

STRATEGIC ROLE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF TOURIST OFFICES IN JORDAN

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Abstract: *The significance of the study stems from the importance of the corresponding topics by highlighting the strategic innovations and its role to develop the management of the tourist offices, which is regarded as one of the key strategies necessary to be applied by the contemporary institutions to tackle the challenges witnessed in the 21st century. In addition, the study is considered to be an added value to the total number of researches in this field, especially those studies and researches that do not discuss the relation among variables of the study in the tourist sectors.*

This growth, which is long term effort aims at improving the capability of organizing and solving problem via creating active and innovative environment, and management for all new things including the directed research towards innovation (Al-Salami ,2007). Also, this growth and development includes processes related to the innovative human resources which have ability and proficiency as well as a comprehensive and planned effort aiming at innovating new organizing elements to further escalate the rate of productivity, satisfy the needs of institution and achieving excellence through restructuring and organizing itself to provide untraditional services with high proficiency and quality in performance and excellence.

The study shows that to reach to strategic innovation, tourist offices have to use a strategy which addresses the fundamental pillars for innovation and organizational development plan. Innovation is one of the progress's secrets and excellence in different fields of life. It is the basic material in the processes of change and development. Creativity and innovation points towards the development and change in the tourist establishment and offices because they grow up out of the internal factors while others arise from external factors.

Key words: *Strategic, Organizational Development, Development, Tourist, Strategic Innovation.*

INTRODUCTION

The dramatic developments which have been witnessed from the early 20th century in different aspects field of life, mainly political , social , economic and cultural field and others in line with the increase of competition led the concerned institutions to work hard for excellence, so as to create the different strategies to match their counterparts of the competing institutions. They also seek to follow comprehensive approach fits for all levels to be able to solve unprecedented problems which maintains the existence, survival and success of institution.

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effort, aiming at innovate new organizing elements to escalate the rate of productivity, satisfy the needs of institution and achieving excellence through restructuring and organizing itself to provide untraditional services with high proficiency and quality in performance and excellence. (Al- khateeb & Maa'iha , 2006) Due to the fact that tourism is a consistent growing phenomenon, and it is reforming itself regularly since it is one consuming activity, the tourism sector is subject to development since it is used as an assistance to present new thoughts, products and services alongside with providing list of destinations to be visited.

Accordingly, the wise management must have clear vision and it is necessary to put it on the top of its priorities to pay attention to its tourist establishments in general and its tourist offices particularly.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Nowadays, due to the increasing competition and developments that is faced by many institution, it becomes obligatory to answer some questions concerning the variable of the study by adopting theoretical framework which demonstrates the significance of strategic innovation to develop the tourist establishment and increase the marketing shares to create modern knowledge in the current age . These questions are:

- What is innovation? What is the strategic innovation? And what are the stages, types, levels and strategies of innovation?
- What is the administrative development and its types and justifications?
- What is the role of strategic innovation to develop the tourist offices?

Objectives

Introducing the strategic innovation and organizational development through presenting sets of theoretical concept and studies.

Demonstrating the role of strategic innovation to develop tourist offices.

Presenting the useful findings and recommendations.

Significance of the study:

The significance of the study stems from the importance of its topics by highlighting the strategic innovation and its role to develop the management of the tourist offices which is regarded one of the key strategies necessary to be applied by the contemporary institutions to tackle the challenges witnessed in 21 century. In addition, the study is considered to be an added value to the total number of researches in this field, especially in those studies and researches which do not discuss the relation among variables of the study in the tourist sectors.

