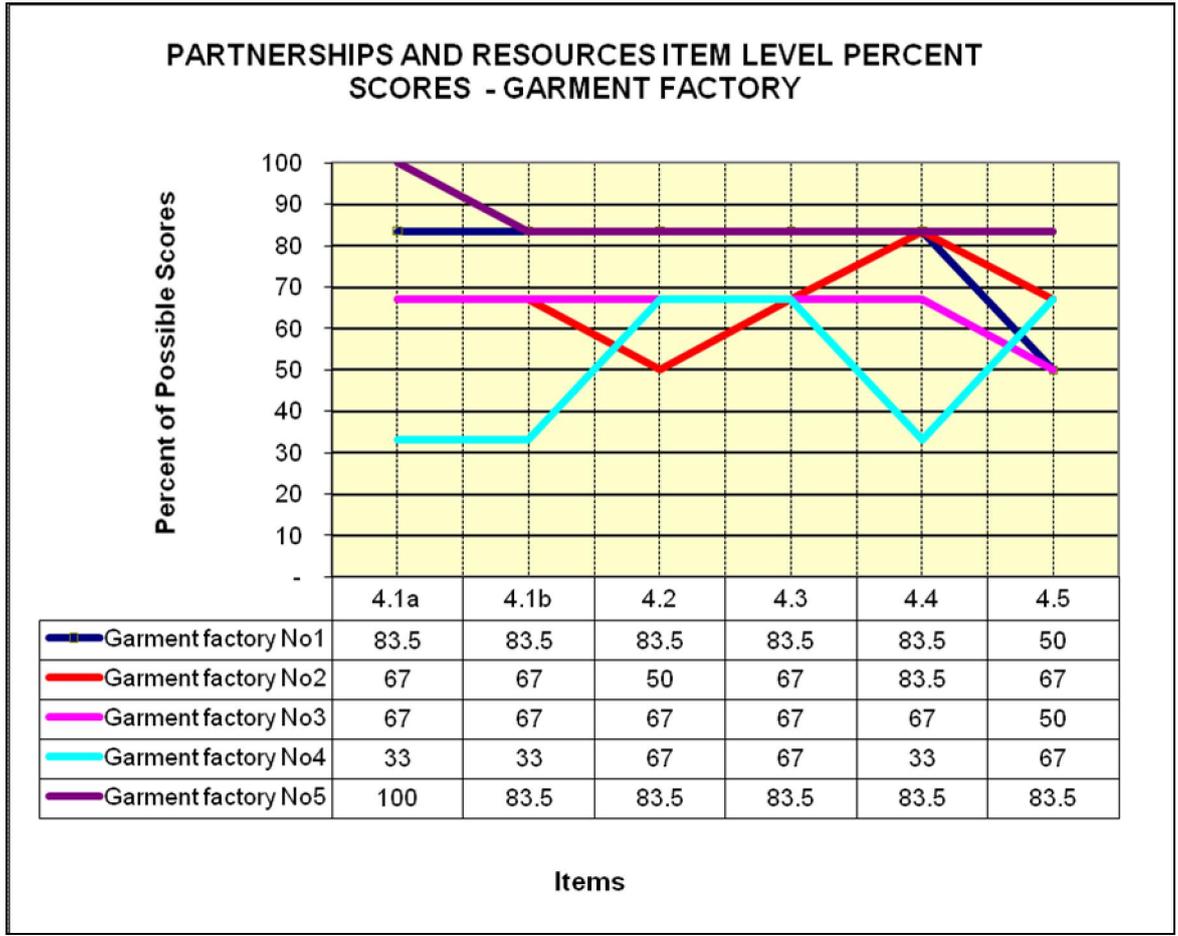


Figure B8c. Partnerships and Resources Item Level Percent Scores – Garment Factory



CRITERION 5: PROCESSES

Table B8. Processes Item scores in Company B

	<i>Items</i>	<i>% percent</i>
5.1	<i>Does your organisation have a system to ensure that all activities used to produce products and services operate, and are controlled, to the prescribed standards or requirements (e.g. through the use of ISO 9000 and ISO 14000)</i>	79.15
5.2	<i>Is there a comprehensive and reliable method for understanding customer's perceptions, needs, and expectations and the markets in which it operates?</i>	49.33
5.3	<i>Is there a comprehensive and viable system for ensuring that customer requirements are translated into the timely availability of new products and services?</i>	48.04
5.4	<i>Is there continuous improvement of processes based on positively identifying opportunities and needs through analyzing customer data, operational data, and external benchmarks?</i>	58.15
5.5	<i>Does your organisation have a thorough and routine method, by audit or otherwise, for assessing the implementation and effectiveness of all the system that are used to drive and control its activities?</i>	60.59
5.6	<i>Does your organisation ensure that the audits and results, are always used to improve the systems through the implementation of root-cause cures (rather than just "quick-fixes") so preventing the recurrence of the problem?</i>	61.85
5.7	<i>Are the support ("back-room") activities (e.g. accounts, IT, dispatch, data processing, personnel, legal, and secretarial) documented, controlled, and continuously improved to at least the same level as the main product and service activities</i>	65.56

