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**DOCTORAL SCHOOL „*EDUCATION, REFLECTION, DEVELOPMENT*”**

**EFQM Model (Organizational Excellence) Assimilation Methods in Arab  
Sector Schools in Israel**

**Long Abstract**

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Because the sky is not the limit...

## **Abstract**

The present study explores the effect of the process of assimilating organizational excellence according to the E.F.Q.M., on the change of organizational culture in Arab sector schools in Israel. The study is important since its findings can interest schools that have assimilated the model. Moreover, the developed model can provide a response to any organization interested in improving the assimilation of an organizational change. The present study investigated ten Arab schools, that have implemented the E.F.Q.M. model. The schools belong to all the age groups and to various sub-sectors within the Arab sector (Arab, Bedouin and Druze).

The present study was conducted according to the mixed methods approach. The first stage was a qualitative research which consisted of 70 participants and used interviews and focus groups. Based on the themes and categories emerging from data analysis a questionnaire was designed for the quantitative research that encompasses 249 participants.

The main findings indicate a differentiation between the participants with regard to the perception of assimilation methods. Significant differences in the assimilation method variables were found between teachers, according to their ethnic origin. However, some assimilation methods were illustrated by all the sectors. Furthermore, the findings show an impact on the organizational culture change in the two layers: the overt layer, manifested by the change in the work methods and mechanisms and the covert layer, associated with the change in the interpersonal and professional relationships among the teachers and between the teachers and the school management. Another finding illustrates a positive relation between the extent of assimilating the model and the extent of its effect on the organizational culture, regardless of the ethnic and cultural differences between the sectors.

Perusal of the findings indicates that each sector has its own ethnic individuality that affects the choice of the assimilation methods in compliance with the needs and uniqueness of each sector. It is recommended consolidating and institutionalizing the assimilation process, in order to strengthen a positive and promoting effect, leading to the improvement and cultivation of the organizational culture of the assimilating schools.

Key words: E.F.Q.M., education in the Arab sector in Israel, organizational culture, excellence in education, organizational excellence, assimilating change in education

## **INTRODUCTION**

The present study explores the effect of organizational excellence process, assimilated according to the E.F.Q.M. model, on the change of organizational culture in Arab sector schools in Israel. In order to comprehend the essence of the study, an emphasis is put on two key terms that serve as the foundation for the entire study: Arab education in Israel and the E.F.Q.M. model.

### **Arab education in Israel**

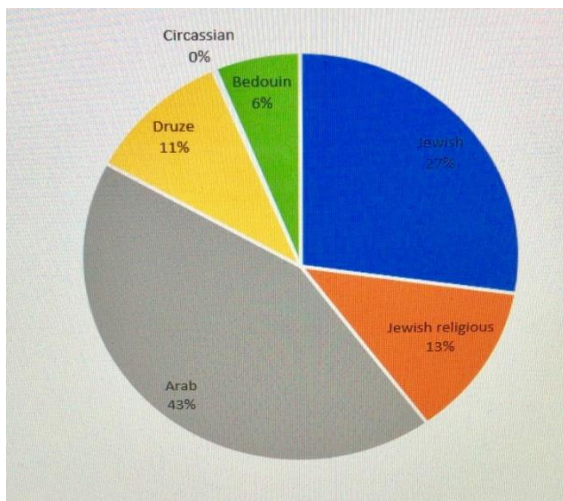
Education constitutes a basis of every society, particularly if this concerns education of a minority group within a multi-national and multi-cultural society (Abu-Assba, 2006). The Arab education system in Israel forms part of the state education stream. This is pursuant to the Compulsory Education Act – 1953, that regulates the structure of education in Israel in two main streams: state education and religious-state education (Jabareen & Agabaria, 2010, Golan-Agnon, 2004). The Compulsory Education Act stipulates a legal and organizational reference to both the Jewish and Arab education. Nevertheless, disregard of the unique interests of the Arab learners is obvious. This is manifested, on the one hand, by separate schools, i.e. Arab education pupils learn in separate schools that are unique to the Arab sector and are located near the learners' place of residence. They have Arab teachers and principals as well as curricula adapted to the Arab sector. Moreover, some of the curricula in the Arab schools have been adapted, in certain aspects, to the Arab pupils. On the other hand, Arab education in Israel is managed according to the Jewish sector policy and decision-makers, and has never benefited from an Arab self-management (Jabarin & Agabaria, 2010, Golan-Agnon, 2004). The very fact that the Arab education is not autonomous in setting its policy, places it in the position of only implementing the decisions, lacking the ability to impact the outline of the Arab education in accordance with its unique culture and needs.

Today, most of the Arab schools are defined as formal schools whereas the others schools recognized as non-formal ones (this category includes mainly ecclesiastical schools in Israel). All the schools in the Arab sector in Israel operate under the supervision and funding of the Ministry of Education. This is demonstrated mostly by means of the mentoring and management teams in the various districts, the general and professional inspectors of the Ministry of Education, as well as small and unique units of an internal sub-division prevalent today as sub-streams of the Arab education (Arab, Bedouin and Druze) (Abu-Assba, 2007).

A multi-year view of the number of pupils in the Israeli education system, indicates a growth in their numbers over the years in the two sectors – Jewish and Arab. The Jewish education has increased by 41% and the Arab education in approximately 64%. When looking more accurately at the academic year 2018-2019, the figures show that 76% of the pupil population in the Israeli education system learn in the Jewish education, while 24% learn in the Arab education that encompasses the Bedouins, Druze and Circassians. It is noteworthy that, until the academic year 2009, the number of Arab learners was higher than the learners in the Jewish education. Moreover, perusal of the updated figures illustrates an increase in the number of Jewish pupils, compared to a decrease in the Arab education (Ministry of Education, 2019).

According to Abu-Assba (2013), the Arab education system in Israel has been growing as illustrated by the number of learners in the educational institutions and by the impressive attainments of the system graduates. Nonetheless, the gap in attainments between the Arab and Jewish sectors has yet to be bridged, perpetuating the low status of the Arab citizens in Israel from a socio-economic point of view (Abu-Assba, 2013).

