Management Development Post Strategic Partnership Jordan Telecom Group as a Case Study

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Abstract:
This research aims at identifying the level of management development practices in the company 10 years after the successful partnership with the strategic partner. The research employed an instrument to measure management development dimensions in the company (skills, Organizational Learning, Relationships and Participation, Leadership and Supervision, and Management Development obstacles). The survey was distributed to the study sample (150) supervisors and managers, but only (124) valid questionnaires were analyzed. The study concluded that the company has a moderate level of management development ranging from about 71% for Skills, and leadership and supervision dimensions, to about 73% for Organizational Learning, and relationships and participation dimensions. In addition, the perceived management development obstacles according to obstacles dimensions scored at 71.6% with a moderate level as well. The study results show that there are no statistically significant differences in the attitudes of managers and supervisors towards management development dimensions due to demographic and organizational variables, with the exception of the variable of scientific specialization. The study found that there are differences in the attitudes of managers towards the relationships and participation dimension due to the scientific specialization variable, and the administrative sciences specializations got the largest average of the direction of managers towards relationships and participation. The study recommended the need to pay more attention to management development practices by concerned people, by adopting the latest development methods, managing and retaining local talents and competencies by providing necessary support and compensation schemes. The research also made suggestions regarding some future studies.

Keywords: Management Development, Strategic Partnership, Jordan Telecom Group

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1. Introduction

The absence of continuous development of organization's capabilities means the inability to meet the needs and as a result inability to achieve planned goals, as well as the lack of growth means a beginning of the end of the life cycle, because any system if it is not maintained and developed it will be collapsed (Brown & Harvey, 2001)
The strategic partnership between Jordan Telecom Group and France Telecom started at the beginning of the year 2000 AD, the main objective of this partnership was to maximize the benefits for both partners. This partnership has led to the consolidation of France Telecom position in Jordan and even at the regional level, and for the Jordan Telecom Group, it gained many advantages by getting support and access to the latest technology and knowledge by France Telecom and experiences in the field of communications, business and project management, in addition, this partnership assumes that it will lead to the sharing of experience and knowledge, and as a result achieving management development.

2. Objectives of the study

The objectives of the study can be explained in the following points:
1- Identifying the meaning of management development.
2- Identifying the level of management development in the Jordan Telecom Group in the period after the strategic partnership with the strategic partner France Telecom.
3- Identifying the interrelationship between the dimensions of management development.
4- Knowing the impact of demographic and organizational variables on the dimensions of management development.

3. Literature Review

Management Development definition

By reviewing the literature in the field of management development, the main essential components and features of this term is presented as follows:

- management development is one of the terms surrounded by ambiguity in a way that may not seem apparent. Development is not just an application of change as much as it is a continuation in the desired direction, and it has not yet gained the clarity that the term training or administrative education gained (Paauwe & Williams, 2001).

- It is a term that includes all different activities, methods and tools used to train managers, develop their knowledge and skills, and encourage them to learn, including education, training, and practical experience, in addition to evaluation and incentive systems that support the development process (Talbot, 1997).

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- management development is a term that includes all organizational activities aimed at developing the manager's capabilities, including educational and training activities, performance evaluation, planning and career succession in addition to any activity aimed at career development (Knox & Gibb Stephen., 2001).

- It is a system of functional practices through which the organization aims to ensure the availability of competent and motivated managers and professionals to fill important and sensitive positions in a timely manner (Jansen et al., 2001).

- Management development is a complex process in which knowledge is acquired through training and education in addition to life and work experience (Suutari & Viitala, 2008).

- management development is defined as a systematic process aimed at ensuring the availability of competent managers at present and in the future in order to carry out organizational duties in the best manner, in addition to paying attention to current managers and giving them appropriate opportunities for growth and progress, emphasizing the importance of ensuring the opportunity for career succession and advancement as much as possible.

Importance of strategic partnership in Management Development

Drucker (1995) indicates that a significant change has occurred in the way of managing organizations in business world, as the trend towards relationships based on partnership rather than ownership has increased (Inkpen, 2000), and many researchers indicate that strategic alliances have grown significantly over the past twenty-five years (Meier, 2010). In addition, (Farooqui, 2005) states that the past few years have witnessed a clear increase in the emergence of strategic alliances around the world, especially in the information technology sector. According to (Dacin et al., 2007) it is apparent that these strategic alliances has considerable benefits. Also, regardless of the reasons for establishing these alliances, organizations are constantly moving towards organizational cooperation with the aim of increasing and expanding organizational knowledge in a way that serves organizational interests efficiently and effectively (Mckenzie & Winkelen, 2006) because this kind of cooperation and partnership between organizations is considered one of the effective means to achieve administrative and organizational development through the exchange of experience and knowledge possessed by the participating parties.