Figure B9. Processes Item Level Percent Scores

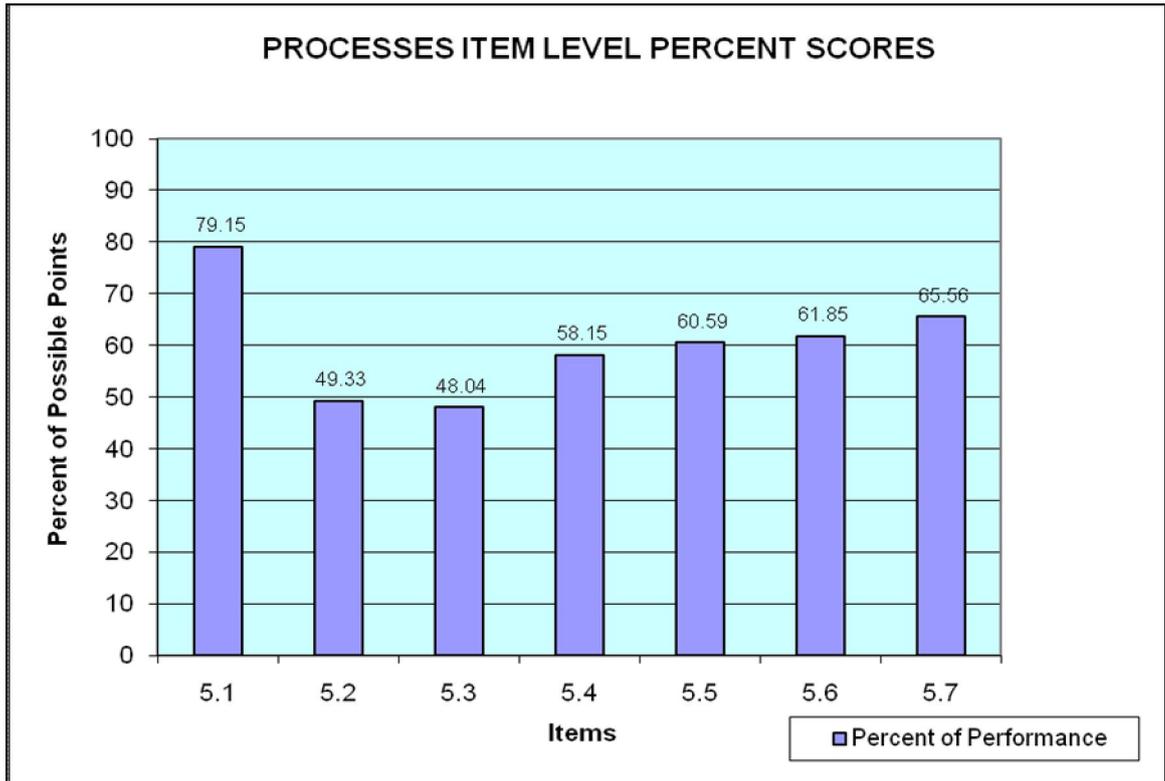


Figure B9a. Processes Item Level Percent Scores – Management group

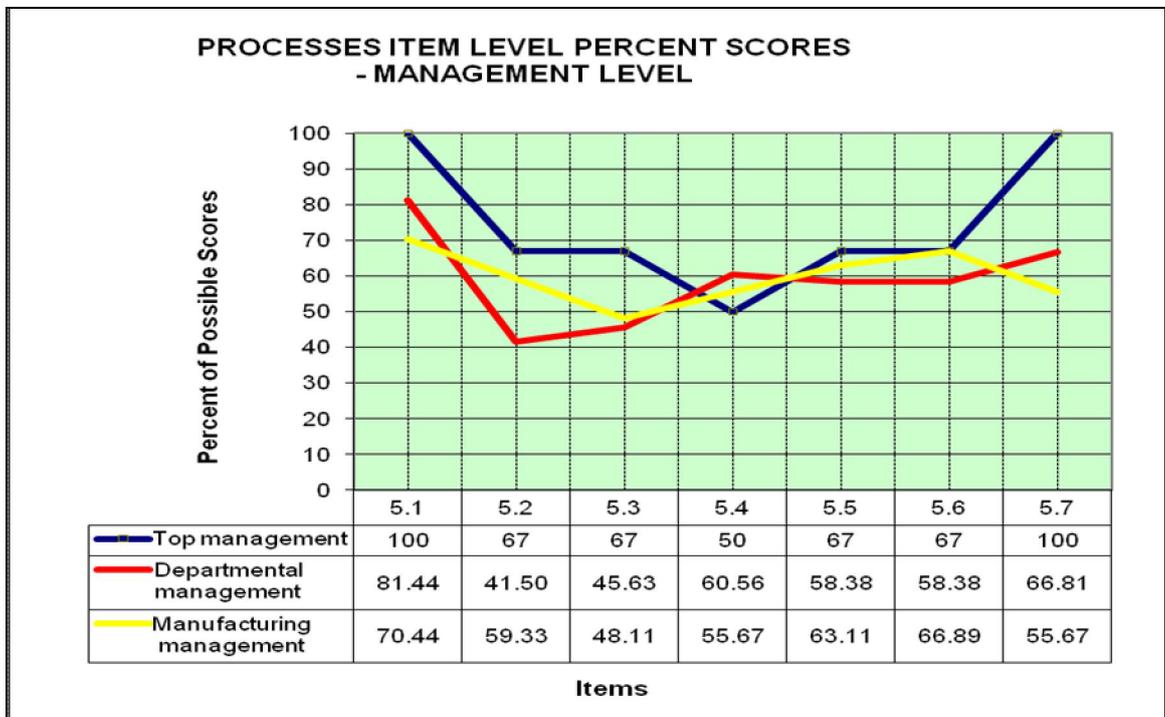


Figure B9b. Processes Item Level Percent Scores – Functional Department

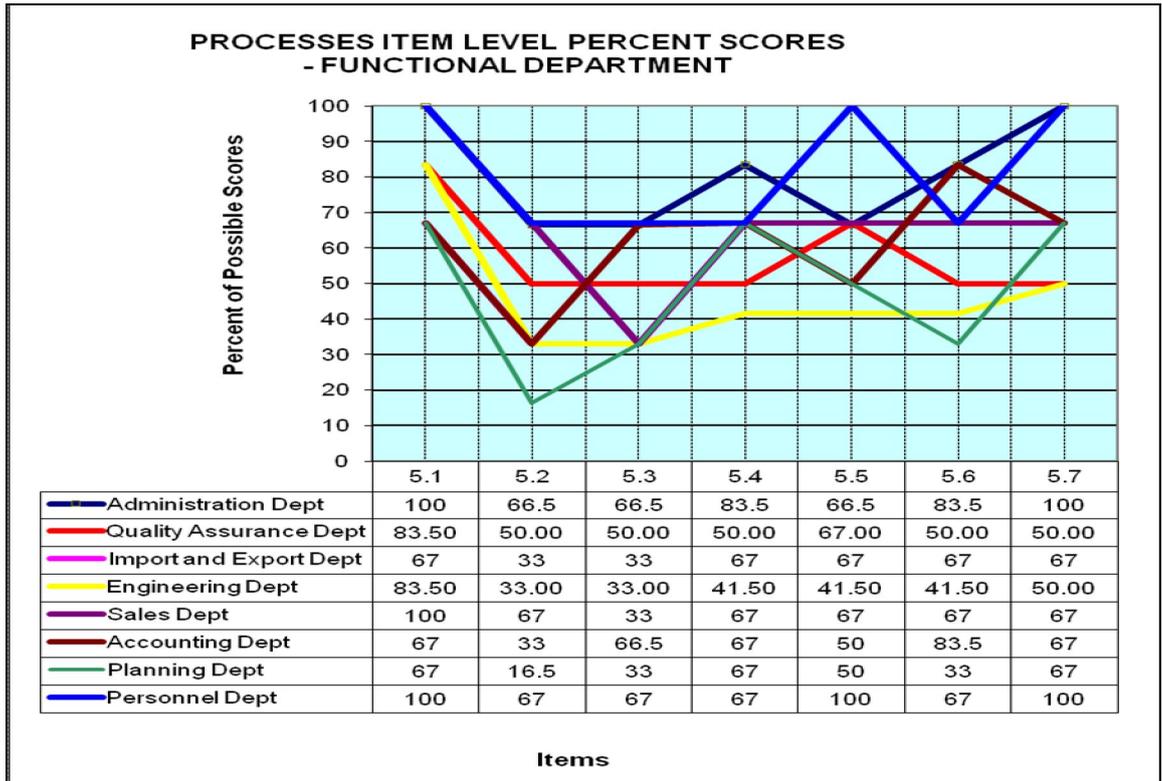
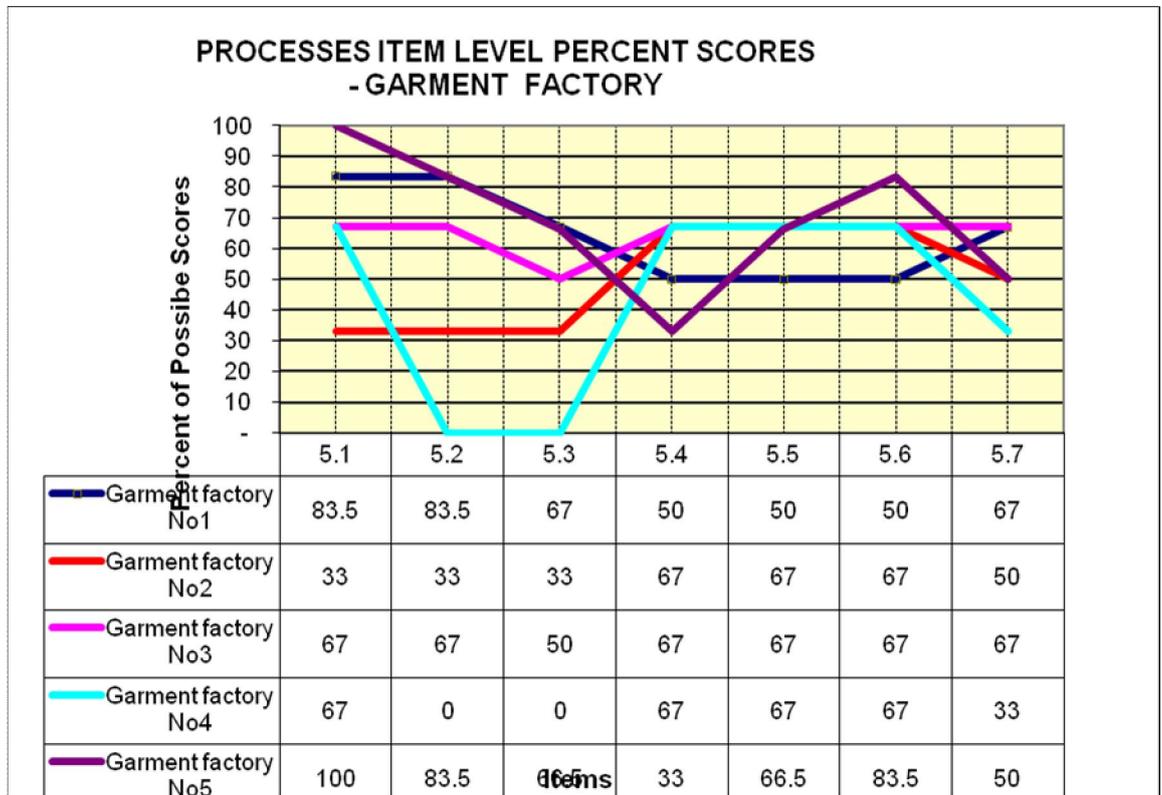


Figure B9c. Processes Item Level Percent Scores – Garment Factory



CRITERION 6: CUSTOMER RESULTS

Table B9. Customer Results Item scores in Company B

	<i>Items</i>	<i>% percent</i>
6.1	<i>a. Does your organisation evaluate its management of the customer relationship through relevant measures that predict trends or influence customer satisfaction and loyalty such as response accuracy and timeliness, returns, loss customers, customer gains, warranty claims, complains and praises etc,</i>	65.52
	<i>b.and which effective predict the likely trends in customer loyalty?</i>	61.69
6.2	<i>Are the measure in (1) above (the internal organisation measures relating to customer satisfaction and loyalty) showing an improving trend or sustained high level of performance?</i>	66.85
6.3	<i>Can you show that the results of these internal organisation measures relating to customer satisfaction and loyalty are comparable with/better than those of direct competitors or equivalent organisation?</i>	61.85
6.4	<i>a.Does your organisation regularly survey its customer to determine their satisfaction with its products and services</i>	64.22
	<i>b.and has it fully established the relevance and coverage of the parameters its measures to determine customer satisfaction and loyalty?</i>	56.81
6.5	<i>Are the customer results segmented to show the perceptions of the various groups and types of customers (including lost or potential customers)?</i>	61.81
6.6	<i>Are these customer results showing improving trends or sustained high levels of performance?</i>	60.59
6.7	<i>Do you have data that shows that your customer results are comparable/better than those of your direct competitors or equivalent organisation?</i>	59.33
6.8	<i>Does your organisation have a method for routine setting targets/goals for improvement in the performance of its internal measures and actual perceptions of customer satisfaction and loyalty?</i>	61.78
6.9	<i>Can your organisation show that the results of surveys are always effectively used to improve the products or services it provides?</i>	60.59