The northern district of the Ministry of Education includes the highest percentage of Arab pupils in the country. Figure No. 1 presents the distribution of the pupils in the northern district by sectors (Arab sector consisting of Muslims, Christians, Bedouins and Druze).



**Figure No 1: Ministry of Education northern district – Statistics**

The present study relates to school as an organization for all intents and purposes (Sergiovanni, 2002). In fact, according to this assumption, every school organization is required to adjust itself to the new era, namely make a progress, improve itself and enhance its performance. In order to implement this approach, chosen schools in the northern district of the Ministry of Education, committed themselves to this challenge and were integrated in a designed program for learning and assimilating the model of organizational excellent and quality – E.F.Q.M. This model is part of a whole system based on the methodology of the European Organizational Excellence Prize. It represents a strategic-managerial perception and constitutes a powerful leverage for the promotion of quality and excellence in the organization (Civil Service Commission, 2004).

### **E.F.Q.M. around the world**

Figures of the E.F.Q.M. website illustrate the following:

1. 30,000 organizations are using at present the E.F.Q.M. model of excellence, in order to promote their strategy, focus on crucial issues and achieve operational and financial results.
2. More than 100,000 people depend on the E.F.Q.M. website in order to learn the most updated information regarding techniques for improving their business!
3. 700 firms in 35 countries are members of the E.F.Q.M.
4. 25 national partner organizations (NPOs) in Europe have started working with the E.F.Q.M. model in order to enhance sustainable excellence.
5. 400 organizations have won recognition as award winners in Europe since 1992.
6. The on-line learning platform of the organization (Excellence One) receives inputs from 99 countries.
7. The network of the E.F.Q.M. organization operates in 15,000 organizations worldwide, each employing millions of people ([www.efqm.org.il](http://www.efqm.org.il)).

These figures indicate that the E.F.Q.M. model is implemented as a policy of excellence and constant improvement in European business organizations. However, there are no figures relating to the implementation of the E.F.Q.M. as a policy for constant improvement of the European education system.



## **E.F.Q.M. in Israel**

The Civil Service Commission in Israel has adopted the E.F.Q.M. excellence system and, through the Department of Quality and Excellence in the Civil Service, it leads its inculcation. The Ministry of Internal Affairs has embraced the organizational excellence system as part of the activity for organizational development of the local authorities' administration and it implements the system by means of the Department of Municipal Administration. Additional public organizations have decided to adopt the system and many others show interest in it (E.F.Q.M., 2013).

The E.F.Q.M. organizational excellence system has been designed for providing response to organizations for the purpose of focusing their needs and the options of promoting the organization quality and excellence. This aim is accomplished by an accurate conceptualization of the organizational practice, the use of clear indices of examination and the application of effective and available diagnosis instruments, following swift learning and improvement processes (E.F.Q.M., 2014).

In order to achieve academic excellence, schools must adapt themselves to the pupils' developmental needs and emphasize social equality. They should encompass organizational structures as well as high-quality mechanisms and processes. Today, the organizational excellence model has been assimilated in schools around the globe: Spain, United States, Arab counties, Egypt and others.

In Israel, the E.F.Q.M. model was introduced in 2011 into the northern district education system as an educational policy for excellence and constant improvement. Every two years, 15 schools from all the sectors (Arab, Jewish, Druze and Bedouin) and from all age groups (primary, junior high and high schools) have been chosen. Up to now, four cycles have been completed. Each cycle comprised 15 schools from the two sectors (Jewish and Arab). A total number of 60 schools have joined the process, 25 of them being Arab schools. The present study focuses on the investigation of 10 Arab schools, out of the 25 schools that have completed the support process for assimilating the E.F.Q.M. model. The investigated schools have been chosen from three sectors: Arab, Bedouin and Druze.

## **Gap in knowledge**

The existing empirical literature does not include studies of assimilating the E.F.Q.M. program in Arab schools in Israel. This program has been implemented since 2011 in Israel in 25 Arab sector schools and 35 Jewish sector schools. The research aim was to explore the processes of assimilating the model in the Arab schools in Israel as well as the changes in the school organizational culture.

Furthermore, the present study underscores the intercultural issues in several contexts and their effect on the processes of assimilating the change in the schools that have introduced the E.F.Q.M. process. This relates particularly to different levels of intercultural differences. On the one hand, the E.F.Q.M. originated in Europe, which is culturally different from the assimilating schools. On the other, the model is implemented in schools from the Arab and Jewish sectors, encompassing intercultural differentiation between their sub-sectors (Jewish, Arab, Bedouin and Druze).

## **Research aims**

- a. To examine the methods of assimilating the E.F.Q.M. organizational excellence model in Arab sector schools in the northern district in Israel.
- b. To examine the changes that have transpired in the school organizational culture following the implementation of the E.F.Q.M. model in the Arab sector schools in Israel.

## **Research questions**

In order to accomplish these aims, two major research questions were formulated:

- a. Which implementation methods have been applied for the purpose of continuing the E.F.Q.M. model in the Arab sector schools?
- b. Which changes have transpired in the school organizational culture following implementation of the E.F.Q.M. model in the Arab sector?

## **Importance of the present study**

The present study is important because it will provide schools in particular and any organization in general an assimilation model that will assist them in continuing and even expanding the E.F.Q.M. assimilation in an effective manner. This will promote and develop their organizational work culture, as well as improve it.

### **Research boundaries**

The present study was conducted according to the mixed methods approach: interviews and focus groups in the qualitative part and questionnaires in the quantitative part. The first stage consisted of the qualitative research and, based on it, the questionnaire in the quantitative research was designed. The present study lasted two years (2018-2019) in ten Arab schools that had assimilated the E.F.Q.M. model. Sixty participants took part in the qualitative research, whereas the quantitative research encompassed 249 participants. All the participants were teachers, principals and quality coordinators, working at those assimilating schools.

**Keywords:** E.F.Q.M., education in the Arab sector in Israel, organizational culture, excellence in education, organizational excellence, assimilating change in education.