Operational Definitions

- Innovation: It is a creative process and an art of innovation for a certain thing that is presented in a new form, new way and in a new device to effect a change in the way of making and renewal of things as well as providing alternatives (Jaradat, 2011).
- Strategic Innovation: It refers to creating new strategies such as growth and innovating products and to propose samples of deeds which calls for an added value for beneficiaries and achieving excellence among competitors.(Sniukas, 2007).
- Administrative development : It is the ability to develop trends, systems and methods via providing organizing innovative systems and proficient human resources in light of renewing variables to achieve maximum use of the financial and human resources' capabilities (**Karlyn, 2005**).
- Tourism establishment: It indicates to all organizations aimed at providing certain service for tourists to meet their needs in terms of housing, transport, food, trips, programs, etc.
- Types of tourism establishments: Aircraft companies, tourism offices, tourist guides, restaurants, hotels, tourist cities and villages, and tourist camps (Abouii, 2008).

Research Variables

The organizations which look for leading and excellence should work according to strategies assisting to achieve their goals as strategies:

Accordingly, innovation is defined as “the potential readiness for distinction as it seen by workers.”

Typology of Innovation

Trott (2002) points out that innovation includes the following types:

- Product innovation: It is concerned with the development of a new or improved product.
- Process innovation: It is concerned with the development of a new or improved manufacturing process which used for delivering new services.
- Organizational innovation: It is concerned with creating a new venture division or new internal communication system.
- Management innovation: it concerns with developing new managerial systems or philosophies at the level of the organization such as Total Quality Management (TQM).
- Production innovation: It is concerned with the introduction of new techniques of production such as Quality circles, Just in Time manufacturing system, new production planning software, and new inspection system.
- Commercial/marketing innovation: It is concerned with developing new ways for marketing products, developing new financing arrangements or new sales methods, e.g. direct marketing.
- Service innovation: It is concerned with any activity related to service, whether it starts from the stage of preparing and delivering the service or from the stage of developing processes and activities which the services performed through e.g. the accompanied services to the physical goods, such as the services linked to the computers and cars.

Innovation Stages

Abodi (2006) refers to the proposal of Knicki and Kreither that the process of innovation includes the following:

1. Preparation: It includes the period the individual spent on reading, learning, training and working as well as attending conferences and seminars. This also enables the individual to be duly familiar with the dimension of the problem to know it very well.
2. Concentration: In this stage, the individual concentrates on his efforts and interest on the problem.
3. Incubation: In this stage, the individual engages him/herself in his daily works, while he/she is busy looking for data. This stage is a time of interaction of data in the unconsciousness of the innovative individual.
4. Illumination: While the individual is looking for data, he simultaneously links the data to find the relations among things, and as a result, the new thinking will be revealed in form of light to alert the innovative individual, which helps the innovative individual to be in a state of discovery after completing the stage of illumination.
5. Verification: It means repeating the whole process to prove, amend or try the idea. This also means that the innovative thing offered by individual which includes thought, behavior and response is subject to examination to make sure of its verification and applicability.

Innovation Levels

For Abawi and Jelda (2006), innovation has different levels. This study will specifically handle three of them:

- Individual Innovation: This level of innovation is reached by one of the individuals who has enough innovative capabilities and features.
- Group Innovation: This level of innovation exceeds the total rate of individual innovation because of the interaction among its individuals, exchanging opinions and aiding each other. Due to the fact that contemporary organizations faces several challenges, the innovative groups has to be developed.
- Organizational Innovation: This level of innovation might be achieved if we meet the following basic conditions:
 - a) The necessity of perception that innovation and leading requires proficient individuals.
 - b) The necessity of solving problem innovatively.
 - c) The necessity of developing innovative abilities and skills to find problems and enhance them.
 - d) The necessity of developing innovative skills in creating or constructing problems.

Organizational Strategic Innovation

Strategic innovation is a political policy which have been designed for the purpose of promoting the innovative process to create innovative environment inside the organization and the strategies are:

1) Management by Objectives Model (MBO):

It is defined as a try to achieve the objectives of the organization through the commitment of its workers and their effective participation to fulfill the objectives and activities of the organization.

2) Organizational Development (OD):

It is defined as a set of long term methods inspired from science of behaviors which are designed to prompt the capabilities to accept change and increase its affectivity.

3) Functional Specialization :

It is defined as designing units of specialized activities and this strategy is one of the most common technique used in the organization that seeks to create innovative works.

