

**MOBILIZING HUMAN RESOURCES TO ENHANCE BUSINESS INNOVATION
CASE STUDY: STRATEGY & INNOVATION DEPARTMENT IN VODAFONE EGYPT**

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ABSTRACT

The uprising Egyptian revolution January 2011 triggered most organizations in the Egyptian society to revise strategies to invade markets vigorously with innovative plans in order to survive in such unforeseen economic conditions. As change is the process by which the future invades our life, most organizations in Egypt nowadays are trying to pave the way for this change allowing for more innovative patterns that cannot be guided without the support of the human resources policies and practices. The importance of this study arises from its contribution at both the academic and the practical levels as it reflects not only the importance of innovation as a catalyst tool for the organization development but also it focuses on the importance of mobilizing human resources to enhance business innovation. On the academic level, the aim of this study is to shed the light on such a crucial approach of business innovation as one of the new trends in management studies as well as to highlight the crucial role of human resources to support business innovation initiative. On the practical level, the importance of this study arises from the fact that there are few studies within the Egyptian context that highlighted the importance of mobilizing human resources to enhance business innovation. This study would reflect the concepts derived from the literature review on both business innovation and human resources practices as applied on one of the Egyptian business organization in the field of communication: Vodafone Egypt. The focus of this study can be tackled through two questions. First is to what extent can human resources enhance business innovation? Secondly, to what extent the applicable procedures in Vodafone Egypt regarding both business innovation & human resources practices fulfill the standards driven through the international experiences?

Keywords: *Innovation, Innovation Measurement, Innovation Dimensions, Innovation Strategies, Business Models, Human Resources Management*

1- INTRODUCTION

Being a hunter who eats the pray is far much better than being the pray who avoids the hunter. From this notion, innovative organizations can survive and prosper as they can shift their business away from the traditional culture to hunting opportunities in the market. In our world today, the innovation process in any organization is inevitable both in the national and the international business arena. The market challenges and globalization trends entail most organizations to struggle for survival and to bridge the change gap. The urge behind the increasing need for innovation is boosted by the increased global competition, the rapid change in customers' preferences, and the development of technology. The Human Resources HR department in any organization flashes under the limelight when it comes to innovation as the HR department is considered to be the catalyst tool for all organizations to execute the process of innovation. The underlying assumption of this study is as the economy recovers from the adverse conditions since the uprising of the revolution January 2011, the Egyptian business environment would require that most organizations mobilize the human resources to enhance business innovation.

2- LITERATURE REVIEW

Since the sixties and the definitions of innovation are basically the same regarding the new ideas and procedures that have to be qualitatively different from those existing and taking a concrete shape in reality (Robertson, 1967). Today with the new trends and concepts in management and the shifts in the paradigm of thinking towards gaining a better market share, innovation of the organization would rely basically on mobilizing the capacity of its human resources. This would reside in depending on the intelligence, imagination, creativity and the capital knowledge of the organization's employees. Moreover, the empowerment of those employees and the support given to them by their organizations towards more freedom in innovating is the catalyst to the success of any plans towards better growth rate and market position of the organization. Therefore, we look today on people, not only on products and services to introduce change and to catalyze the organizations' innovative plans (Gupta and Singhal, 1993). This put