## **CHAPTER I: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

The present study is innovative, exploring the effect of the organizational excellence process according to the E.F.Q.M. model, on the organizational culture change in Arab sector schools. The present study is unique since the effect of assimilating the E.F.Q.M. model in Arab sector schools in Israel, has not been investigated, raising points of reference that are associated with the multicultural and intercultural aspects and the extent of their impact. On the other hand, the research findings and research recommendations can assist the Arab schools and schools that assimilate the E.F.Q.M. model, in rationalizing and improving the assimilation process. Moreover, the recommendations can help any organization that is undergoing a process of assimilating an organizational change.

Consequently, two main research aims have been defined. The first aim was examining the methods of assimilating the E.F.Q.M. organizational excellence model in Arab sector schools in the northern district in Israel. The second was examining changes that have transpired in the school organizational culture, following the implementation of the E.F.Q.M. model. In order to accomplish these aims, two research questions were formulated. The first question related to the implementation methods applied by the schools for the assimilation of the E.F.Q.M. model, and the second put an emphasis on the changes that transpired in the school organizational culture, following implementation of the E.F.Q.M. model.

## **I.1 Theoretical Framework Pertaining to This Research**

The present study is mainly grounded in major theories that constitute the main motive from its beginning to its end.

The present study is underpinned by the organizational excellence E.F.Q.M. model (La Rotta & Pérez Rave, 2016), with a focus on the education for quality and excellence (Grienberg & Simchon, 2017). In order to examine the changes in the organizational culture, two main theories that engage in this field, have been chosen: the three circles model of Aviad Raz (2004) and the pyramid (iceberg) model of Schein (2004). Furthermore, organizational culture theories in the educational system in particular (Zifroni, 2008), have been examined. While analyzing the generation of a change in the schools, an emphasis was put on theories that engaged in the organizational culture of the education system in general (Blaustein, 2018), and change in the organizational culture of schools in particular (Gorodetsky & Weiss, 2010). Multiculturalism in education (Ben-Porat, Yonah, & Bashir, 2016), and intercultural education (Elkahar & Tal, 2013) were also underscored.

## **I.2 Key Concepts Underpinning the Present Study**

The conceptual framework of the present study consists of several key concepts that are derived from wide theories.

*The organizational excellence model E.F.Q.M.:* The E.F.Q.M. is a business model of quality and excellence, established by the European Foundation located in Belgium. The model offers a holistic organizational envelope that assists every organization in cultivating and upgrading its working processes for the purpose of achieving its results and the constant improvement thereof (Gómez-López, Serrano-Bedia, & López-Fernández, 2015).

*Education for quality and excellence:* We are living today in a dynamic world that is rapidly and constantly changing. Thus, what is relevant today can become irrelevant tomorrow. This obliges the education system to function in a reality of constant improvement processes (excellence). At the same time, the education system must nurture and promote quality processes, while relating to a new concept in the world of education, namely the customer. That implies that the customer determines the extent of quality of the education system (Grienberg & Simchon, 2017).

*Organizational culture:* The organizational culture reflects the essence and unique worldview of the organization, underscoring the values, behavioral norms and working norms of the organization members (Friedman, 2013a).

*The Pyramid Model:* The Pyramid Model of Schein (2004), relates to the organizational culture through three strata. The first stratum is artefacts and it is the overt stratus. The second stratum is the espoused values and it is covert and the last stratum is the basic underlying assumptions and it is the most covert stratus of the model (Schein, 2004).

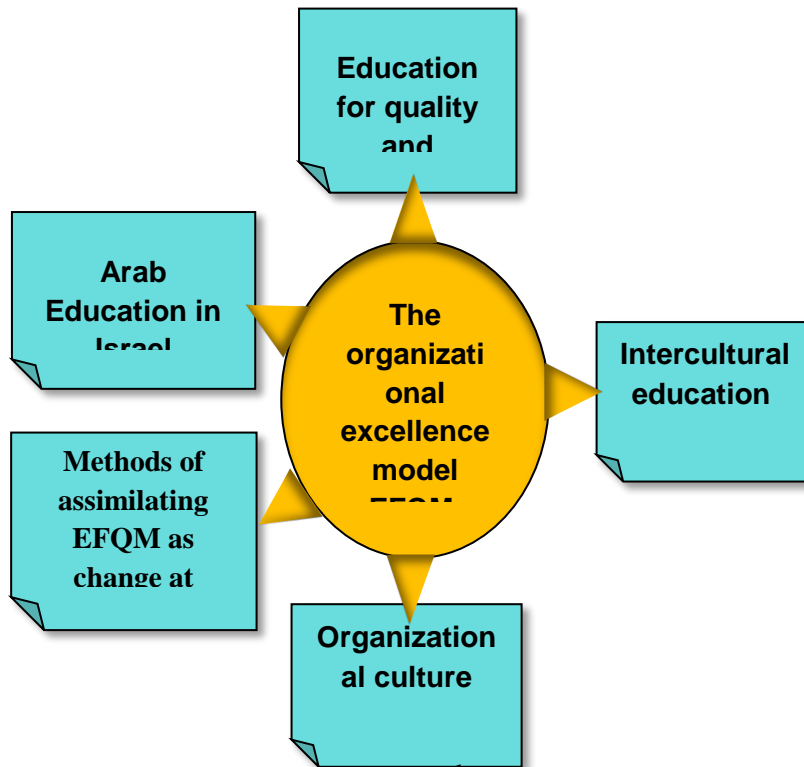
*The three circles model:* This model was developed by Aviad Raz (2004). Its fundamental point is that the organizational culture of every organization consists of three central circles with interfaces between them. The first circle is the managerial culture of the organization, the second circle is the workplace culture and the third relates to the surrounding culture of the organization (Raz, 2004).

*Arab education in Israel:* The Arab education system is part of the general education system of the State of Israel. Today, Arab pupils are learning in separate schools or with Arab-speaking teachers (with the exception of bi-lingual schools). They mostly learn according to a curriculum that is adapted in certain aspects to the culture and characteristics of the Israeli Arab culture (Jabareen & Agabaria, 2010).

*Methods of assimilating a change at school:* Schools, like any other organization, undergo change processes. Many researchers have investigated this topic and proposed several strategies. One of the main strategies is the developmental strategy, advocating that in order to lead change processes at school, it is necessary to invest in teachers who are the change ambassadors and the main element in its assimilation (Gorodetsky & Weiss, 2010).