4) Periodicity:

This strategy is defined as the ability to use temporary organizational forms as group of specialist and workers to execute certain project and to create temporary organizational body. It will be eased when this mission ends. Then the individuals will be directed to start with new project. (جلدة، 6002،

وعبيوي (5) Strategic Innovation:

Strategic Innovation

Al-dori and Alazawi (2004) point out that the concept of Business Concept Innovation supports the feature of competition in the light of challenges of information revolution because it expresses the ability of the organization to realize the samples of current works in way that creates new values for customers to gain satisfaction. As a result, it will lead to the natural development for the administration of innovation. Furthermore, this will embody the logic approach for the value system which is considered as an integral part for the Business Concept Innovation. The practical steps for Business Concept Innovation are:

1. Defining the user's values of the product or the service and the main mission.
2. Developing the Business Concept Innovation and developing solution as well.
3. Introducing new thoughts and technologies.

The previous steps will extensively expand the extent the administration of innovation and as a result, represents the strategic entrance for the innovation since it adds new additional dimension.

The new dimensions concentrates on the values of customers, and they will list the value of customer in the main tasks of productivity in line with concentrating on the symbolic values or the meanings of the knowledge community (Kotelnikov, 2003).

There are two resources for the innovation of organization. First, the analysis of the customer's needs and the withdrawal of the market when it is shown that there are many marketing opportunities in terms of transport services and easiness of delivering products to the customers. Indeed, this provides a guiding approach for the strategy of the organization. Secondly, the analysis of technology development; this resource is adopted by the organizations alongside with the first resource and they follow up other industries through this resource to diagnose their technological developments (Lynch, 2000).

The strategy specialists depends largely on the analysis as a stimulus for innovation and on the perception as a cornerstone for innovation as well. At this stage, we can say that success depends on perception and realizing the mission because the innovation is adopted to generate effective and strategic thoughts (Jones, 1995).

At a time when movement competitors go up, it becomes so important to explore new opportunities of the external environment and monitor business competitors, and this requires a strategy to develop products differently from that followed in the sector in which organization does its business. Then innovation will be very quick in its response to the opportunities, threats, and the foundations of the competitive advantage as well (Al-Najar, 2001).

Strategic innovation is a framework for business development, which focuses on the future, and identifies opportunities for growth, and generating a long-term vision for the competitive advantages that have to be strengthened. The innovation could not be strategic unless it turns from an intangible resource to the fundamental capabilities to generate competitive value to the organization by relying on innovative thinking in the generation of new ideas (Wit & Meyer, 2000).

The strategic innovation management combines traditional and non-traditional elements of business strategies and develops them to achieve the (Strategic Intend) (Jones, 2002), thereby relying on the teamwork style and the achievement of the team for innovation by stimulating its members with open-ended forward thinking (thinking about the desires of the customer and delivering attractive products which customer does not expect to receive as a basis of competitive advantage), and then determine the expected opportunities, evaluate so as to make the best decision.

This administration also includes defining the strategic path that makes the leadership team with the board able to define a common vision for the organization, and strive to develop and motivate them to success (Jones, 2002)

This strategic innovation requires stability in the tourism sector and the adoption of market research, strategic analysis of the external environment, the diagnosis of their changes, opportunities and threats in the context of the strengths and weaknesses to achieve the goals and mission of the organization, and to develop the view point about the future. In fact, we have to accept the fact that the organization has to be led by the customer to create a perfect understanding on how well the technology and the facilities are related, so you can get to a practical basis about the ideas that are relied upon in achieving competitive advantage. Also, the necessity that the organization is ready to implement innovative ideas in the context of their culture and different capabilities through a series of activities supported by the administration at all levels will be arranged in accordance to the priorities. Then devoted potentials of qualified personnel will implement innovative ideas in the framework of the management that coordinates the innovative subprojects carried out by the organization, which continues to create innovative opportunities alongside with quick introduction of new products to the market even before the competitors becomes aware of this. Also it is important to the organization to make evaluation to determine the gap between what has been accomplished and what is expected, and it is also important to make the diagnosis of critical points through adoption of benchmark and compare it with the best practices in other organizations, this will further lead to the enhancement of the pursuit of the development and continuous improvement, and adaptation (Kotelnikov, 2003)

ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Concept of Organizational Development:

Qaryouti (2000) defines organizational development as a positive and planned process of change and conversion at level of organization to address the regulatory areas such as values, trends, organizational structures, administrative and technological activities, regulatory environment and others (Al-sakarneh, 2009).

According to Beers (1980), organizational developments helps to bring about harmony between the regulatory environment, operations, strategy, personnel and culture, as well as it develops the organizational and innovative solutions in line with developing

.the ability of the organization of renewal (French and **Junior**, 2000)

Elements of Administrative Development

The administrative development relies on basic elements to achieve its objectives, and these elements should be included in the statute and it is continuously updated by specialized personnel in the organization or by consultants and experts in the same field. These elements are (Couch, 1999; Lau, 2001):

- Organizational structure is the image that reflects the full shape of the organization including the main organizational units and subset of the sectors, departments and divisions. Also, organizational structure includes basic tasks and their sequence from the lowest level to the highest level, and the structure is called the hierarchical system. This system determines the chain of leadership and responsibility in terms of specializations, their relations and the extents of their authorizations to others. Here, the existence of organizational structure is essential for organizations, and it must be updated based on the newest amendments and changes to the activities of organizations and tasks, and this is because it determines the functional levels and defines the scope of supervision and responsibility sequences.
- Job Description: It is a card containing the tasks and responsibility of supervisory, educational qualifications and scientific and practical experience required for the job. It also identifies the employee's relationship and his/her role within and outside the organization. Job description is used as a tool in performance assessment, analysis of recruitment, and training needs. This aims at clarifying the roles, tasks and responsibilities of the workers of these jobs, and it helps to avoid the overlap or duplication of tasks with other tasks.
- Business procedures and models: Each organizational unit and operating procedures are implemented to finalize each transaction, and this takes a whole documentary cycle and models to accomplish the work. This is carried out by a group of employees, and whenever the procedures of works are simple, easy and quick in the process of being accomplished, it leads to saving time and effort since the aim here is to achieve customer's satisfaction, comfort and gain more customers. Whenever the work's procedures are clear and automatically documented, it will minimize the use of paper.
- Regulations Human Resource Guide: These regulations and systems of human resources governs the duties and rights of employees in the organization from the beginning of their appointment until the end of the service. This includes terms of employment, and its procedures and system of work in terms of leave, public holidays, salaries, allowances and job's advantages, system of official missions, training courses and a list of sanctions. This guide helps Human Resources Management to perform effectively so as to deliver their desired output.
- Staff Performance Assessment: It is a system that identifies the level of employee's performance for a specific period. This system helps to evaluate employee's performance track when there are deviations, decline or weakness in the achievement of business tasks, and whether the employee follows the regulations and systems work or not. Also, it helps to detect the need for the development of skills of some workers and helps developing them. Accordingly, it motivates employees financially based on their level of the annual performance.
- Training: One of the human resource management tasks is to identify training needs and determine the qualifying track of employees in the organization, either by finding out the weaknesses in the performance of some of the workers through the annual performance evaluation. It can also be done by the presence of the development and updates in the tasks and activities of the organization that needs to transfer new knowledge and skills of workers in the organization. Also, the role of human

resources management does not end with involvement of the staff in training courses, but it follows-up and evaluates their performance.

Justifications for Administrative Development

The administrative leaders are able to meet the challenges, and they also bear the responsibility to modernize the institutions that lead them by determining priorities, putting the strategies that lead to change, and creating new visions for their organizations. They also provide support of the institutional commitment to these visions, and re-shape institutions and draft it by revisit the strategies, structures, legislations, methods of work, procedures and mechanisms of human resources development, as well as the use of new mechanisms for follow-up and evaluation for the institutional performance to lead their institutions to the level of creativity, innovation, effectiveness, efficiency, productivity and quality (Samhan, 2005).