Figure B10. Customer Results Item Level Percent Scores

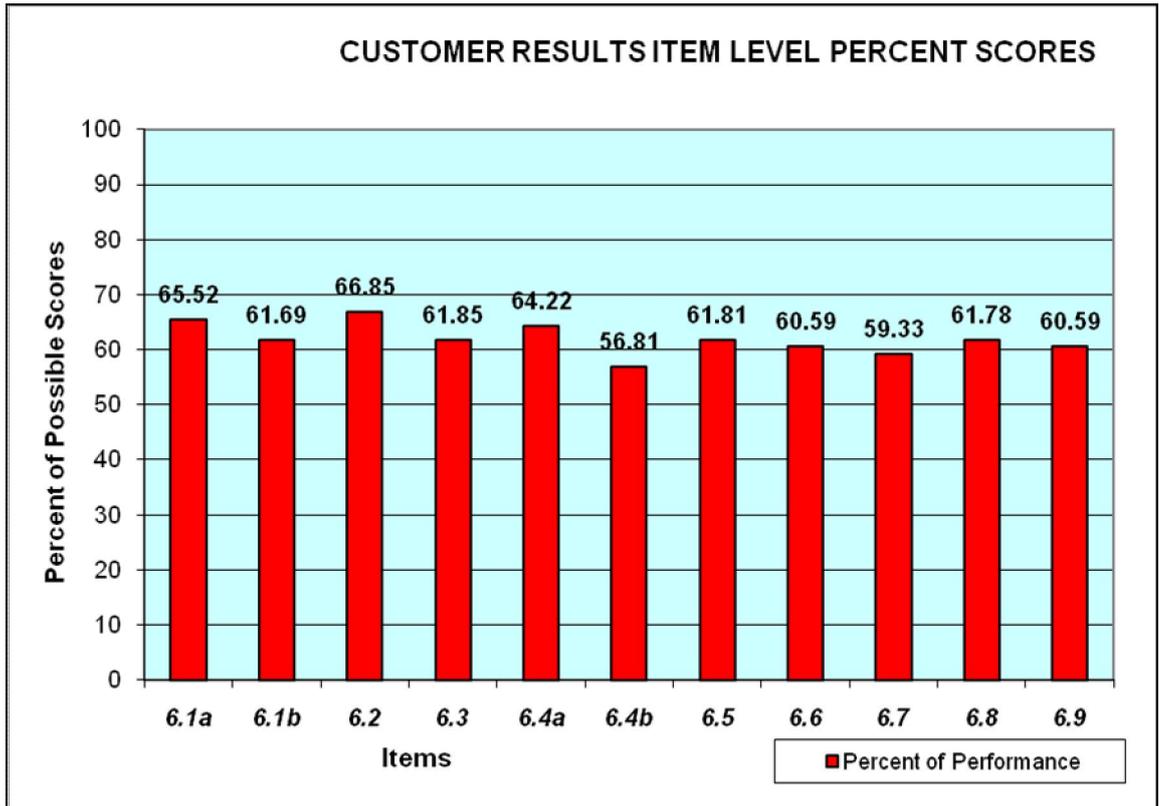


Figure B10a. Customer Results Item Level Percent Scores – Management group

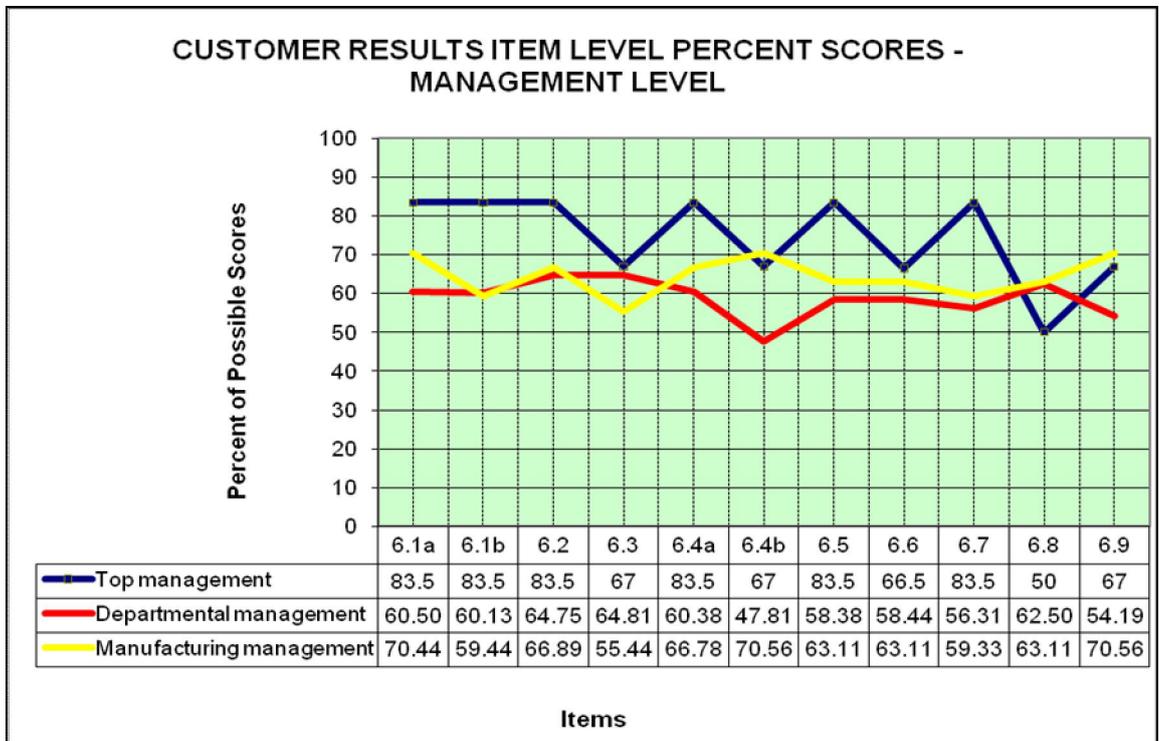


Figure B10b. Customer Results Item Level Percent Scores – Functional Department

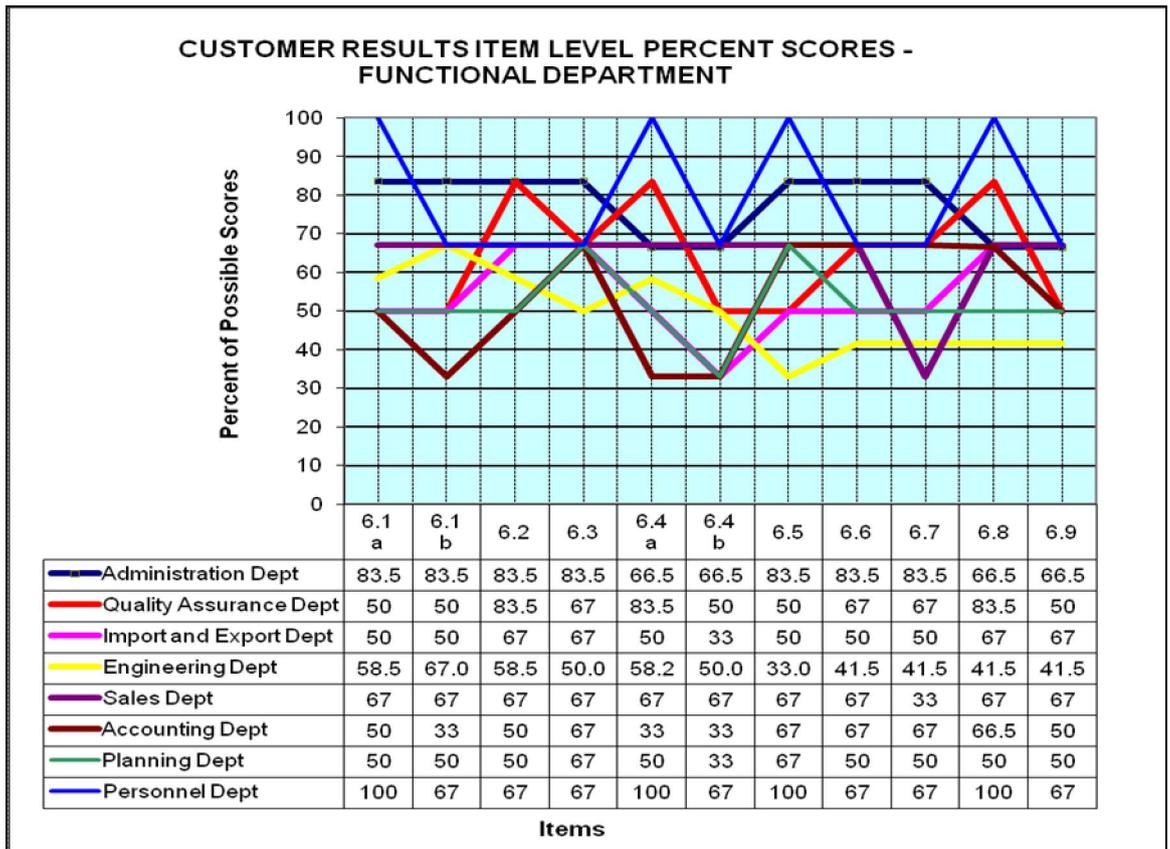
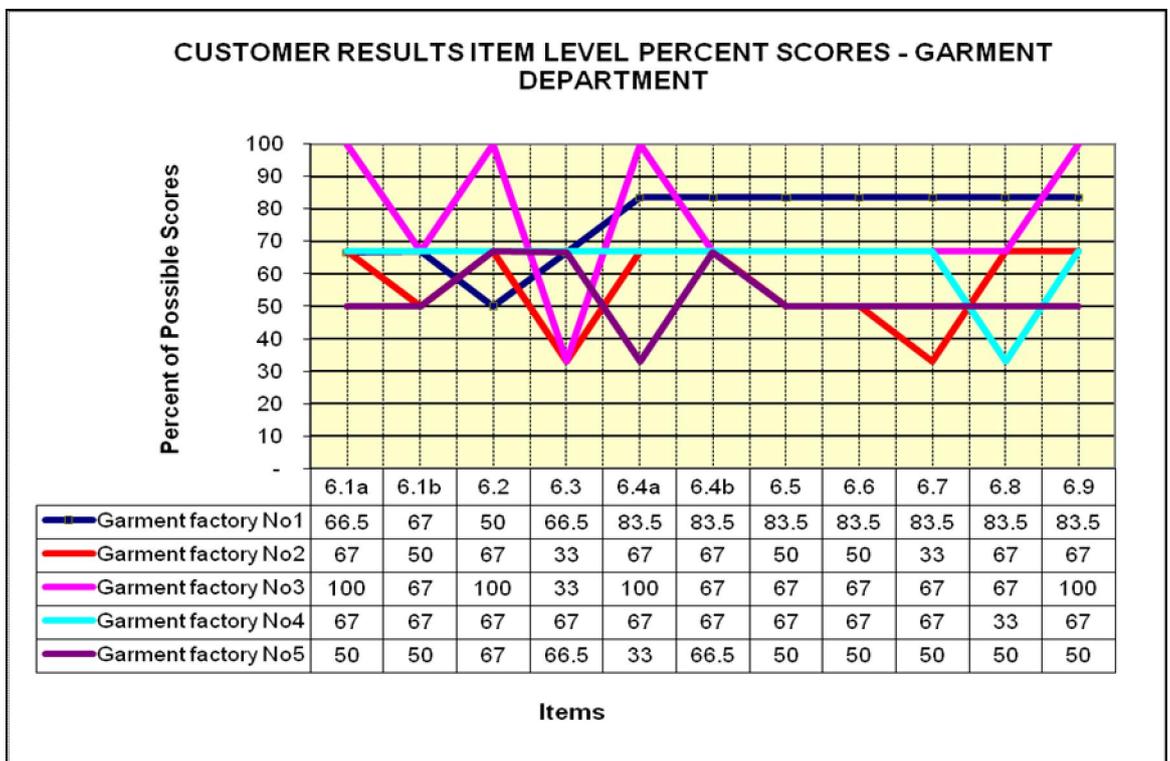


Figure B10c. Customer Results Item Level Percent Scores – Garment Factory



CRITERION 7: PEOPLE RESULTS

Table B10. People Results Item scores in Company B

	<i>Items</i>	<i>% percent</i>
7.1	<i>Does the organisation regularly measure and evaluate aspects which predict trends or influence people satisfaction and morale such as absenteeism, sickness, staff turnover, early leavers, levels of training, internal promotions, accident levels, recognition levels, grievances, and does it act on the results?</i>	74.22
7.2	<i>a. Is regular feedback obtained (through questionnaires, interviews, focus group etc) of the perceptions of the people on various aspects of the organisation such as, working environment, health, safety, communications, career prospects, pay, appraisal, recognition, training, and overall satisfaction;</i>	56.74
	<i>b. and has the organisation established the relevance of its measure?</i>	63.07
7.3	<i>Are the results of both the organisation results made known to the people and actual perceptions compared with those of other organisation?</i>	66.93
7.4	<i>Are all the people satisfaction results made known to the people and acted upon by the management?</i>	65.59
7.5	<i>a. Are the results (particularly the actual perceptions of people satisfaction) generally showing an improving trend or sustained high level</i>	66.85
	<i>b. and can they be shown to be comparable with equivalent organisations and other benchmarks?</i>	63.15