*Intercultural education:* Many researchers have explored the issue of interculturalism in education. Their findings illustrate that extensive efforts have been exerted in the promotion of intercultural education, fostering an intercultural discourse. In fact, studies show that teachers have to be trained so that they can lead this task in a way that enhances an intercultural dialogue, based on equality of the various cultures (Elkahar & Tal, 2013).

Figure I.2 presents a visual model of the conceptual framework that underpinned the present study.



**Figure No. I.2: Visual model of the conceptual framework**

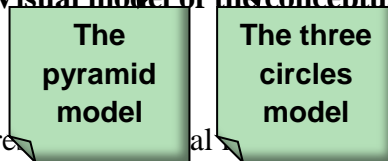


Figure No. I.2 presents a visual model of the conceptual framework of the present study, while underscoring its key concepts. The relationship between the concepts can be identified since the E.F.Q.M. model is at the heart of the model, being the central essence of the present study. Investigation of the E.F.Q.M. model focused on its assimilation in the Arab education system in Israel, as part of the promotion of quality and excellence processes. For the purpose of examining the extent of the E.F.Q.M. model assimilation and its impact on the education system, an emphasis was put on Arab schools that have assimilated the E.F.Q.M. model. These schools are included in the Arab education system. The present study explored the extent of the E.F.Q.M. model assimilation and the extent of its effect on the organizational culture change of these schools. In the data analysis and conclusion drawing, the present study relied on two key models of organizational culture, the Pyramid Model and the Three Circles Model.

This conceptual framework directed the present study, conducted in a structured form that facilitated its systematic course. This is detailed in the next chapter, that discusses the methodological considerations of conducting the present study.

## **CHAPTER II: The Description of the Pedagogical Research Entitled E.F.Q.M. Model (Organizational Excellence) Assimilation Methods in Arab Sector Schools in Israel**

The present study explored the extent to which the E.F.Q.M. model assimilation has affected the organizational culture in Arab schools in Israel.

### **II.1 Research Aim, Research Questions, Research Hypotheses and Variables**

#### ***II.1.1 Research aims***

- a. To examine the methods of assimilating the E.F.Q.M. organizational excellence model in Arab sector schools in the northern district in Israel.
- b. To examine the changes that have transpired in the school organizational culture following the implementation of the E.F.Q.M. model in the Arab sector schools.

#### ***II.1.2 Research questions***

In order to accomplish these aims, two major research questions were formulated:

- a. Which implementation methods have been applied for the purpose of continuing the E.F.Q.M. model in the Arab sector schools?
- b. Which changes have transpired in the school organizational culture following implementation of the E.F.Q.M. model in the Arab sector schools?

#### ***II.1.3 Research hypotheses***

1. There will be a difference in the methods of assimilating the E.F.Q.M. model between the schools that received the support of the Ministry of Education a year ago and the schools that received the support of the Ministry of Education three years ago in the Arab sector.
2. There will be a difference in the methods of assimilating the E.F.Q.M. model between the schools according to the different investigated Arab sectors, i.e., Druze, Bedouin and Arab.
3. There will be a difference in the organizational culture changes, following the assimilation of the E.F.Q.M. model between the schools that received the support of the Ministry of Education a year ago and the schools that received the support of the Ministry of Education three years ago in the Arab sector.
4. There will be a difference in the school organizational culture changes following the assimilation of the E.F.Q.M. model between the schools according to the different investigated Arab sectors, i.e., Druze, Bedouin and Arab.
5. There will be a **correlation** between the extent of the model assimilation and the extent of its effect on the organizational culture of the schools in the Arab sector.

#### *II.1.4 Research Variables in this research*

<b>Dependent variables</b>	<b>Independent variables</b>
<b>Assimilation methods of the E.F.Q.M. model</b>	How much time has elapsed since the school has received tutoring and support for the assimilation of the E.F.Q.M. model?



<b>Changes in the organizational culture</b>	The ethnic sector to which the teacher belongs
	Extent to which the E.F.Q.M. model has been assimilated

## **II.2 Research Paradigm**

### ***II.2.1 Mixed methods research***

A mixed methods research integrates the two research methods (qualitative and quantitative). Conducting a mixed methods research, can facilitate an understanding of the investigated problem better than any other research type. There are four ways of integrating these two research types (Creswell & Clark, 2011). The first way is collecting and analyzing quantitative and qualitative data in parallel. That is, researchers wish to compare the obtained quantitative data to the qualitative ones. The second way is merging all the data collected from the two research types, so that they are presented together. This can be done by interpretation or discussion, following an analysis of the findings from each approach separately. At these stages, the findings are presented after being merged. The third way is using qualitative instruments for explaining the quantitative data. One starts by collecting and analyzing the quantitative data and, then, according to the findings, qualitative data are collected. That is, the quantitative research is central and the qualitative research supports and assists it. The fourth way is starting with the qualitative research and, based on the data analysis and obtained data, one continues with a quantitative research that helps clarifying and interpreting the data collected from a larger sample. Each of these ways is an integration of the data obtained from the two research types, creating together a wider and clearer picture of the investigated problem.

**Table No. 1.I : Distribution of the research field – 10 schools**

Age group	Primary school 1 <sup>st</sup> -6 <sup>th</sup> grades	Junior high school 7 <sup>th</sup> -9 <sup>th</sup> grades	High school 7 <sup>th</sup> - 12 <sup>th</sup> grades	Special education Ages 6-21
Sector				
Arab (Muslim, Christian)	2	1	2	1
Arab (Bedouin)		2		
Arab (Druze)	1		1	

### II.3 Research Design

At the first stage, the data were collected according to the qualitative method. A focus group of principals, teachers and position holders was set up. The objective was to examine in what ways they had assimilated the program at their school and the effect thereof on the school organizational culture. Based on the findings of the focus groups, the researcher of the present study identified central points to which more attention should be paid, constituting the basis for the personal interviews with the principals and the various position holders. The research topic was investigated by comparing the initial stage prior to the assimilation process and the stage following the assimilation, in order to elucidate the foci of change and their impact. The findings of the focus groups and the interviews were served for building the questionnaires that were the basis of the quantitative research.