Alkhadri (1993) pointed that the most important justification for the development of innovation is the change involved, and this change requires a major effort to treat with it, whether the treatment is positive in adaptation or negative in rejection.

Saleh (2002), Salem (2009), Brown & Harvey (2004) divide the justifications of development into the following:

- Internal justifications: It is the group driving factors from the inside organization towards the organizational development and the need for adapting sustainable programs. One the most important of these factors is providing support from top management for the development programs of the organization. To provide support for the requirements of the survival of the organization and its excellencies in the world of competition, and adoption of governance approach in the organization and in the programs of management innovation and organizational innovation.
- External justifications: They represent a range of incentive factors from outside of the organization, and that contributes to increasing the motivation of the organization towards the formulation of organizational development and implementation programs. These factors are the accelerating pace of scientific and technical developments, directing towards a knowledge economy, increasing the interest in the management of the minds and intellectual capital, growth of the service sector and increasing the work opportunities in this sector by promoting awareness on human rights, and increasing attention to managing the complexities of environmental problems and management. **Tourist Offices in Jordan**

Jordan has been interested in the last quarter of the twentieth century in the tourism industry by attracting global tourism through the creation of the appropriate factors to facilitate tourism. Since Jordan has the advantages which qualifies it to be compatible with tourism in it, they following factors are put into consideration; strategic location in the mid the world in which Jordan is the crossroads of three continents: Asia, Africa and Europe. Also, Jordan is one of the more stable countries in the Middle East, in particular from the economic and security conditions, which positively affects the investment environment. In addition, there is a good political and diplomatic relations with all countries. (Bzazaw 0.2009).

On the basis of the above, this was quite stimulating for many of the people with experience and competence in the field of tourism to open tourist offices and create tourist marketing opportunities through the exploitation of geographical and historical features that characterized Jordan to other neighboring countries. The number of tourist offices has been increased, thereby promoting Jordan and marketing its tourism by exploiting the available advantages. The tourist offices start promotion programs in order to promote itself among countries and tourism companies to give them an idea about the services provided by the tourist offices for tourist groups. This brings about ruins that is expected to be watched by tourists during his/her visit to Jordan. This can only be achieved through the participation of these offices in the outside fairs by providing tourist with magazines that contains different information on the top tourist and archaeological sites, and this will help to promote Jordan as a country with an outstanding geographical location (Alhbarnh.2008).

Definition of Travel and Tourism Agencies

It is the place where a person can get detailed information or technical consultation and make proper arrangements to travel by land, air and sea to any location of choice. The agency often includes a small number of staff who ranges between (2-12) persons (Nasr, 2011).

Abboa (2006) summarizes the functions of the travel and tourist offices in Jordan as follows:

1. The sale of tickets of various kinds, the replacement and provision of tickets, and insurance for tourists and travelers in collaboration with institutions and transportation companies.
2. Arrangement of hotel reservations from inside and outside the Kingdom.
3. Collaborating with tourist car rent and tourist transport companies offices to provide this service for tourists for a coupon exchange.
4. Working on sale tickets for festivals and tourism activities that are being held in the kingdom.
5. Accept foreign currencies from tourists and travelers for the services provided to them in accordance with the laws and regulations in Jordan.
6. Providing visas for tourists and travelers.
7. Providing tourists and passengers with baggage insurance from insurance companies that are operating in the Kingdom in accordance with the laws and regulations in Jordan.
8. Any activity that is determined by the minister upon the recommendation of the Commission.