Figure B11. People Results Item Level Percent Scores

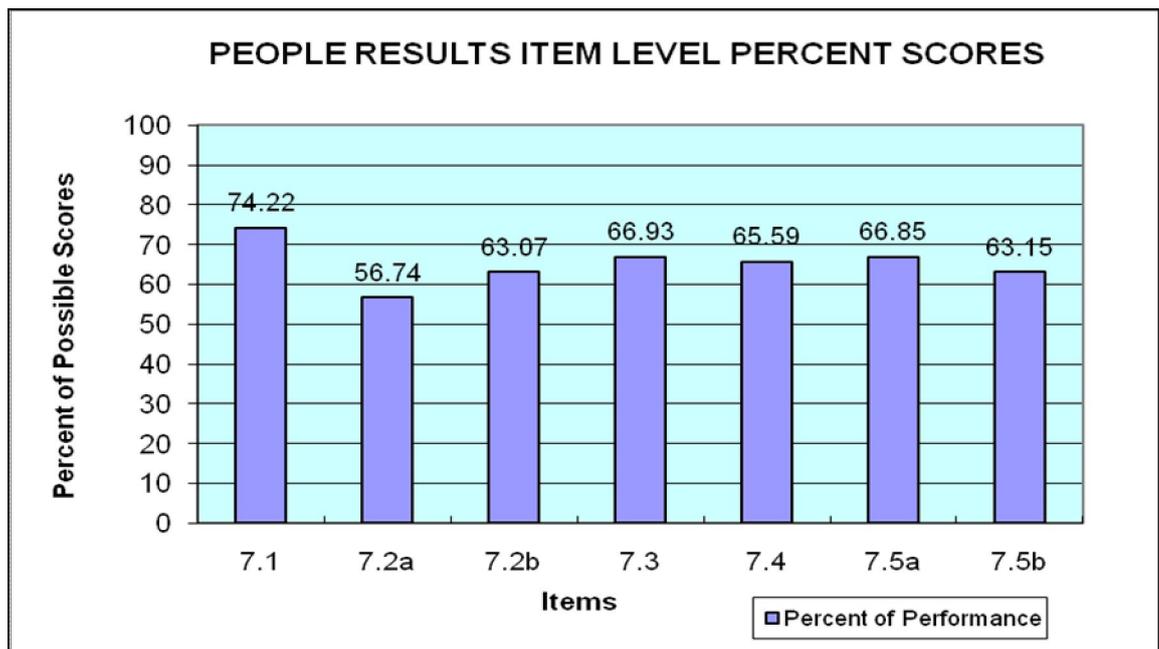


Figure B11a. People Results Item Level Percent Scores – Management group

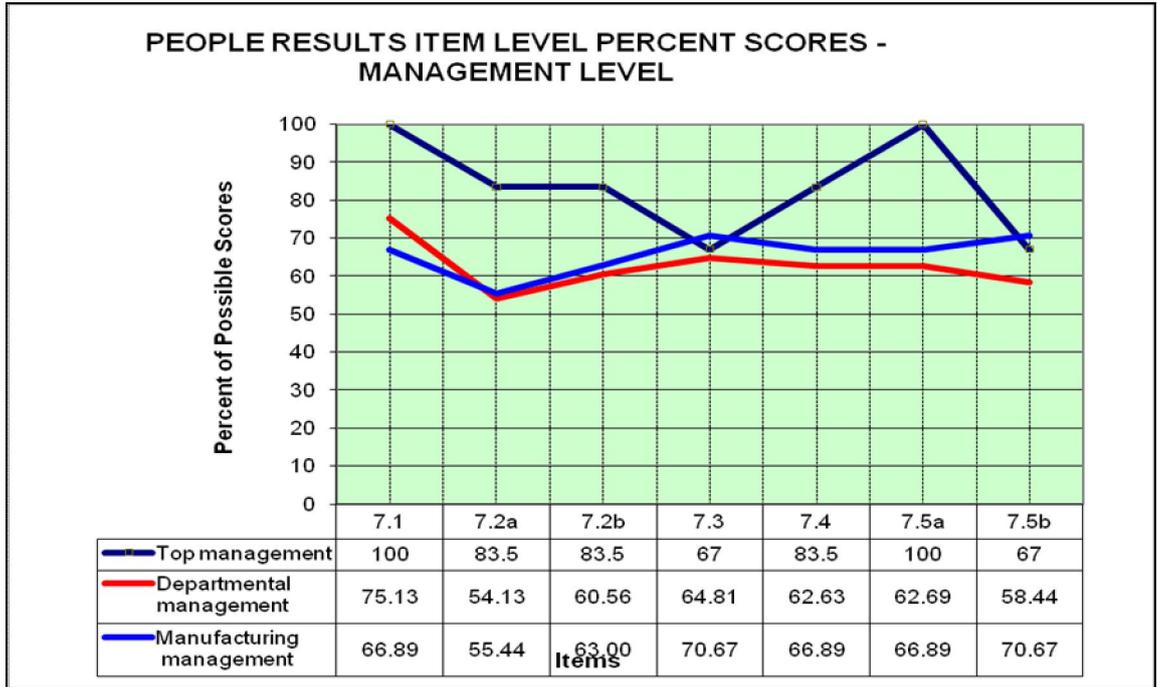


Figure B11b. People Results Item Level Percent Scores – Functional Department

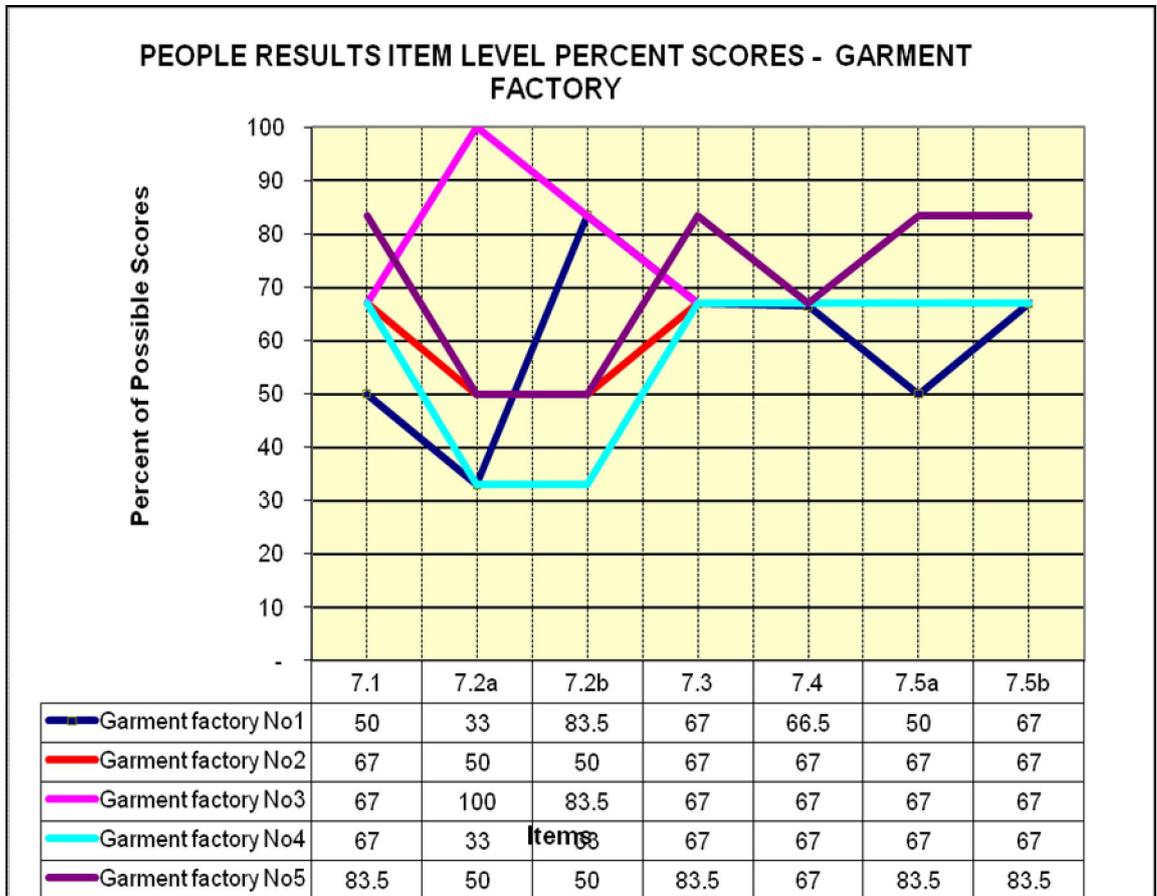
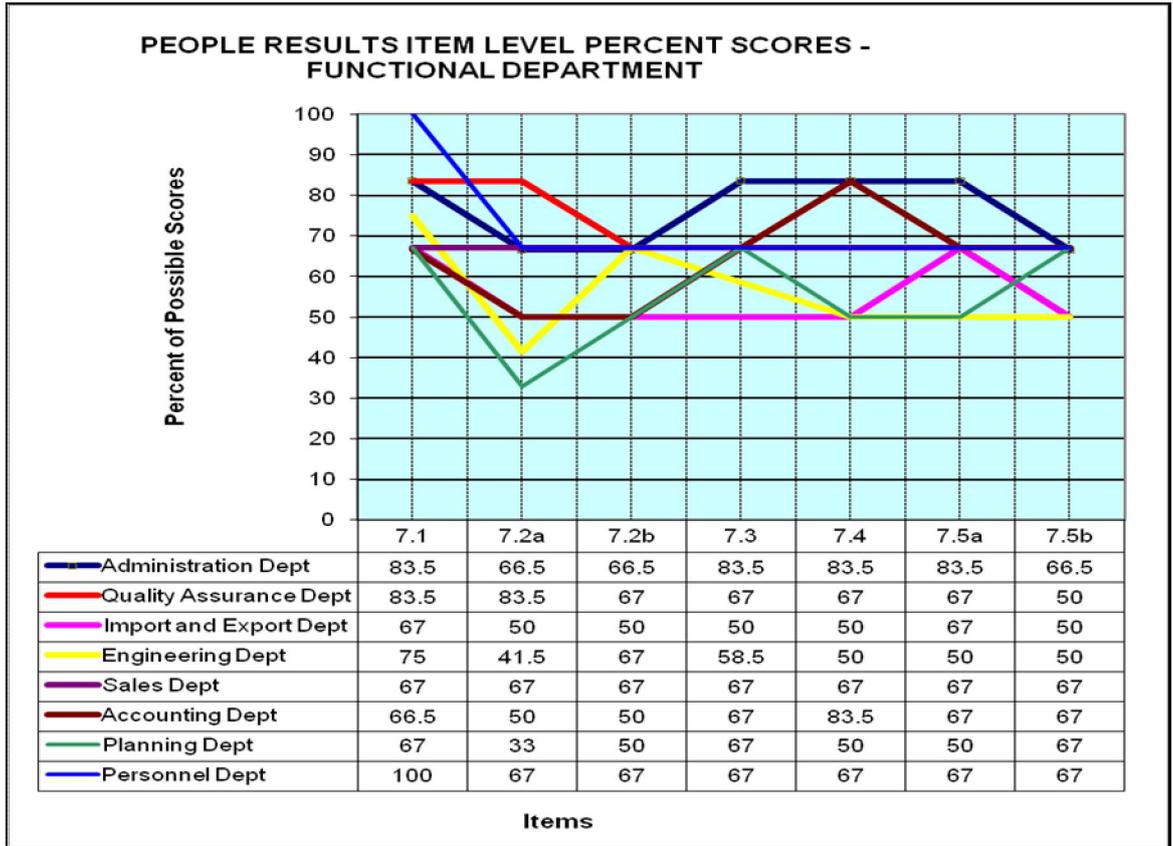


Figure B11c. People Results Item Level Percent Scores – Garment Factory



CRITERION 8: SOCIETY RESULTS

Table B11. Society Results Item scores in Company B

	<i>Items</i>	% percent
8.1	<i>Can you demonstrate that your organisation has achieved results</i>	
	<i>a. on preventing or reducing harm or nuisance to neighbours and the general environment,</i>	74.30
	<i>b. or conserving and protecting global resources (e.g. energy, recycling, waste)</i>	70.63
	<i>c. and on positively contributing to the community (charitable, education, sports and leisure, leadership in professional matters)</i>	79.19
8.2	<i>Are the activities in the above areas showing a positive trend and can the results be shown to be comparable with others in the locale, or business sector?</i>	71.89
8.3	<i>Can the organisation show, through results of surveys or other means, that neighbours and society in general think highly of them and that their reputation is improving</i>	63.11