**Table No. 2.I : Research design**

Stage	Research Aim	Research Question	Research instrument	Research population	Data Analysis
<b>Stage 1:</b> <b>Qualitative research</b>	1. To examine the methods of assimilating the E.F.Q.M. organizational excellence model in Arab sector schools in the northern district in Israel.  2. To examine the changes that have transpired in the school organizational culture following the implementation of the E.F.Q.M. model in the Arab sector schools in Israel.	- Which implementation methods have been applied for the purpose of continuing the E.F.Q.M. model in the Arab sector schools?  - Which changes have transpired in the school organizational culture following implementation of the E.F.Q.M. model in the Arab sector ?	Discussion in the focus group: 50 Teachers in Arab assimilating schools	Content analysis	
			Semi-structured interviews	10 Principals of assimilating schools  10 Quality coordinators	Content analysis
<b>Stage 2:</b>	- To examine the methods of	- Which implementation	Close-ended	Teachers, coordinators	Statistics

<b>Quantitative research</b>	assimilating the E.F.Q.M. organizational excellence model in Arab sector schools in the northern district in Israel. - To examine the changes that have transpired in the school organizational culture following the implementation of the E.F.Q.M. model in the Arab sector schools in Israel.	methods have been applied for the purpose of continuing the E.F.Q.M. model in the schools? - Which changes have transpired in the school organizational culture following implementation of the E.F.Q.M. model in the Arab sector ?	questionnaire	a total of 249 participants	
<b>Improving the assimilation program in accordance with the research findings</b>					
<b>Stage 3: Qualitative research</b>	To collect views of experts in	What views do experts in E.F.Q.M.	Focus group discussion	5 Principals of	Content analysis

	E.F.Q.M. assimilation regarding the improved program	assimilation regarding the improved program have?		assimilating schools 5 Quality coordinators	
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## CHAPTER III: FINDINGS

### III.1 Integrated Findings Obtained from the Qualitative and Quantitative Research

Research question No. 1: "Which implementation methods have been applied for the purpose of continuing the E.F.Q.M. model in the schools?".

The integration of the findings obtained from the qualitative and quantitative parts of the present study with reference to the assimilation methods implemented in the school illustrated that:

- (1) According to the findings of the quantitative research, research hypothesis No. 1 was refuted. There was no significant difference between teachers in their identification of the assimilation methods of the E.F.Q.M. according to the time elapsing between the support they received from the Ministry of Education and the model assimilation.
- (2) The finding obtained from the quantitative research shows that research hypothesis No. 2 was partly corroborated. Significant differences in the assimilation method variables (professional development about the E.F.Q.M. model and leadership by the quality coordinator) were found between the teachers according to the ethnic sector to which they belonged. The main impact was demonstrated by teachers from the Druze sector with low mean values as compared to the assimilation method variables in the Arab and Bedouin sectors who indicated high mean values. In the Druze sector, leadership by the quality coordinator was high as an assimilation method, whereas in the Arab and Bedouin sectors, teachers' professional development was indicated as the high assimilation method.
- (3) There was a consensus about the assimilation by working according to the E.F.Q.M. model instruments, that was indicated as the most common assimilation method in both the

quantitative and qualitative findings. Moreover, it was indicated from the viewpoint of the management and the teachers.

- (4) Teachers' professional development as an assimilation method was demonstrated to great extent in both the principals' interview and the questionnaires analysis. It was highest in the percentage of participants who indicated it as an assimilation method. On the other hand, this method was partly demonstrated by the quality coordinators and was not demonstrated at all in the teachers' focus group.
- (5) The quality coordinators' interview on the one hand and the percentage of teachers who responded to the questionnaires on the other, pointed out the leadership by the quality coordinator as a meaningful function in the process of assimilating the E.F.Q.M. model. Conversely, the principals specified this method to small extent in the interviews and the teachers did not indicate this method at all in the focus group.
- (6) In their interview, the quality coordinators indicated to great extent peer learning as an important method, while it also received a high score in the interviews' analysis. On the other hand, this method was not raised at all in the teachers' focus group and the principals indicated it to small extent as a method of assimilating the E.F.Q.M. model.
- (7) Both the principals and the quality coordinators indicated partly in their interview that setting up a quality unit was an assimilation method. Similarly, the questionnaires items showed that teachers partly mentioned this assimilation method. Conversely, teachers in the focus group specified to small extent the quality unit as an assimilation method.
- (8) The teachers in the quality group elaborated to great extent the method of working by improvement teams as a method of assimilating the E.F.Q.M. model. Unlike them, the principals and the quality coordinators, as well as the teachers in the quantitative research, partly indicated working by improvement teams as a method of assimilating the E.F.Q.M. model.
- (9) The quantitative findings illustrated that assimilation methods that integrated learning and training were the most efficient for assimilating the E.F.Q.M. model.
- (10) The research findings showed, although to small extent, that the perceptions about the methods of assimilating the E.F.Q.M. model were random and even partial.

- (11) The research findings indicated that according to the teachers' perception, albeit to small extent, the E.F.Q.M model had not been assimilated. On the other hand, this point was not raised by the principals and the quality coordinators.
- (12) To sum up, the findings illustrated a gap between the participants' positions about the methods of assimilating the E.F.Q.M. model.

**Table No.3.I: Participants' positions about the assimilation methods in the two research approaches**

Assimilation method	Principals (interviews – qualitative)	Quality coordinators (interviews – qualitative)	Teachers (focus group – qualitative)	Teachers (questionnaire – quantitative) Increased ranking from 1-5
<b>Professional development</b>	Full	Partial	Not raised at all	High 3.17
<b>Setting up a quality unit</b>	Partial	Partial	To small extent	Partial 2.88
<b>Peer learning</b>	To small extent	To great extent	Not raised at all	High 3.04
<b>Leadership by the quality coordinator</b>	To small extent	To great extent	Not raised at all	High 3.11
<b>Working according to the instruments of the E.F.Q.M. model</b>	<b>Full</b>	<b>Full</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>High 3.08</b>
<b>Working by improvement teams</b>	Partial	Partial	High	Partial 2.78
<b>Random and partial assimilation</b>	Low	Low	Partial	Low 1.028
<b>No assimilation</b>	Not raised at all	Not raised at all	Low	Low 1.045

Findings pertaining to Research question No. 2: “Which changes have transpired in the school organizational culture following implementation of the E.F.Q.M. model?”

