

VISIBILITY OF THE NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK OF BAHRAIN AND THE END USER PERSPECTIVE

OVERVIEW

The National Qualifications Framework of Bahrain (NQF) is a comprehensive and ambitious initiatives adopted by the government to support lifelong learning. The NQF despite being in an operations phase is sharing similar challenges of other qualifications frameworks reported by The European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training. One of which is the low visibility to end users; learners, parents and employers. The research addresses the visibility of the NQF from end users' perspective and its image and value proposition from a marketing point of view.

PROBLEM

This research is intended to answer two main questions. The first is identifying what is missing from the current image and value proposition of the NQF. In addition to capturing the main areas of improvement to support achieving its ultimate goals. The second is to explore mechanisms and approaches to improve the visibility of the NQF to the end users.

METHODOLOGY

A mixed methodology approach was adopted in this research study as both in depth interviews and a survey were conducted in addition to an analysis of some of the means the NQF adopts in communicating the service and information to the end users. The combination of these three methods is designed to establish validation ground for each other.

FINDINGS

The main result is a great need to engage the end users and raise their awareness of the value added of the NQF and its register. This needs to start with a clear understanding of the different segments of target audience and their needs. It also requires high coordination and cooperation with governmental body in delivering and mobilising supporting projects that are directly affecting the added value concept of the NQF to education and training system and the end users. A marketing audit framework is proposed to support the development of such marketing strategy.

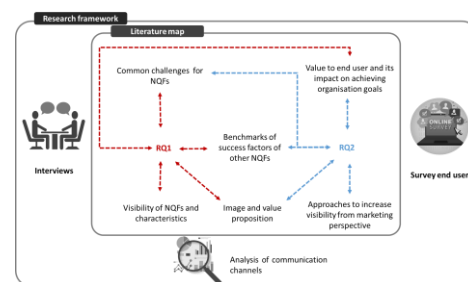
RECOMMENDATIONS

- Closely monitor and contentiously evaluate the value added to end users of the NQF against its image and value proposition. This may require developing a separate clear mission statement for the NQF and explicitly state its objectives and benefits in a visible manner.
- Mobilising the supporting projects is crucial for the value proposition and end user's perception of the NQF.
- Improved engagement of stakeholders and end users is essential in addition to identifying potential ambassadors .
- Including the NQF levels on official certificates and collaborate with the CSB -the main employer for the government- to link NQF levels to occupations and pay.
- General education qualifications should be placed on the NQF, and learners should be targeted and engaged at early stages of their learning path.
- The public must be aware of the existence of such tool and have a clear understanding of its value and benefits, otherwise the value of the NQF as whole is compromised. Therefore, the organisation should re-assess the current promotional, communication and marketing efforts; and consider approaches to increase the visibility of the NQF to end users. This could involve awareness campaigns, exploring the opportunities of branding and developing an NQF logo.

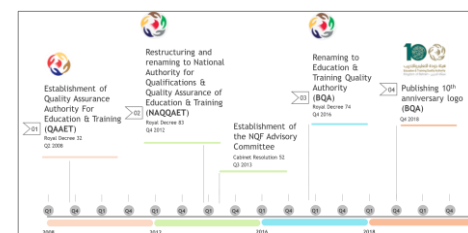
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A thesis by Heba B. Abdulhalim

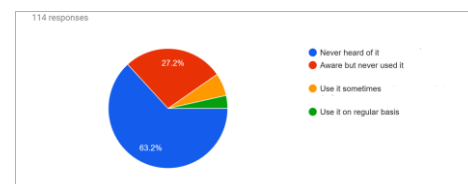
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Research framework



Timeline of the organisation's growth the organisation's growth



End users' level of awareness of the NQF

"All information relevant to the BQA and the NQF were gathered from the public domain, i.e., the BQA webpage and public communication channels, the official gazette... etc. as of November 2019"