Figure B12. Society Results Item Level Percent Scores

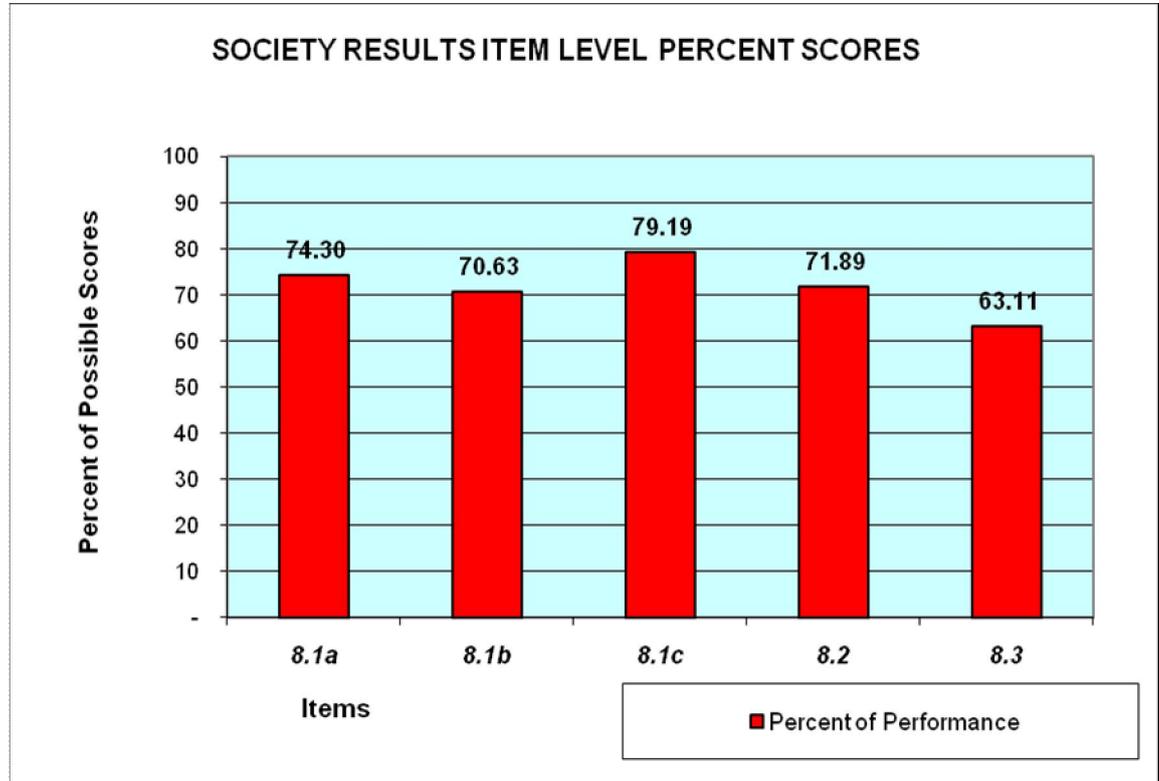


Figure B12a. Society Results Item Level Percent Scores – Management group

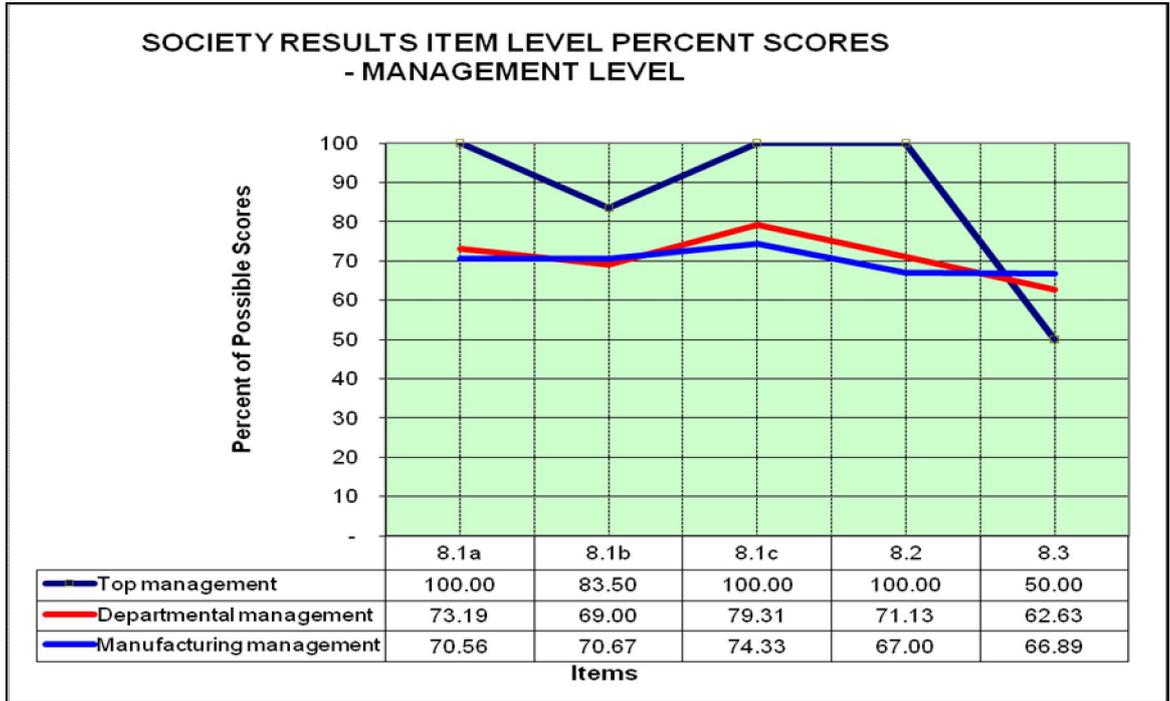


Figure B12b. Society Results Item Level Percent Scores – Functional Department

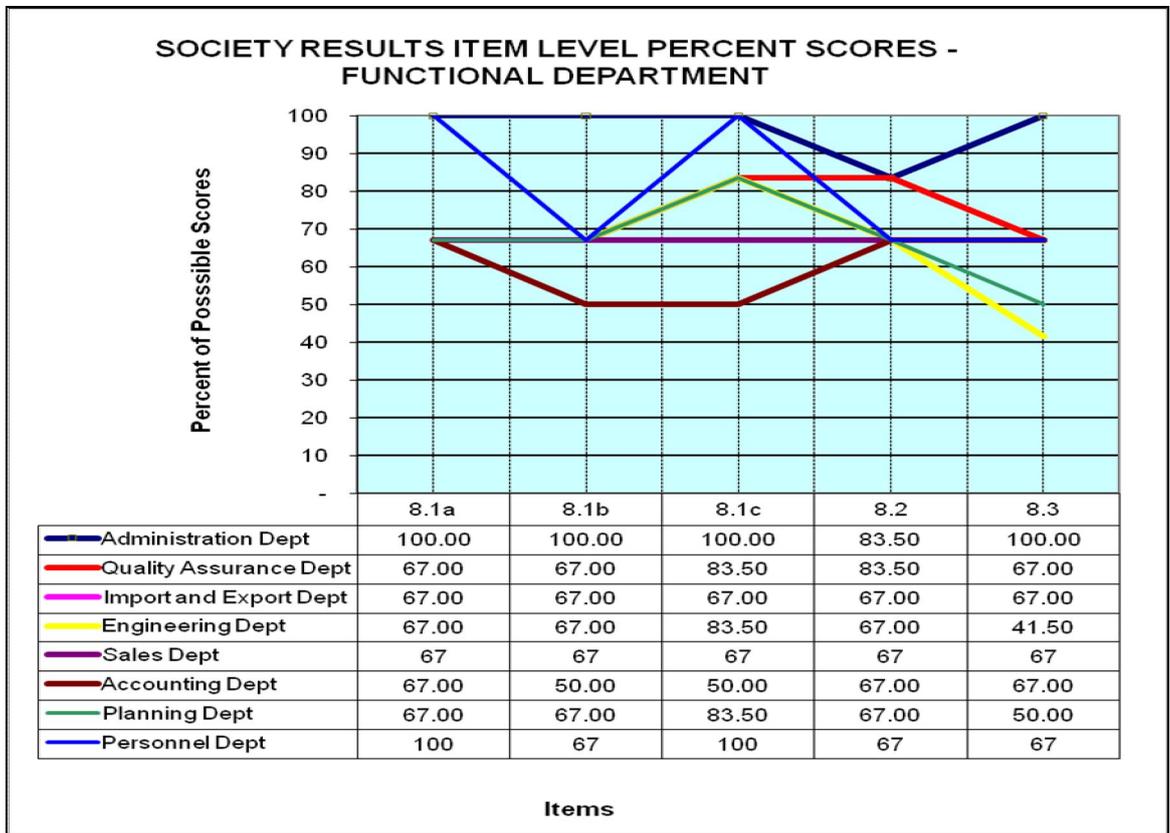
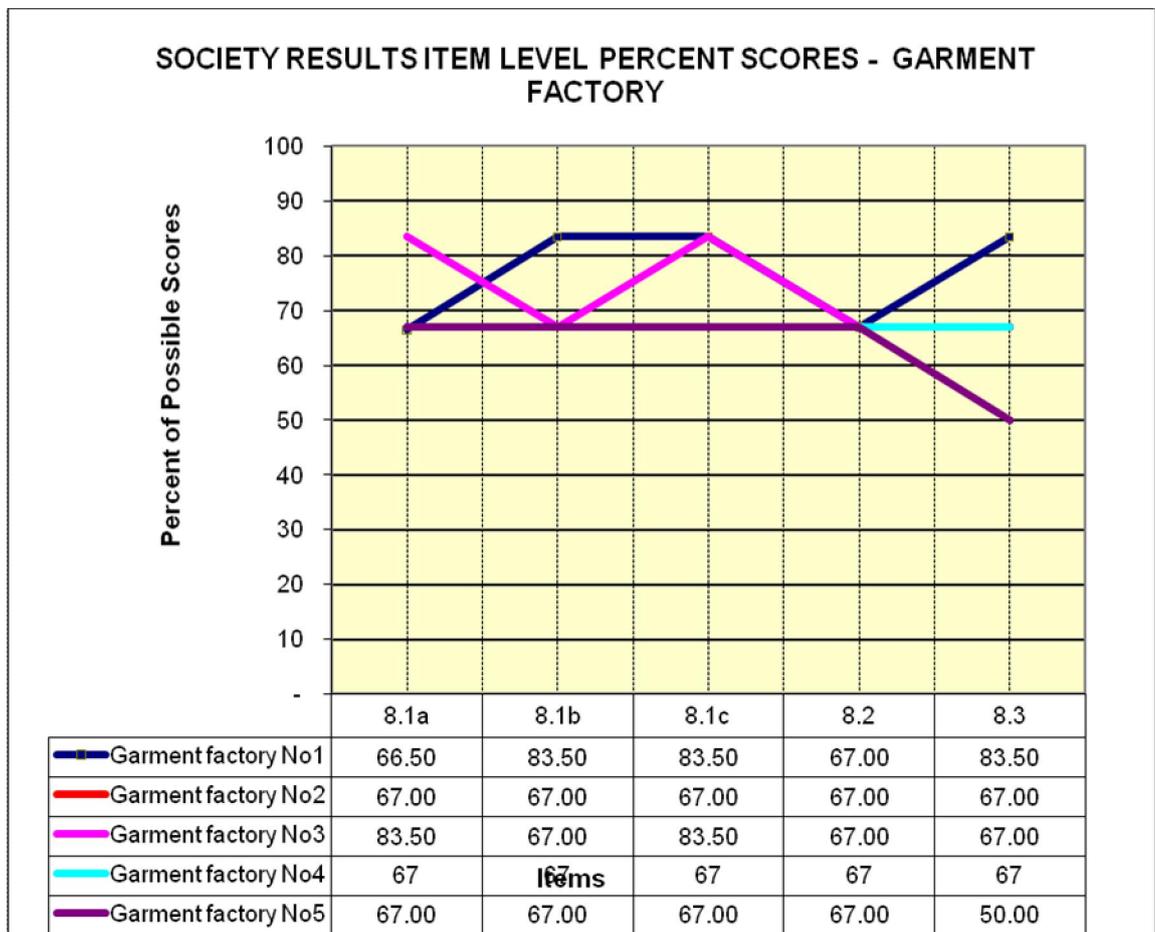


Figure B12c. Society Results Item Level Percent Scores – Garment Factory



CRITERION 9: KEY PERFORMANCE RESULTS

Table B12. Key Performance Results Item scores in Company B

	<i>Items</i>	<i>% percent</i>
9.1	<i>Do the results of your organisation's key financial and non-financial outcomes (e.g. profits, margins, volumes, market share etc) show an improving trend?</i>	73.07
9.2	<i>Do these key financial and non-financial outcomes have results that are comparable with/better than direct competitors or equivalent organisations?</i>	65.56
9.3	<i>Are there results segmented by the various parts of the business, markets, and/or products and services to show differences in performance?</i>	59.33
9.4	<i>Is the performances of all activities (processes) that directly contribute to a product or service measured and know?</i>	66.81
9.5	<i>Are the results of the products and service activities showing an improving trend?</i>	70.56
9.6	<i>a. Are the results of these product and service activities compared with others</i>	72.08
	<i>b. and can be shown to be comparable/better?</i>	69.46
9.7	<i>a. Are the results of the support and administration activities (e.g. IT, planning, legal, security, accounts) showing an improving trend</i>	73.00
	<i>b. . and can they be shown to be comparable/better than other organisations?</i>	65.59

Figure B13. Key Performance Results Item Level Percent Scores

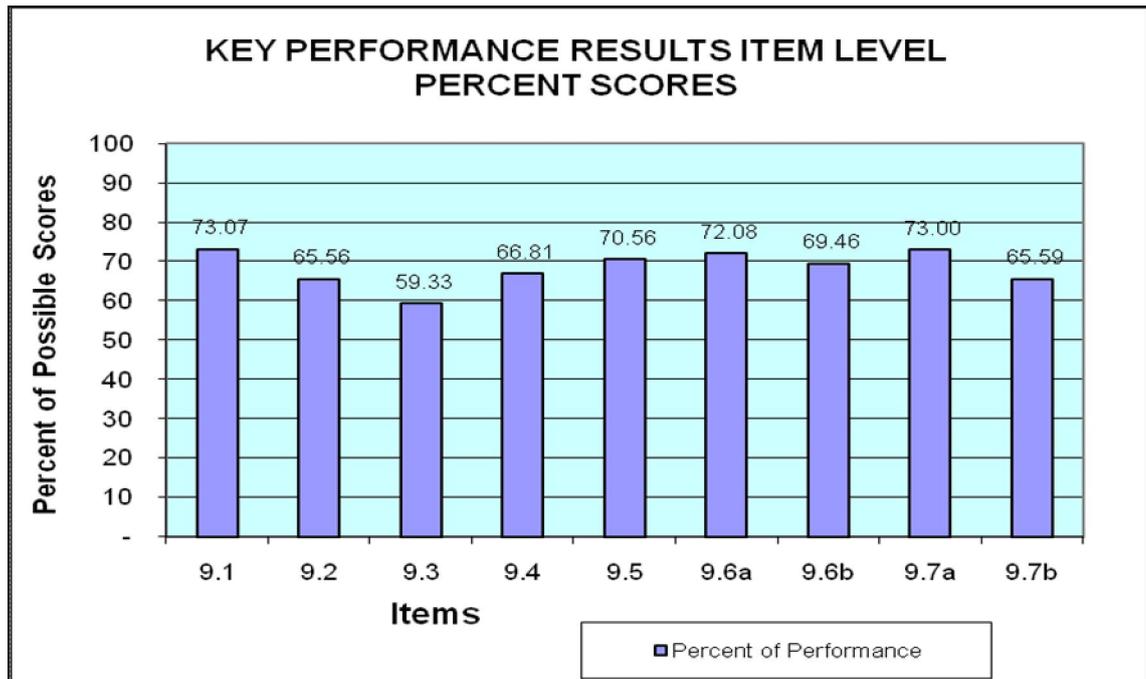


Figure B13a. Key Performance Results Item Level Percent Scores- Management group

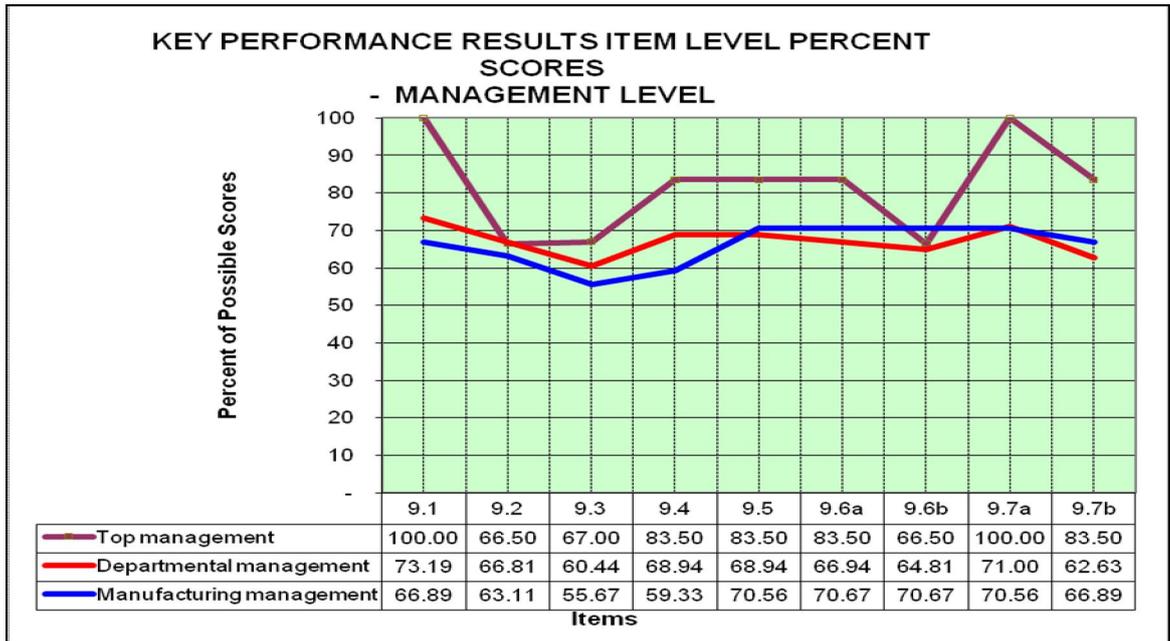


Figure B13b. Key Performance Results Item Level Percent Scores- Functional Department