- (13) The findings showed that research hypothesis No. 3 was refuted. No significant difference was found between the teachers in their identification of changes in the school organizational culture, following the assimilation of the E.F.Q.M. model, concerning the time that elapsed since they received the Ministry of Education support and the assimilation of the model.
- (14) Based on the quantitative findings, research hypothesis No.4 was corroborated. No significant difference was found between the teachers in their identification of changes in the school organizational culture, following the assimilation of the E.F.Q.M. model, concerning the ethnic sector to which teachers belonged.
- (15) The quantitative findings illustrate that research hypothesis No. 5 was corroborated. There was a straight statistical correlation, significant and strong in its intensity between the extent of assimilating the E.F.Q.M. model and changes in the school organizational culture. That is, the higher the extent of assimilation was, the more meaningful changes transpired in the school organizational culture. This trend was manifested in all the teacher groups, as far as the time of the Ministry of Education support and the ethnic sector were concerned.
- (16) In the covert layer, a change in the perception of leadership of the school leadership was clearly pointed out in the principals and quality coordinators' interviews. Both groups emphasized a change in authority delegation, open leadership, teachers' empowerment, etc. The teachers too indicated a change in the management's attitude towards them. This was manifested by partnership, empowerment, encouragement and so on. Moreover, in the quantitative research, this element obtained the highest score by the teachers who responded to the questionnaire.
- (17) In the overt layer, the assimilation of the E.F.Q.M. model assisted the schools in changing their working methods and adopting new working mechanisms, such as: working by processes, learning from other organizations, working by data and others. There was high reference to this change in both the quantitative and qualitative research, rationalizing the work in the participants' schools.
- (18) In the covert layer, in both the quantitative and qualitative research, the teachers concurred about their personal development as teachers. This was manifested by their way of thinking that was expanded and became more thorough, as well as by the professional conduct among themselves.



- (19) In the covert layer, in the qualitative research and partly in the quantitative research, the teachers specified a change in the inter-personal relationships among themselves, manifested by listening, attention, partnership, etc. In parallel, the principals and the quality coordinators indicated this change under the heading of “a change in the teachers’ behavioral norms”. They gave examples for this change, while elaborating on the change in the relationships among the teachers themselves.
- (20) In the overt layer, a change in the physical visibility as a result of assimilating the E.F.Q.M. model, was mentioned to small extent by all the participants in both the quantitative and qualitative research.
- (21) A change in the teachers’ attitude to the parents and the learners was also raised as a covert change. Throughout the quantitative and qualitative research, the participants indicated that, following the assimilation, a change in this aspect was manifested by attention, partnership and so on.

## **CHAPTER IV : CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **IV.1 Factual conclusions obtained in relation with research question No. 1 and hypotheses 1 and 2.**

**Research question No. 1:** Which implementation methods have been applied for the purpose of continuing the E.F.Q.M. model in the schools?

**Hypothesis No. 1:** “There will be a difference in the methods of assimilating the E.F.Q.M. model between the schools that received the support of the Ministry of Education a year ago and the schools that received the support of the Ministry of Education three years ago”.

**Hypothesis No. 2:** “There will be a difference in the methods of assimilating the E.F.Q.M. between the schools according to the different investigated sectors”.

The findings obtained from research question No. 1 related to the assimilation methods that the schools had adopted in order to continue their assimilation process independently. The discussion of these findings illustrated that the issue of time elapsing since the schools had completed the support of the Ministry of Education, was examined. The discussion led to the conclusion that the

implementation of the E.F.Q.M. model in the organizational culture of the Arab sector schools in Israel, was perceived as non-time related, nor was it perceived as an inhibiting or enabling factor of the successful change. Another issue examined referred to the differentiation between the sub-sectors (Arab, Bedouin and Druze) in the entire assimilation process. The discussion indicated that the assimilation process changed according to the unique needs of each of these three sub-sectors. Each sector embraced the assimilation methods best suited to its uniqueness and needs, enhancing the success of the assimilation. Some of the methods were recurrent in all the schools at different levels. All the methods were associated with a daily systemic practice of the E.F.Q.M. model instruments and mechanisms. This was done in a way that satisfied the needs of the implementing organization, resulting in a deep and focused comprehension of the need for the model, the values of excellence on which it is based, as well as its compliance with the educational world in which the organization functioned. All these were achieved within the framework of professional development.

#### **IV.2 Factual Conclusions Obtained in relation with Research Question No. 2 and Hypotheses No. 3, No. 4 and No. 5**

**Research question No. 2:** “Which changes have transpired in the school organizational culture following implementation of the E.F.Q.M. model?”

**Hypothesis No. 3:** “There will be a difference in the organizational culture changes, following the assimilation of the E.F.Q.M. between the schools that received the support of the Ministry of Education a year ago and the schools that received the support of the Ministry of Education three years ago”.

**Hypothesis No. 4:** “There will be a difference in the school organizational culture changes following the assimilation of the E.F.Q.M. between the schools according to the different investigated sectors”.

**Hypothesis No. 5:** “There will be a relationship between the extent of the model assimilation and the extent of its effect on the organizational culture of the schools”.

The discussion of the findings enhanced several conclusions associated with elements that could affect the level of changes transpiring in the organizational culture, following the process of

assimilating the E.F.Q.M. model in the schools. One of the main conclusions emphasized that the time element was not meaningful in changing the organizational culture of these schools. That is, the impact on the organizational culture following the implementation of the E.F.Q.M. model in Arab schools in Israel, was not related to the time that elapsed since the completion of the Ministry of Education support given to the assimilating schools. Another conclusion elucidated that the effect of assimilating the E.F.Q.M. model on the organizational culture of Arab schools in Israel, could consist of different impact cycles, but there was no direct effect resulting from ethnic and intercultural differences. The findings showed that the attitude towards the assimilation of a change, was identical in all the investigated cultures. At the same time, we could conclude that there was a direct and significant relationship between the extent of assimilating the language in the different contexts of the daily school life and the specific needs of each school. The higher the extent of assimilation, the more prominent the meaningful changes in the school organizational culture. This trend was demonstrated by all the teacher groups, according to the type of the Ministry of Education support and the ethnic sector.