The Role of the Jordanian Travel and Tourism Offices in the Tourism Promotion

The concept of tourism marketing or promoting tourism in a particular country is particularly dependent on the systematic and integrated performance of all the official tourist efforts; any competent government agencies in this area of ministry, departments, institutions and others, as well as the efforts of the private sectors of tourism either at the level of single tourist sector level or at the level of tourist sectors as a whole. This means that the revitalization of tourism must rely on the planning, organization, implementation, monitoring, guidance, organized and mutual cooperation between the relevant government agencies and between the different sectors of tourism, since the tourist service is based on the integrated image which indicates that each part of the government tourist sectors has a role in promoting tourism and with the integration of these roles, we have reached to a great competitive image for the tourist services. For sure, it cannot be for a single tourist sector, whether government or private to work alone in the revitalization of tourism, since tourism is becoming vast with its structure, various sectors, adoption and its multiple and overlapping services between the tourism sectors which is one of the most complex sectors.

The offices of travel and tourism for a tourism sector, is one like other sectors which is considered one of the most complicated sectors, but it may help to clarify some matters, and as we mentioned at the beginning of the study that with no doubt the tourist office has a role in the revitalization of the Jordanian tourism, but this role varies relatively from one office to another; in other words, you may find out that some offices have no role and does not perform any activity that helps to stimulate the Jordanian tourism meanwhile, you might find out that some other offices have a minor role, another has a good role, and another has a notable role, and this is what we have observed in some tourist offices that were interviewed. According to Alhabarnh (2008) that what has been seen in the ratio between these offices is depending on many factors and these factors are:

1. The financial capacity of the office of Travel and Tourism, and the availability of capital.
2. The coordination between tourism offices and hotel activities.
3. The extent of effective coordination between the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities and the offices of tourism and travel.

Relationship of creativity to tourism

The creative thought is one of the ways in which tourist offices might seek in order to reach the development, continuity and profitability of the tourism sector.

There are several parties that can stimulate innovation such as Innovative people; environmental factors such as turbulence and crises; external parties such as government intervention and competition, and what is not clear in current research is whether the administration has a key role in encouraging creativity and innovation, or not? Or whether the innovation will happen without any influence from management? However, managers need to understand the role of creativity and its ability to improve the enterprise's operations, and the interaction between customers and the enterprise (Tourism Management, 2008).

So, creativity and innovation are key factors in the tourism sector due to its nature which characterized by fast development. Thus, the tourist products have to be regularly updated and renewed in order to keep pace with the growing needs of consumers for the development of the quality that's to be provided and offer new products and experiment because tourists are constantly looking for something new and new places to visit, or a new activity to do, thus, this requires those in charge of tourist facilities to prepare an action plan based on offering ideas, and then prepare a feasibility study involving investment funds (Tourism management, 2008). In addition, knowledge capital must be available in the facility as well as the availability of cumulative knowledge, technology skills, personal skill or specialized and skills.

CONCLUSIONS

From the above we can conclude the following:

1. The study shows that to reach to strategic innovation, it means tourist offices have to use a strategy which addresses the fundamental pillars for innovation and organizational development plan.
2. Innovation is one of the progress's secrets and excellence that is seen in many different fields of life, and it is the basic material in the processes of change and development.
3. Creativity and innovation are pointing to the development, and change in the tourist establishment and offices because they are growing up out of the internal factors while others arise from external factors.
4. Establishment that seeks to achieve excellence have organizational structures in terms of models and work procedures, job descriptions, regulations of human resources, evaluation of employees' performance in addition to train them.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Encourage workers in the tourist offices to develop their creative potential by using the method of brainstorming, and other methods to increase the creativity abilities among them.
2. Work on the participation of all workers in the various levels of the organization, and motivate them to make tangible suggestions.
3. Promote the use of information technology because of its positive impact on innovation, and the development operations in the tourist offices.
4. Use the modern techniques to attract the attention of the visitors in tourist products.
5. Work on raising the skill of workers, train them and develop them through teamwork that has creative thinking skills.
6. Provide efficient and effective management to meet the various needs of the tourist office in light of increasing competition and globalization.
7. The tourism office should have estimated budget for all needs, which are necessary for the development of the facility and its continuity.

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