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Globalization is considered one of the main factors that could explain organization tendency towards cooperation through strategic alliances. As globalization has its advantages and disadvantages; starting with the openness of global markets and free trade agreements, and ending with increasing competitiveness at an international level, it becomes clear why organizations are eager to establish such alliances, because threats and risks have increased in a way that is difficult for a single organization to encounter, and opportunities as well. These opportunities and threats require a lot of energies and capabilities - which rarely be found in one single organization – on the other hand strategic alliances enable organizations to better exploit these opportunities and employ them in a way that maximizes benefits and profits for all involved partners. Strategic alliances are increased dramatically due to the intense competition and rapid change in the business world today (McSweeney-Feld et al., 2010). (Daft, 2004) indicates that these alliances and conglomerates have many contractual forms such as licensing agreements, supply agreements, in addition to joint ventures that include two independent organizations under a joint alliance that is mostly controlled by the main company.

There are many ways in which an organization can learn how to expand and implement business internationally; In addition to consulting companies and other sources of information, alliances and partnerships are considered among the best approaches for learning the nature of international work, because such partnerships require the exchange of information and experiences that both parties lack in a way that achieves a complementary and direct benefit. But despite the importance of such alliances in the success of international work, these relationships are considered sensitive and critical, especially when these partnerships combine two partners separated by a vast geographical distance.

Management Development.

Management development is defined as a term that includes all various activities, methods and tools used to form managers, develop their knowledge and skills, and encourage them to learn, it could include education, training, and practical experience, in addition to evaluation and incentive systems that support the development process (Talbot, 1997). Management development in Jordan Telecom Group will be assessed through several components as mentioned with their procedural definitions (Qawasmeh, 2002):

1- Skills dimension, this main dimension contains some sub-dimensions as follows:

- Time management: It is the managers' ability to manage meetings effectively, as well as the ability to prepare and schedule work plans, in addition to paying attention to time as a core resource.

- Performance appraisal: is the managers' ability to define performance standards, formulate goals for subordinates, and ensure that these standards are consistent with job duties.

- Job design and analysis: managers' ability to be aware of the current job titles in departments, and the ability to create new job titles and job descriptions for these titles, in addition to taking note of job requirements, objectives, efficiency and qualifications of their occupants, and the ability to apply renewable mechanisms when designing jobs such as rotation and Job enrichment.

- Designing training programs: is the ability of managers to formulate and update training programs in order to meet the emerging needs, in addition to emphasizing the comprehensiveness of these programs for all employees and their participation with managers in the process of designing training programs.

2- Leadership and supervision dimension, this main dimension contains some sub-dimensions as follows:

- Leadership and supervision: is the ability of managers to delegate authority, and prioritize work for themselves and their subordinates, in addition to the ability to assume responsibilities, make decisions and solve problems.

3- Organizational learning dimension, this main dimension contains some sub-dimensions as follows:

- Self-learning: it is the managers' ability to acquire knowledge and provide comprehensive training and education programs for all employees, and to move towards continuous performance development, in addition to encouraging individual learning.

- Response to changes: is the ability of managers to study business requirements in competitive environments, to exploit opportunities and avoid risks, in addition to anticipate changing environmental requirements.

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- Knowledge exchange: It is the managers' ability to facilitate knowledge sharing, simulate skills, share information, learning from successful experiences conveyed by the strategic partner, and pay attention to knowledge integration and open dialogue.

4- Relationships and Participation dimension, this main dimension contains some sub-dimensions as follows:

- Relationships and Communication: It is the managers' ability to be friendly and professional in their relationships, and a positive spirit in resolving conflicts.
- Participation and cooperation: It is the managers' ability to enhance forms of cooperation between different departments, ask for help in work matters, as well as encourage subordinates to cooperate, exchange skills and experiences, and discuss work issues freely.
- Teamwork and trust: It is the managers' ability to develop teamwork and trust among the members of the organization by promoting the concept of work teams and exchanging leadership roles, and adopting incentives that are granted on the basis of team performance.

4. Methodology

This is a descriptive study aims at reporting the level of management development practices in the company by employing the instrument used by (Qawasmeh, 2002).

The study population consists of all managers and supervisors working in the Jordan Telecom Group (470) supervisors and managers. The study sample was (150) managers and supervisors. As stated in (Sekaran, 2003) that the sample size that is greater than (30) and less than (500) is the most appropriate for most research. All questionnaires that were distributed were retrieved, and (26) questionnaires were excluded due to lack of validity for the purposes of statistical analysis. The number of questionnaires that were subject to statistical analysis was (124), which represents (82.6%) of the total questionnaires that were distributed, and this percentage is considered acceptable to complete the research and analyze the results.

The validity of the study instrument was verified in order to ensure that the scale used in the study actually measures what should be measured, and that it contains the necessary items through which

the variables of the current study can be measured. The instrument reviewed by

faculty members in different universities, suggestions were made to make some modifications, and

some of them were adopted.