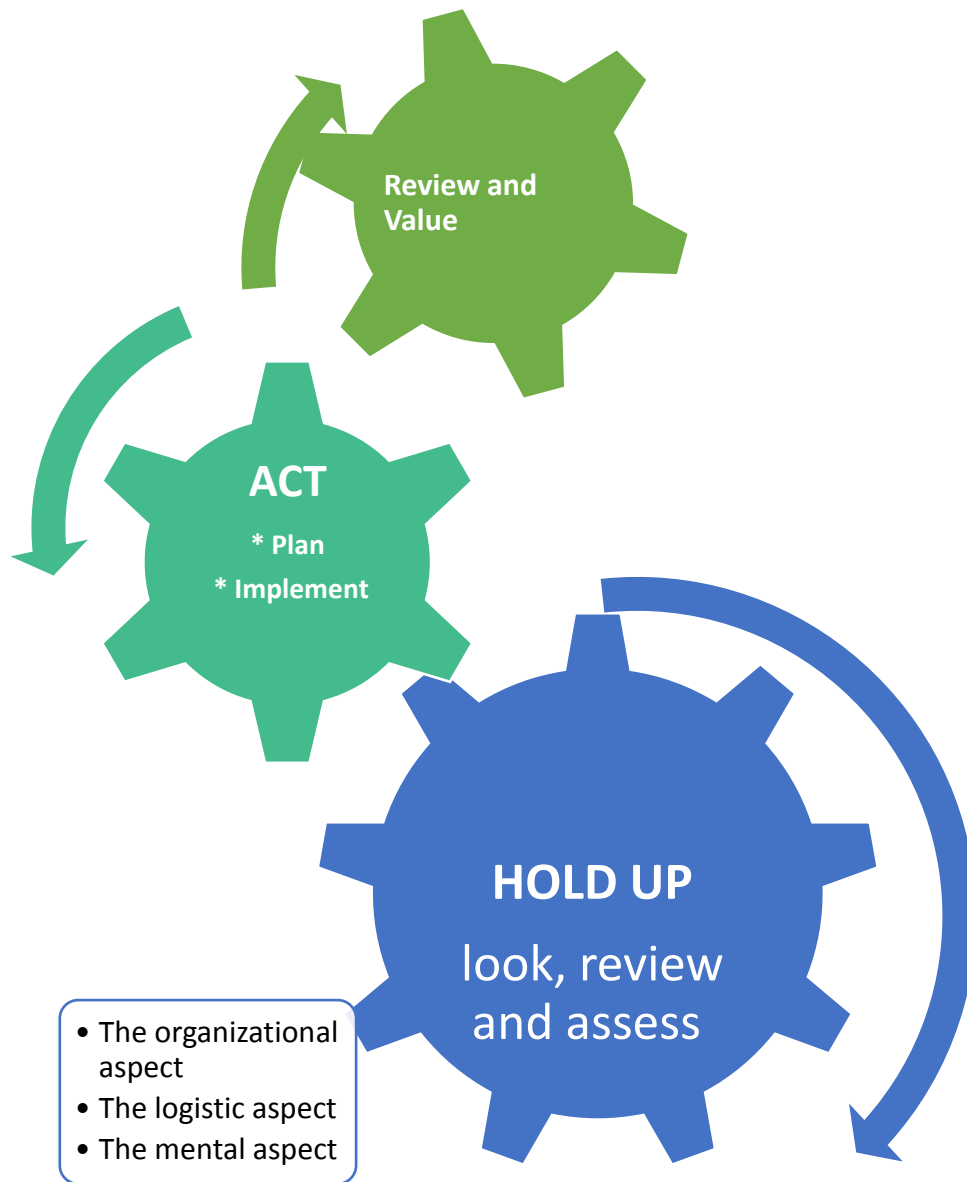
### **IV.3 Conceptual Conclusions**

Based on the insights and suggestions for improving the model, obtained from the focus group, a renewed in-depth thinking was invested in the HARV model (see Figure No. V.1). The model maintained the same stages while relating to the key aspects comprising every stage.

Several changes were introduced:

1. The model was structured in a more dynamic way that would facilitate leading the process in a cyclic and continuous, rather than a one-directional way, with an integration between each stage (attached Figure No. V.2 that highlights this change).
2. The school quality coordinator is nominated as the person in charge of monitoring the model implementation.
3. The time for the “hold up” stage was determined and it would last 2-4 months at the most.

Thus, Figure I.3 illustrates the improved assimilation model.



**Figure No. I.3 : The HARV model**

*IV.3.1 The model rationale – Assimilation model*

The HARV (**H**old up, **A**ct, **R**eview and **V**alue) model was built with the purpose of assisting school organizations, that had starting functioning according to the E.F.Q.M. model, in continuing the assimilation process also after completing the professional support of the Ministry of Education. The starting point of the model is grounded in the fact that the school organization has completed a 2-year intensive support process. During this period, the organization operated in a different way, mobilized all its forces, learnt and assimilated a new organizational language. Consequently, this school organization is required and expected to act according to this model, aiming to ascertain continuity of the assimilation process and, thus, promote the organization goals. The model consists of three main stages.

1- Hold up: this stage aims to allow the school organization to stop the intensive practice in which it has engaged for two years, look, review and assess where it is positioned at this point of time, in order to manage in an informed manner the continued progress, based on the processes that have transpired. The hold up stage should focus on three central aspects:

A. The organizational aspect includes:

- Examining the extent to which the organizational vision complies with the organization new reality.
- Performing a focused diagnosis for identifying the organizational needs (mainly points of strength and weakness), following and in relation to the support process undergone by the organization.

B. The mental aspect – the human capital: examining the mental state of the organization employees following the assimilation, identifying empowered forces and weakened forces, identifying difficulties on the emotional level as well as general insights about this aspect.

C. The logistic aspect: identifying partnerships and resources, available to the school organization as far as the continued assimilation is concerned.