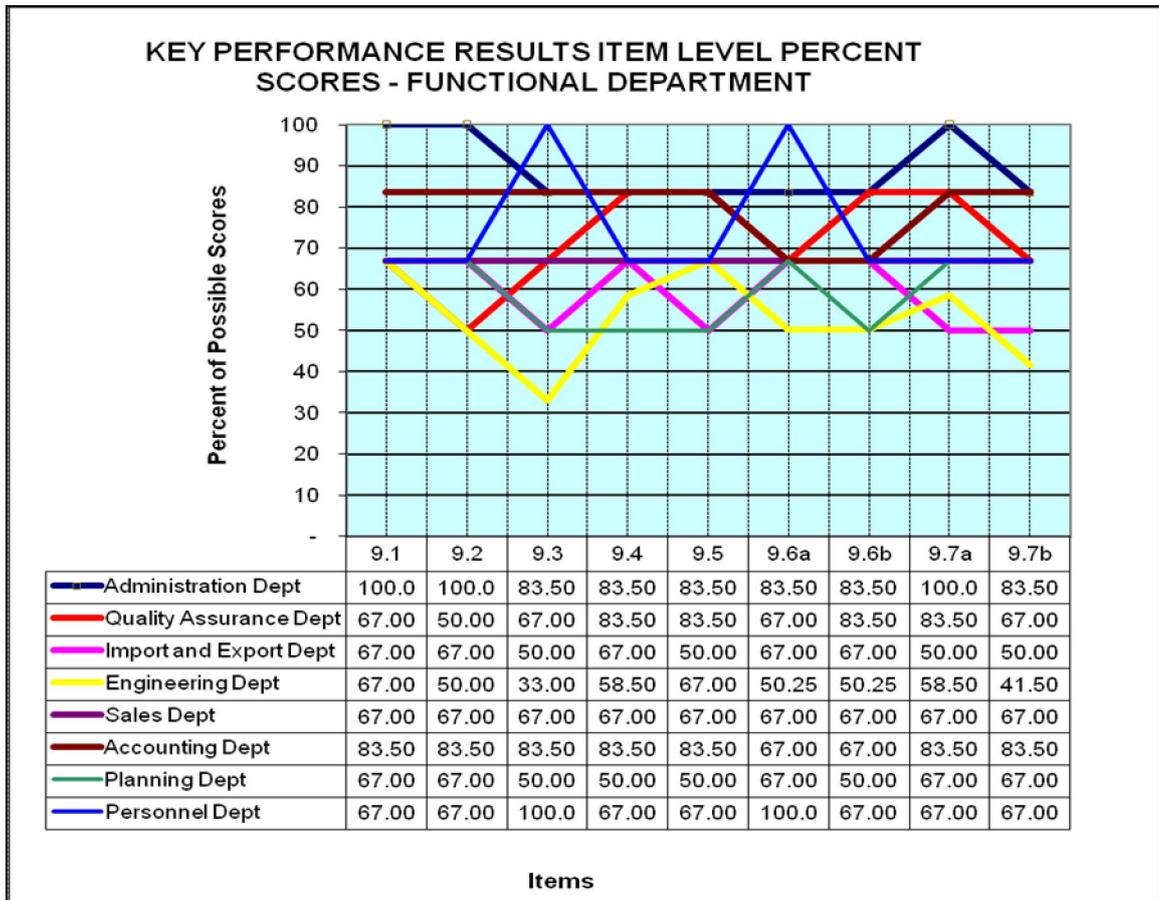
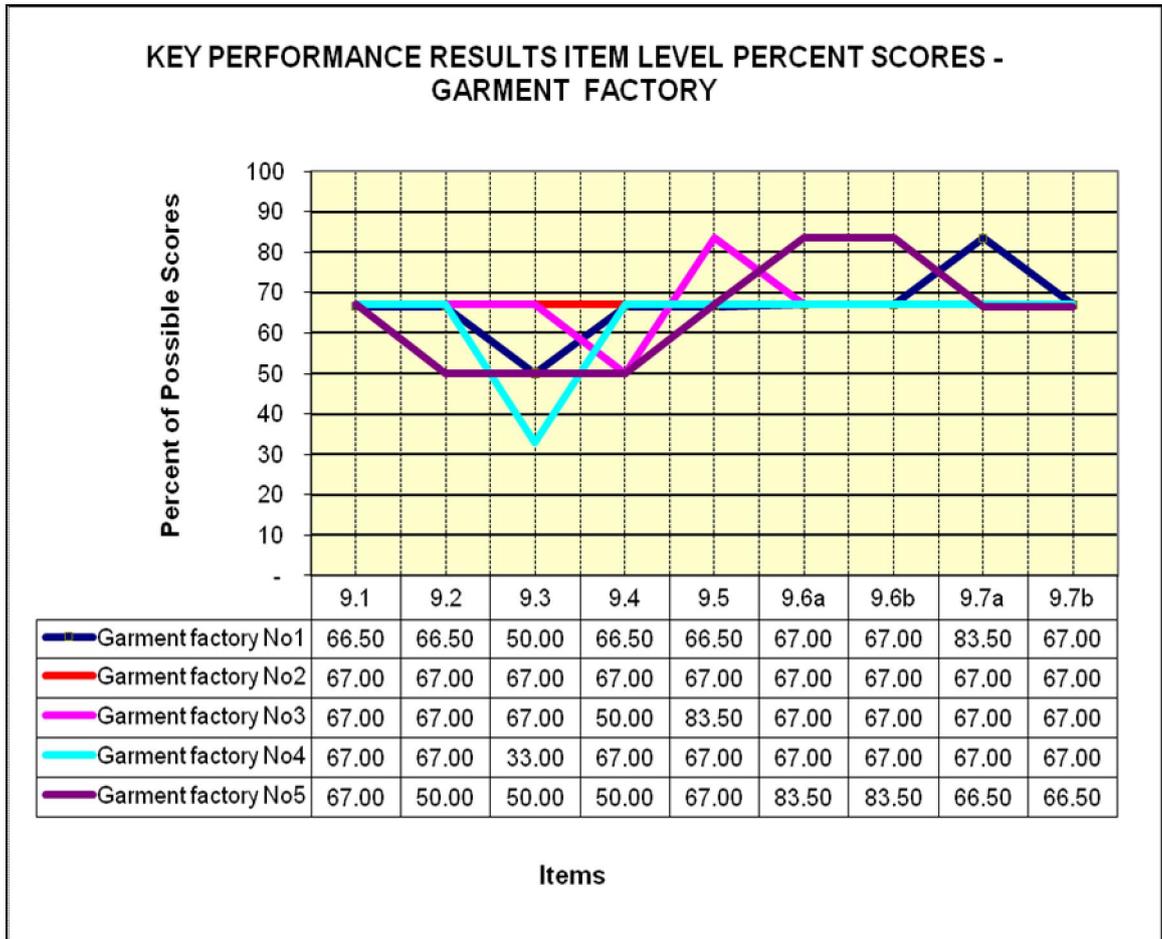


Figure B13c. Key Performance Results Item Level Percent Scores – Garment Factory



LIST OF INDIVIDUAL SCORES – COMPANY B

	CR1	CR2	CR3	CR4	CR5	CR6	CR7	CR8	CR9
Scorer 1	53.40	67.00	53.40	60.20	62.14	74.22	70.30	74.30	66.86
Scorer 2	53.40	67.00	60.20	67.00	66.86	63.22	67.00	66.98	67.00
Scorer 3	63.60	50.00	53.40	43.20	52.43	51.89	60.20	66.98	64.57
Scorer 4	60.20	50.00	67.00	67.00	57.29	57.56	67.00	70.64	67.00
Scorer 5	53.40	50.25	36.60	53.40	43.00	63.22	60.20	66.98	62.14
Scorer 6	46.60	50.00	60.20	60.20	67.00	57.56	46.60	63.20	42.71
Scorer 7	43.20	37.25	50.00	60.20	47.57	57.56	67.00	66.98	67.00
Scorer 8	73.60	83.50	80.10	83.50	76.43	74.33	80.20	85.30	83.50
Scorer 9	46.60	50.00	53.40	53.40	47.57	48.11	53.40	66.98	57.29
Scorer 10	63.40	45.75	53.40	53.40	52.43	48.11	53.40	66.98	67.00
Scorer 11	36.40	62.75	56.80	46.60	57.29	51.89	50.00	66.98	57.29
Scorer 12	73.40	54.25	67.00	60.20	61.86	55.67	56.80	88.97	78.79
Scorer 13	63.30	75.00	93.40	100.00	85.71	66.83	73.60	66.98	76.43
Scorer 14	93.30	58.25	70.00	80.00	71.57	72.28	86.80	77.63	78.57
Scorer 15	63.40	37.38	43.20	56.80	57.29	61.33	60.20	66.98	62.14
Scorer 16	76.80	75.13	83.50	76.90	81.14	78.00	73.60	74.30	74.07
Scorer 17	56.70	58.38	66.70	63.50	47.43	44.33	70.20	59.31	54.86
Scorer 18	44.33	62.50	66.78	70.30	52.29	40.56	73.40	55.64	47.57
Scorer 19	53.40	62.63	60.10	80.20	71.57	66.88	80.20	59.43	95.29
Scorer 20	46.60	62.50	53.30	73.60	42.86	53.78	53.40	59.31	52.43
Scorer 21	70.00	66.75	73.40	56.80	47.43	49.94	70.20	59.31	54.86
Scorer 22	53.40	41.50	66.70	73.60	52.43	51.89	60.20	66.98	67.00
Scorer 23	74.22	46.00	73.50	93.40	61.86	94.50	73.50	88.97	88.21
Scorer 24	50.00	45.75	50.00	56.80	42.71	46.22	36.40	55.64	55.67
Scorer 25	70.30	67.00	66.90	67.00	67.00	68.83	73.60	66.98	67.00
Scorer 26	93.40	79.13	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.0	100.00
Scorer 27	70.10	58.38	56.60	50.10	57.14	72.39	73.50	77.98	76.29

Appendix N. Design of Semi-structured Interviews

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS TEMPLATE

Duration: about 40-60 minutes.

Introduction

To acknowledge the state-of-the-art management practice around the world, especially in developed countries, the award-based/business excellence-based self-assessment is believed to be an approach which is used to underpin continuous improvement by measuring an organisation's current performance against an award/excellence model which represents a position of excellence. In this study, the EFQM self assessment questionnaire was chosen as the main application to verify the usefulness of SA European techniques in particular Vietnamese textile and garment cases. Additionally, SA using the existed award (- the Vietnam Quality Award) applied (in our company) is explored. Finally, a comparison of both approaches could be addressed if possible.

Objectives

PRIMARY: To evaluate the usefulness of SA using the EFQM questionnaire to enhance the company's effectiveness.

SECONDARY: To investigate the self assessment experience using the existing quality award approach (the Vietnam Quality Award application)

Interviewee profile

Company name:.....

Interviewee name:

Position:

Procedures

Sign the Participant Informed Consent Form

Sign the Research Organisation Informed Consent Form

Contents:

Session A: Evaluate the specific benefits of SA results using the EFQM questionnaire (SA-EFQM)

[Referencing: The position of the case organisation on the journey to Excellence (establish the current level of organisational excellence/ where are they) EFQM 2000]

1. (BENEFITS) Among six intended benefits of the EFQM SA questionnaire, which ones have gained in your company?

Benefit a. Help your organisation identify its current position and determine future directions and priorities

Benefit b - Allow comparisons with the achievements of other organisations.

Benefit c- Encourage your organisation to monitor its progress on a regular basis.

Benefit d- Assess whether all members of a management team have the same view of the organisation's achievements and weaknesses

Benefite e - Create a focus for agreeing improvement priorities

Benefit f- Benefit Ensure that the organisation is not over-stressed by too many improvement actions

2. Among your responses, what is the most important benefit of using the SA-EFQM? And why? In addition, do you suggest any other benefits of your own?
3. In terms of the results, how do you think about the accuracy of SA results? And could you tell me **the reason** why did you think so?
4. Which specific criterion was accurate/inaccurate? Also, why you believe that the aforementioned criterion is strong/weak?
5. Were you already aware of your company's strengths and weakness? How did you know about them? And which information in the criteria and sub-criteria is new?
6. As you know, the EFQM scoring standard has provided 3 ranks as follows: a typical score with 200 points (20%); a very good organisation with 500 points (50%) and world class one with 750 points (75%). Indeed, your company's overall score is X%. How do you comment

about it? Do you really think that your organisation is **very close to world-class**? Or have you got some difficulties with scoring?

7. After completing the SA-EFQM, would you say its results have helped to strengthen your whole organisational (and / or operational unit) effectiveness? What is your evidence?