The researcher calculated the Cronbach Alpha coefficient to ensure the reliability of the study instrument, and coherence between the paragraphs of the scale, and although the rules of measurement in the value to be obtained from the coefficient are not specified, but to obtain (Alpha ≥ 0.6) is considered acceptable in the administrative and human sciences in general (Sekaran, 2003). Table (1) shows the results of the reliability test.

Table (1)

The internal consistency reliability coefficient of the instrument dimensions

(Cronbach's alpha scale)

No.	Dimension	No. of items	Alpha value
1	Skills	17	0.905
2	Leadership and Supervision	4	0.814
3	Organizational Learning	10	0.894
4	Relationships and Participation	10	0.791
5	All Management Development Dimensions	41	0.951
6	Management Development obstacles	6	0.633

The indicators of Cronbach's alpha above indicate that the study instrument in general has a high stability coefficient and its ability to achieve the objectives of the study according to (Sekaran, 2003). It is evident from Table (4-5) that the coefficient of stability of each dimension of the study was not less than the coefficient of alpha of (0.633), which is an acceptable percentage indicating the interdependence and cohesion of the paragraphs of one dimension.
The Statistical Package for Social Sciences- (SPSS 17) program was used to analyze the primary data that it collected for the purposes of this study. As for the relative importance in this study, it was determined according to the following formula and according to the five-point scale for answer alternatives for each paragraph:

Table (2)
Importance levels

Level	Score
Weak	1 – 2.33
Moderate	>2.33 – 3.66
High	>3.66

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5. Results

Demographics information
The percentage of males (96) people, was (77.4%), while the percentage of females (28) was (22.6%). The age group (31-40) and (41-50) are The highest in the sample are equal in number and the percentage of each of them is (33.1%), meaning that the two groups together constitute the majority of the study sample by (66.2%), the number of married people in the current sample is (87) (70.2%), while the percentage of unmarried people in the current sample is (29.8%), as for the educational qualification, (86) are holders of a bachelor's degree at a rate of (69.4%), while (20.2%) are diploma holders. As for the scientific disciplines, the engineering major came in the first place, reaching (56.5%), followed by the administrative sciences. For the total experience in the company in the category of (11-15 years), represented (25.8%) of the sample. And for the span of supervision, the percentage of managers and supervisors who supervise (less than 10 people) was the largest.
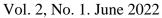
The results showed that all Management Development Dimensions obtained averages that ranged between (3.55) and (3.60) with moderate relative importance for all dimensions. Also, the dimension of Management obstacles obtained an average of (3.51) and of moderate importance as well.

The results of the current study showed that there were no statistically significant differences in the attitudes of managers and supervisors towards the dimensions of Management Development (skills, leadership and supervision, organizational learning, relationships and participation) due to the following demographic and organizational variables: (gender, age, marital status, educational qualification, practical experience in the current department, the total practical experience, and the span of supervision), as for the scientific specialization the study showed that there were significant differences in the managers' attitudes towards the dimension of relationships and participation represented in (relationships, communication, participation and cooperation, teamwork and trust) due to the variable of scientific specialization. Management science majors have the highest average score for managers' attitudes toward relationships and participation.

Table (3)
Demographic and organizational variables

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	96	%77.4
	Female	28	%22.6
	Total	124	%100
Age	Or less 30	36	%29
	40-31	41	%33.1
	50-41	41	%33.1
	51 فأكثر	6	%4.8
	Total	124	%100
	Single	37	%29.8

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Marital status	Married	87	%70.2
	Total	124	%100
Qualification	High school or less	6	%4.8
	Diploma	25	%20.2
	Bachelor	86	%69.4
	Post graduate	7	%5.6
specialization at university	Engineering	70	%56.5
	Administrative Sciences	33	%26.6
	other	21	%16.9
Experience in the current department	3 years or less	39	%31.5
	4-7	21	%16.9
	8-11	18	%14.5
	12 or more	46	%37.1
overall experience	5 years or less	39	%31.5
	6 - 10	11	%8.9
	11-15	32	%25.8
	16-20	20	%16.1
	21 or more	22	%17.7
The span of supervision	10 or less	105	%84.7
	20-11	12	%9.7
	30-21	2	%1.6
	40-31	1	%0.8
	41 or more	4	%3.2

Table (4)
Means of Management Development Dimensions

No.	Dimension	Importance Level	Standard Deviation	Means
	Skills	Moderate	0.56	3.55

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Leadership and Supervision	Moderate	0.68	3.60
Organizational Learning	Moderate	0.64	3.53
Relationships and Participation	Moderate	0.74	3.56
All Management Development Dimensions	Moderate	0.58	3.55
Management Development obstacles	Moderate	0.58	3.51

6. Recommendations

In light of the findings of the study, the researcher makes the following recommendations:
1. The necessity of paying attention to the issue of management development by people in charge in business organizations, by following the latest development methods and approaches.
2. The need to pay attention to local competencies and work to nurture them and provide them with adequate support.
3. The need to conduct more in-depth studies that explore the issue of strategic partnership in a precise and detailed manner as an approach for management development.

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