2- Act: this stage aims to enable the organization to act in an organized, systematic, wide and comprehensive manner, based on its self-learning and in compliance with its needs. This stage is grounded in two sub-stages:

A. *Planning*: at this stage, the organization is planning the assimilation process that is optimal for it, while relating to three levels:

- Level 1 – constitutes the main basis for inculcating the new organizational language. The organization will adapt its vision and policy (if necessary), so that they are in line

with the assimilated change. It will design a comprehensive strategic plan for introducing the organizational change and assimilating the quality and excellence language.

- Level 2 – Setting up a school quality unit for managing the quality processes and disseminating them in the organization.
- Level 3 – designing an action plan for leading the process of assimilating the change, in compliance with the organization needs and in relation to the existing resources.

B. *Implementation*: at this stage, the organization is implementing the action plan in a systematic and supervised way, while defining cornerstones for stopping and assessing the situation.

3- Review and Value: at this stage, the organization supervises and assesses the effectiveness and efficiency of the assimilation, identifying successes and failures, as well as deriving lessons and insights, which constituting a basis for the continued work and making a constant improvement.

The model is presented in a cog wheel format, in order to illustrate that the model is dynamic, integrative and dynamic, since the three stage drive each other. The movement creates synchronous dynamics that results in synergy that enhances the successful implementation of the E.F.Q.M. model in a systemic way, in collaboration with all the elements of the school organization.

#### **IV.4 Practical Implications and Recommendations**

1. Building an indicator with clear criteria for the “hold up” stage. On the one hand, the indicator will help schools to perform this stage in a more effective and focused way and, on the other, it will provide a success index, after having thoroughly examined the three aspects (organizational, mental and logistic).
2. Consolidating the quality coordinator’s role as a leader of the process of assimilating the E.F.Q.M. model. The objective is to set up a professional and qualified entity, whose main function is to ensure continuity of the E.F.Q.M. assimilation in the school organizational language.
3. Setting up a school quality unit, consisting of school position holders who have been trained and implemented the E.F.Q.M. model. The unit will assist the school employees in

implementing, from theory to practice, the E.F.Q.M. model in the current practice, support the improvement team and so on. The quality coordinator will head the unit and will currently manage it.

4. Expanding the E.F.Q.M. model assimilation in additional circles and partnerships at the school discretion. For example, it can be expanded to the maintenance team, secretaries, parents, parents' committee, etc. Expanding the partnerships will entail a facilitating implementation, in order to consolidate the language in the school organization.
5. Building a computerized school database and knowledge, which will include academic material about the E.F.Q.M. model, instructions on this issue, existing improvement teams, products, photos, conferences on this topic and others.

#### **IV.5 Research Limitations**

The first limitation was related to the essence of the mixed methods research, since this methodology integrates two approaches (qualitative and quantitative). The challenge embodied in the integration of the two approaches, is demonstrating how this integration results in one and uniform study. Hence, these two methods were separated. First, the qualitative research was conducted, from which themes and categories were derived as a basis for the quantitative research. This maintained the validity of each research method separately, ascertaining compliance with the research aims and research questions.

The second limitation was associated with the research instruments. The present study was based on three research instruments; interviews and focus group in the qualitative research and a questionnaire in the quantitative research. In order to maintain validity of each research instrument, in the qualitative part, evidences that attested to the stages of conducting the study, the recordings and transcriptions were meticulously safeguarded as the raw material for the basic data that constituted a source of the research findings. It is noteworthy, that before applying the research instruments, the participants received a focused explanation about the nature and aim of the present study, they gave their consent to every clarification and agreed in writing to their participation in the present study.

The third limitation was connected to my attitude as a researcher. Throughout the entire study, this limitation required me, as the researcher, to cautiously and meticulously maintain an emotional

and cognitive neutrality. This was due to the fact that I, myself, was leading the implementation of the E.F.Q.M. model and belonged to the same culture (Arab) as the participants. On the one hand, this issue helped me in performing an in-depth analysis and viewing the data holistically. On the other hand, it obliged me, as a researcher, to act with a full cognitive and emotional neutrality while conducting the study.

The fourth limitation related to generalizability and the extent to which these findings could be generalized to similar populations. In the present study, generalization from one case to another was possible, since the study explored the effect of assimilating an organizational change process (in our case, the E.F.Q.M. model) on the change of the school organizational culture. The conclusions drawn from the present study could provide a response to the effect of assimilating any process of organizational change on the organizational culture of the assimilating organization. Furthermore, the model developed on the basis of the findings, could respond to and assist any organization that wished to assimilate a certain organizational change.

#### **IV.6 Contribution to Knowledge**

The present study can contribute to the existing theoretical knowledge, as well as to the practical knowledge.

The development of an original and innovative model for assimilating E.F.Q.M. model in schools made a contribution to the theoretical knowledge. The model is based on the findings of the present study and, thus, the gap in the knowledge of this field is bridged. The HARV model constitutes a contribution to the theoretical knowledge in the field of organizational culture in education (Zifroni ,2008), theories of organizational change (Blaustein ,2018), and theories of assimilating a change in the school culture (Gorodetsky & Weiss, 2010).

Designing the HARV model contributed to the practical knowledge. It was developed as a practical model that could be used by those wanting to implement the E.F.Q.M. model in particular and those wanting to assimilate any organizational change process in general. Moreover, the HARV model constituted a change in the educational policy in the State of Israel, with regard to Arab sector schools that could use a culturally adapted model. In order to implement the model, designated resources should be allocated to the promotion of excellence in education in the Arab



sector and, thus, bridge the gaps between the Jewish and Arab sectors. Furthermore, the HARV model could be applied for training school position holders as part of a designated professional development. These position holders would then act as the advisory committee that would support those implementing the model in practice, namely the teachers and the school management.

#### **IV.7 Further Studies**

- a. A study investigating the effect of implementing the E.F.Q.M. model on the organizational culture of Jewish schools.
- b. A comparative study exploring the effect of assimilating the E.F.Q.M. model between Arab and Jewish assimilating schools.
- c. A study examining the effect of assimilating the E.F.Q.M. model on the pedagogical achievements of the assimilating schools.
- d. A study of the effect of assimilating the E.F.Q.M. model on the results to customers and to the school community.
- e. A study investigating the effect of assimilating the E.F.Q.M. model on the development of teachers' leadership in the assimilating schools.

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