Session B: SA IMPLEMENTATION using the EFQM approach

(Recap the factual SA using the SA_EFQM process that the interviewee went through)

1. Do you think individual assessment effect to SA implementation? Which factors have such impacts?
 - a. *Their scores*
 - b. *Understanding*
 - c. *Attitude and psychological issues*

2. Do you think that organisational resources have some impacts on SA implementation in your company? What is about? Among the following aspects, what are the critical factors for successful SA-EFQM implementation in Vietnamese organisations? And why?
 - a. *Quality management*
 - b. *Top commitment*
 - c. *Education and Training*
 - d. *Communication*
 - e. *Others*

3. Do you think that organisational management culture has some impacts on SA implementation in your company? What is about?
4. Do you think that national culture has some impacts on SA implementation in your company? What is about?
5. Based on the advantages of SA using questionnaire tool, which advantage do you agree with? And do you suggest any other advantages of your own?
 - a. *Easy to implement/use*
 - b. *Clearly-defined goals*
 - c. *It is a simple tool*
 - d. *Quick/ not time-consuming*
 - e. *Low efforts/ Low resources requirements*

6. Of the disadvantages of following the SA_EFQM, do you agree with any particular issues? And do you suggest any other disadvantages of your own? Do you think that one of those could explain the reason for the limitation of SA implementation?
 - a. *Lack of accuracy of overall outcome*
 - b. *The output represents perception and requires validation*
 - c. *Difficult to identify the causal factors*
 - d. *Lack of the need to provide evidence*
 - e. *Others*

7. Among those factors you thought to be the success factors for successful SA, which one is the most important? And why?

8. Generally, do you think SA-EFQM is useful for Vietnamese organisations in improving organisational effectiveness and competitiveness? Why or Why not?

Session C: SA WITH THE VIETNAM QUALITY AWARD (VQA) - Optional

- Have you got experience as a recipient the VQA?

If Yes:

1. What role did you play in SA using the VQA application? And what knowledge did you have in that process?
2. How would you describe the SA process?
3. Do you think SA-VQA is useful for Vietnamese organisations in improving organisational effectiveness and competitiveness? Why or Why not?
If so, what are the **benefits** you discovered when conducting SA with the VQA approach? And what are the **difficulties** encountered throughout this process?
4. Did you know about the VQA score of your organisation? What do you think about it?
5. If you have any choices, which one will be recommended as the most suitable approach for Vietnamese organisations in improving organisational effectiveness and competitiveness? Why or Why not?

Appendix O. The actual scores of the Vietnam Golden Quality Award winners 2006 – 2008

Source: The Vietnam Quality Award Office, 2009

In 2006:

List of 06 enterprises awarded the Vietnam Quality Gold Prize and Certificate of Merit by the Prime Minister in 2006

Number	Name	Province/City	Score
<i>Large Production Enterprises (04 prizes) A</i>			
1	Cuu Long Pharmaceutical J.S.C	Vinh Long	813.5
2	Dong Nai Rubber Company	Dong Nai	935
3	Huu Nghi Cement Company	Phu Tho	886.5
4	SAMSUNG VINA Electronics Company	HCM City	907.25
<i>Small and Medium production Enterprises (01 prize) B</i>			
5	Dien Ban Agricultural and Pharmaceutical Company	Quang Nam	900
<i>Large Service Enterprise (01 prize) C</i>			
6	Petroleum Company B12	Quang Ninh	890.3

In 2007:

No	Winners	Score
<i>Large production Enterprises (04 prizes) A</i>		
1	AGIFISH ANGIANG Joint-stock Company	818.5
2	LG ELECTRONICS VIETNAM Ltd, Co.	915.5
3	EUROWINDOW Ltd, Co.	848
<i>Small and Medium production Enterprises (01 prize) B</i>		
4	VIET THAI PANTING Limited Company	913.4
5	MINH DUNG Trading and Producing Ltd, Co.	851.75
<i>Large Service Enterprise (01 prize) C</i>		
6	COMECO Petroleum Materials Joint-Stock Company	921.75

In 2008:

STT	Winners	Score
<i>Large Production Enterprises (04 prizes) A</i>		
1	BINHLONG Rubber Company	931
2	VIETNAM Electric Cable Corporation – CADIVI	930.75
3	KHANH HOA Salanganes Nest Company	854.5
4	VIGLACERA HA LONG Ceramic Joint-stock Company	897.3
5	THANH HOA Medical Materials Pharmaceutical Joint-Stock Company	947
<i>Large Service Enterprise (01 prize) C</i>		
6	HAI DUONG Environmental and pure water provision Limited Company	913.5

Appendix P. The score bands of the Vietnam Quality Award winners (2005-2008)

Source: The Vietnam Quality Award Office, 2009

Score band	0-250	251-350	351-450	451-550	551-600	601-650	651-750	751-875	>875	Total samples	Average score
2005						4	25	87	18	134	799.3
2006						3	28	76	22	129	806.1
2007						2	34	73	23	132	799.3
2008						2	30	73	17	122	791.8
TOTAL						11	117	309	80	517	799.1
%						2%	23%	60%	15%		

Appendix Q. Equivalent functions in template analysis and NVivo software

Sources: Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2007; *NVivo 8 Help: using the Software* - QRS, 2008

Techniques	Template analysis	Equivalent functions in NVivo 8
INSERTION	-Insertion of a new code into the hierarchy as the result of a relevant issue being identified through data collection for which there is existing code	<p>-Adding Nodes (from the beginning of working) by key codes of template</p> <p>-Creating Nodes While Coding</p> <p>-Let NVivo Create Nodes for You (Automatically)</p> <p>- Editing Nodes Properties: changing name and other modifications</p> <p>-Copy Nodes: copying a node within its own node folders or across node folders.</p>
DELETION	Deletion of (unwanted) code from the hierarchy	Deleting Nodes: when delete a Node, its coding is removed from all relevant sources.
CHANGING SCOPE	Altering the level of code within the hierarchy	<p>-Moving Nodes: by using Cut and Paste options, or Drag and Drop.</p> <p>Nodes can move between folders, within trees.</p>
CHANGING HIGHER-ORDER CLASSIFICATION	Reclassifying a code to a different category	<p>-Adding/Copying/Deleting/ Renaming/Moving Folders.</p> <p>-Sorting Nodes: Sorting the display of Nodes to suit the way you want to work.</p> <p>-Merging Nodes: If two or more nodes have similar meaning or content, they can be merged them together or with another node.</p>

Techniques	Template analysis	Equivalent functions in NVivo 8
CODING	Relationships: define and code hierarchical relationships manually	<p>Coding: by selecting and coding the contents in transcripts gathered in the node.</p> <p>Uncoding: by existing nodes, or entire content of one or more sources.</p> <p>Adding/Editing Relationships: after defining the type of relationships between 2 nodes (i.e. <i>Lack of understanding</i> -> <i>Inaccuracy</i>), information can be coded/deleted/uncoded at relationships.</p>
ANALYSING	Handle manually	<p>-Filtering transcript: is a quick and easy way to find and work with a subset of the data in your transcript by using Filter button.</p> <p>- Sorting transcript: by the content in custom column by using Sort by option.</p>

Appendix R. Company A profile

Possessing many producing advantages, Company A is currently a well-known and competitive manufacturer for garments, but not for textiles and upstream products. This is similar character to other companies which have the same multi-functions. Additionally, Company A and other neighbours own potential low-cost resources owing to geographical location and the labour market.

The main manufacturing site, the spinning mill, has been equipped with four spinning lines using technologically advanced machinery from Germany, Switzerland and Japan. This mill has a total of more than 58,000 spinning spindles; its annual capacity is 9,000 tons of various yarns, such as combed and carded cotton yarn, polyester and blended yarn. Along with the spinning mill, the knitting-dyeing mill has an annual capacity of 2,500 tons of knitting/dyeing, and finishing/finished products. Besides, as the biggest revenue contributor among the company's members, the garment factory has currently been supplying both large international and the domestic markets with a range of diversified items, including T-shirts, polo-shirts, jackets, short-pants, and knitting and weaving fabrics.

With an annual production capacity of 9 000 tons of cotton and over 2.5 million clothing products, this company makes a critical contribution to the local government budget and is recognised as the region's industrial leader. In 2009, the turnover rate was 530 billion Vietnam Dong (equivalent to 17.2 million GBP) including 62 % from exports. Its major export market is the USA (50%); followed by Japan and Europe. Company A had maintained a good reputation with famous consumers, such as Perry Ellis, Sears, and Regatta, as a high quality manufacturer over many years.

In the quality aspect, Company A has applied the quality control system of ISO and it received the certificate of 9001:2000 in 2003. The latest vision statement of the company is '*Looking forward to doing lasting business with all customers*'. The VQA has been given to this company twice: in 1997 and 2002. Furthermore, to support product access to American markets, Company A received the Worldwide Responsible Apparel Production Certificate, in brief SA 8000, and other certificates of the Custom & Trade Partnership Against Terrorism (C-TPAT).

Structure of management

Structure of management consists of Shareholder Council; Management Council; Control Department; General Director and professional departments.

General Director: a person of supreme power in the company who decides all matters referring to daily operations and is directly responsible to Management Council for his power and duties.

Deputy General Director: assistant to the General Director and is directly responsible to the General Director for his assignment, actively settling issues which are assigned and authorized by the General Director according to the State and company's policies and regulations.

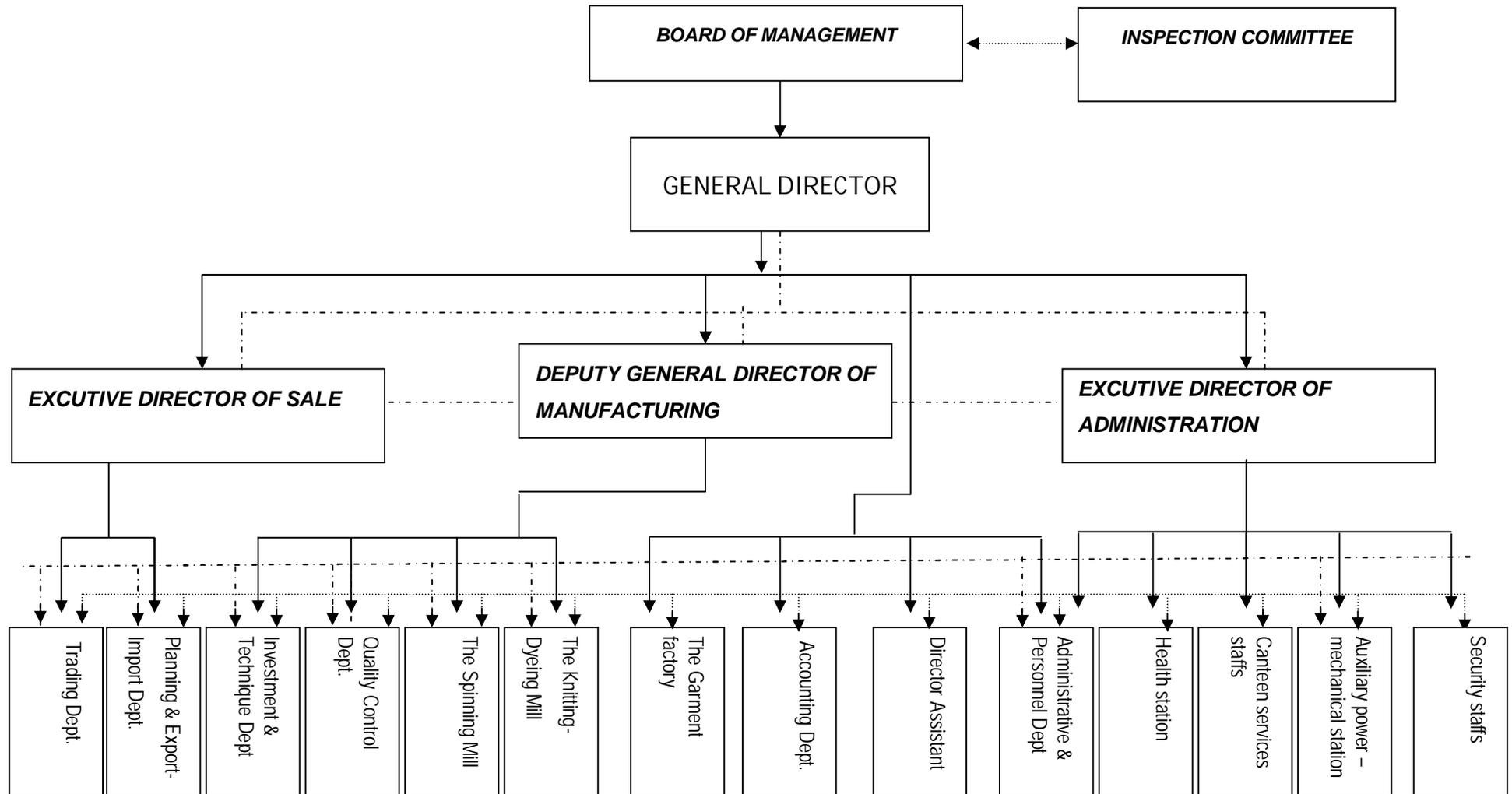
Professional departments: operate as advisors and assistants to the Board of Directors and directly manage their own professional field and are controlled by the Board of Directors. The company's head offices consist of six departments (dept). They are: Administrative & Personnel department; Accounting department; Planning and Export-Import department; Investment and Technical department; Sales department; and Quality Control department, as follows:

- *Administrative & Personnel Dept.* work as advisor and assistant to the Board of Directors for labour force control and labour safety; they set up human resources improving programmes to develop the company. Update regularly the State's policies to apply for the company's operation, they solve labour policies for employees, drafting and issuing regulations for the company accordingly to labour laws.
- *Planning & Export-Import Dept.* work as advisor and assistant to the Board of Directors for marketing strategy, choosing customers & exploiting markets and setting up business activities programmes to achieve maximum effect. Other task involves planning production schedule monthly, quarterly, yearly basing on real capacity of the company. Further duties include taking delivery of raw materials and accessories, arranging the production as scheduled and supervising implementation for signed sale contracts.
- *Accounting Dept.:* work as advisor and assistant to the Board of Directors in planning of the use of the company budget, financial management, setting up financial plan monthly, quarterly and annually. Their duties consist of analyzing financial activities to remain source of capital, establishing organizing statistic, liquidation all expenses of the company production and trade according to the State's financial regulations.
- *Quality Control Dept.:* work as advisor and assistant to the Board of Directors for supervising technical quality issues during each process of the factory production they control consumption rate of materials, accessories and equipment. They also set forth standards for product quality, consulting to choose clients and setting forth the strategy target for quality for the entire company.
- *Trading Dept.:* work as advisor and assistant to the Board of Directors for the trading programmes to sell products in the domestic market, arranging production and developing domestic market according to the company's orientation.

Investment & Technique Dept.: work as advisor and assistant to the Board of Directors for strategies of long-term general investment, setting up investment plans for equipment and spare parts, repairing and installing new equipment. They set up & issue technical consumption rate, also adjusting the consumption rate, as well as organizing meetings on technical solutions in order to maintain stable production for high productivity.

THE STRUCTURE OF COMPANY A

Valid date: 27/3/2006



Appendix S. The Tree Nodes Report from NViVo software

Name	Memo Link	Sources	References	Created On	Created By	Modified On	
Theme1_EFQM benefits				20/08/2010 11:59		20/09/2010 16:14	
	Name	Memo Link	Sources	References	Created On	Created By	
	1a-Intended benefits				20/08/2010 12:00		
		Name	Memo Link	Sources	References	Created On	Created By
		1a_most important benefit				27/09/2010 03:43	
			Name	Memo Link	Sources	References	Created On
			benefit a		14	22	24/11/2010 02:50
			benefit d		4	5	24/11/2010 02:55
			benefit e		2	3	24/11/2010 02:55
		1a-a_help the org. identify its position and determine direction		12	21		
			Name	Memo Link	Sources	References	Created On
			1a_a1_Very good - ranking		2	3	28/11/2010 23:10
			1a_a2_suggested lower position-pretty good		8	17	24/11/2010 01:40
			1a_a3_inprecise position		3	3	24/11/2010 01:39
		1a-b_allow comparison with other companies		2	2	12/01/2010 19:05	
		1a-c_encourage to monitor regularly		1	1	12/11/2009 15:56	
		1a-d_assess the management views		9	17	06/11/2009 22:56	
		1a-e_focus priorities		5	7	12/11/2009 15:56	

		1a-f_avoid over-stressed by many improvement actions.		0	0	14/11/2009 00:35	
	1b-Other benefits						
		Name	Memo Link	Sources	References	Created On	Created By
		1b1_identify company's strengths & weakness		15	43	27/11/2009 00:54	
		1b2_enhance organisational learning		11	27	06/11/2009 22:40	
		1b3_involvement enhancement		1	1	25/11/2009 22:49	
		1b4_help to improve competitiveness		1	1	29/11/2009 16:53	
Theme2-useful for effectiveness improvement							
	Name	Memo Link	Sources	References	Created On	Created By	Modified On
	2a_useful in general		12	23	21/08/2010 00:25		05/01/2011 17:16
	2a1_useful with certain conditions		6	13	21/08/2010 00:27		14/12/2010 17:32
	2b_evidence of improvement actions		3	4	29/11/2009 17:27		04/12/2010 13:41
	2c_desire to implement later		5	6	14/12/2010 17:06		05/01/2011 17:16
Theme3_Implementation factors							
	Name	Memo Link	Sources	References	Created On	Created By	Modified On
	3a_Individual impacts				20/08/2010 13:12		20/09/2010 16:33
		Name	Memo Link	Sources	References	Created On	Created By
		3a1_scoring				06/11/2009 20:26	
			Name	Memo Link	Sources	References	Created On
			3a1_Accuracy				03/11/2009 16:16
				Name	Memo Link	Sources	References
				Accurate		4	7
				mostly accurate and acceptable		18	28

				quite accurate		6	7
			3a1a- scoring is useful		3	3	09/11/2009 00:05
			3a1b - easy to score-not focus on high score		1	4	10/11/2009 01:10
			3a1c_emphasis on the high score		13	47	10/11/2009 01:12
			3a1d_focus on improvement than score		2	4	24/11/2009 22:38
			3a1e_scoring - assessment approach				09/11/2009 00:17
				Name	Memo Link	Sources	References
				comparing to previous similar aspect		2	2
				comparing to similar companies in VN		6	14
				different view existed in scoring between department & factory team		5	8
				lack of evidence		9	18
				Purely on the evidence presented		4	9
				relationship between personal accountability and their scores		4	7
			3a1f- wrong assessment scopes		5	10	13/11/2009 23:37
			3a2_understanding				06/11/2009 20:28
				Name	Memo Link	Sources	References
			3a2a_easy to understand		6	9	06/11/2009 23:08
			3a2b - lack of understanding		12	50	06/11/2009 20:31
			3a2c - not easy to understand		8	13	06/11/2009 20:32
			3a2d - improper knowledge-confusion		6	18	13/11/2009 23:43
			3a2e_awareness is crucial for successful SA		2	2	14/12/2010 17:25

			3a2e_interpreted issue - language difficulties		4	7	20/09/2010 16:28
		3a3_attitude				10/11/2009 02:10	
			Name	Memo Link	Sources	References	Created On
			3a3_SA results depend on scorer's attitude		4	9	24/11/2009 21:38
			3a3N1_lack of interest		6	13	14/11/2009 00:17
			3a3N2_subjective view		7	13	10/11/2009 22:58
			3a3N3_lack of rigor		6	8	27/11/2009 22:24
			3a3N4_dealing with internal conflict		3	4	10/11/2009 02:11
			3a3N5_inferiority		3	3	18/01/2010 01:01
			3a3N6_over-optimistic		3	4	14/11/2009 00:09
			3a3P1_serious- careful		14	24	10/11/2009 02:13
			3a3P2_objective view		3	4	10/11/2009 02:11
			3a3P3_rigorous		6	9	10/11/2009 02:10
		3a3_psychological impacts		3	5	15/11/2009 17:35	
			Name	Memo Link	Sources	References	Created On
			3a31_Afraid of a low score		2	4	15/11/2009 17:34
			3a32_Afraid of being out of line with others		4	5	10/11/2009 02:10
			3a33_Never score leaders low		1	3	02/12/2010 22:33
			3a34_preperception about score scale		4	6	10/11/2009 22:53
		3b_organisational resources influences			20/08/2010 13:18		20/09/2010 16:34
			Name	Memo Link	Sources	References	Created On Created By
		3b1_quality management experience				15/11/2009 14:08	

			Name	Memo Link	Sources	References	Created On
			3b1a - positive impact of quality management		3	3	25/11/2009 01:51
			3b1b - inefficient quality system		4	7	15/11/2009 14:08
			3b1c - difficulties when implementing quality issues		5	6	25/11/2009 01:51
			3b1d- lack of benchmarking experience		3	4	24/08/2010 12:01
		3b1_VQA the VQA experience					
			Name	Memo Link	Sources	References	Created On
			3b1VQA_benefits gained		3	4	02/12/2010 22:32
			3b1VQA_details of the participation		6	19	02/12/2010 22:31
			3b1VQA_disadvantages_shortages		7	13	02/12/2010 22:32
			3b1VQA_not involved		9	10	05/12/2010 02:24
		3b2_top commitment					
			Name	Memo Link	Sources	References	Created On
			3b1a_ fully committed		3	4	25/11/2009 00:35
			3b1b_top commitment is crucial		15	30	25/11/2009 00:37
		3b3_education&training					
			Name	Memo Link	Sources	References	Created On
			3b3a_adequate training		2	2	18/01/2010 01:36
			3b3b_More training is needed		4	11	06/11/2009 20:31
			3b3c_external consultant is essential		1	1	18/01/2010 01:02
			3b3d_not-well educational background		3	8	13/12/2010 05:53
			3d3f_Training is crucial.		8	12	25/11/2009 00:51

		3b4_communication- information sharing					
			Name	Memo Link	Sources	References	Created On
			3b4a_communication is important		6	8	07/11/2009 00:03
			3b4b_sufficient information		1	1	09/11/2009 23:42
			3b4c_lack of efficient (intersectional) communication		8	12	07/11/2009 00:05
		3b5_management competence				06/11/2009 20:38	
			Name	Memo Link	Sources	References	Created On
			3c2a- quite good management competence		3	4	06/11/2009 20:40
			3c2b- inefficient top competence		5	5	06/11/2009 20:40
			3c2c- weak management competence		10	23	06/11/2009 20:40
	3c_management culture influences						
		Name	Memo Link	Sources	References	Created On	Created By
		3c1-change management				14/04/2010 19:37	
			Name	Memo Link	Sources	References	Created On
			determination for changing		2	3	14/04/2010 19:38
			positive evidence for change		3	4	14/04/2010 19:39
			resistance to change		3	6	14/04/2010 19:39
	3d_Vietnamese cultural impacts						
		Name	Memo Link	Sources	References	Created On	Created By
		3d1_culture has little impact		3	4	27/11/2009 22:14	
		3d2_negative impact from Vietnamese characteristic		6	9	27/11/2009 22:14	
		3d3_Over-emphasis on the high score		3	6	27/11/2009 21:27	

	3e1_advantages of EFQM implementation						
		Name	Memo Link	Sources	References	Created On	Created By
		ad_a_easy to implement		10	18	25/11/2009 01:25	
		ad_b_clear defined goals		5	5	25/11/2009 01:26	
		ad_c_it is simple tool		5	8	25/11/2009 22:29	
		ad_d_quick		3	3	25/11/2009 01:26	
		ad_e_low efforts- low resource requirement		2	2	29/11/2009 15:54	
	3e2_disadvantages						
		Name	Memo Link	Sources	References	Created On	Created By
		dis_a_Lack of accuracy of scoring outcome		13	44	27/11/2009 23:44	
		dis_b_The output represent perception and require validation		10	19	25/11/2009 23:09	
		dis_c_unfamiliar language		8	12	15/11/2009 14:10	
		dis_d_Difficult to identify the causal factors		6	8	15/11/2009 13:29	
		dis_e_difficulty in implementation generally		4	7	15/11/2009 13:30	
		dis_f_Lack of the need to provide evidence		5	8	24/11/2009 23:54	
		dis_g_other-hard to sustain SA process regularly		2	2	11/11/2009 00:17	
	3f_key success factor						
		Name	Memo Link	Sources	References	Created On	Created By
		awareness		2	2		
		communication		3	3		
		scoring		1	2		
		Top commitment		6	6		

		training		6	6		
Theme4_potential usefulness in VN							
	Name	Memo Link	Sources	References	Created On	Created By	Modified On
	4a1_useful in Vietnam in general		13	26	24/11/2009 23:38		05/01/2011 14:19
	4a2_useful with certain conditions		6	22	04/11/2009 21:11		05/01/2011 17:31
	4a3_it helps to improve competitiveness		3	3	24/11/2009 23:40		04/12/2010 14:19
	4a4_hard to deploy widely		3	6	15/11/2009 18:28		04/12/2010 14:19
	4b_Suggestions		3	8	11/05/2010 16:13		04/12/2010 14:20

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