

## Providing a Human Resources Development Model in the Ministry of Education (Case Study: Headquarters)

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### ABSTRACT

Today, human resource has been raised as the most important factor in the field of organizational development. In this regard, a topic called human resources development has been suggested, which can be addressed in different areas. The main purpose of this research is to provide a model for human resources development within the headquarters of the Ministry of Education. For this purpose, the statistical population of this research has been composed of 165 experts with experiences in this field. In the sampling section, the sample size was set to 115 using the Cochran formula. In addition, in the qualitative section, 28 experts were selected. Interviews were used to collect information in the qualitative section. In the quantitative section, a questionnaire was used for exploratory factor analysis and prioritization of indices. In the information analysis section, content analysis method was used to identify the indices, and in the dimensions identification section, the exploratory factor analysis method was used. Finally, a hierarchical analysis method was used to prioritize dimensions. At the end of this research, a process model of human resources development is proposed in the form of environmental and organizational factors. In this research, the main indices are classified into environmental and organizational indices. The environmental part includes economic, political, legal, international, and cultural factors, and organizational part includes organizational dimensions, human resources development capabilities, strategic relationships, process alignment, functional system culture creation, and development of an accountability system.

**Keywords:** human resources development, ministry of education, content analysis

### INTRODUCTION

The human resources development is a relatively emerging academic discipline, yet it's a long-lasting scientific; therefore it is of great importance, and this process is increasingly complex. Although the concept of human resources development has recently been introduced at universities, its roots lie in past and in firm works (Knight, 2015). The idea that people develop themselves purposefully to improve their living conditions seems as a part of human nature. Theories and actions of human resources development are deeply rooted in this development perspective. Human resources development is about knowledgeable people who play a role in generating systems. The goal is to develop this success both in individual and organizational dimensions. The two main categories in human resources development are:

1. Individual and organizational learning

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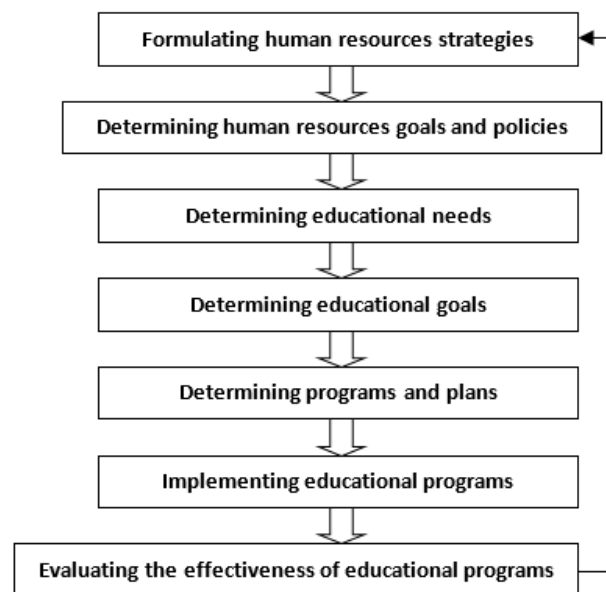
2. Individual and organizational performance (Watkins & Morsick, 2004; and Swanson, 2008).

It is easy to reasonably relate the human resources development to human history and the training needed to continued progress. Human resources development often acts within the framework of the organization. The organization might be a company, a university, or a large or a small government agency. Strategic investment in human resources development can play a major role in maintaining a high level of competitive advantage among the internal and external forces of a country. Therefore, the transition to global issues is possible in presence of strategic human resources (Swanson, 2: 4).

One of the main tasks and processes in the human resources cycle is the human resources development and it addresses issues such as the creation of a dynamic organization and education opportunities and employee learning in order to improve organizational, group and individual performance (Armstrong, 2002: 15). Human resources development activities include designing and providing education, training, and development to improve organizational effectiveness (Woodwiack and Batista, 2002: 1). As a pioneer of human resources development theories in 1960, Nadler defined human resources development as organized learning experiences provided by employers in a specific time period in order to improve individual performance and growth (Nadler and Nadler, 1989: 4). Gilley and Egglund defined human resources development as a process for: (1) developing individuals focusing on improving performance associated with the current job, (2) developing a career path focusing on improving the performance of future occupational missions, and (3) providing organizational development that results in the optimal use of human potentials, and improving human performance that results in organizational efficiency (Gilley and Egglund, 1992: 5). According to Nadler and Nadler (1989), three key activities form the core of the human resources development process. These three key activities include education, training and development. Education involves learning by focusing on the learner's current job; training includes learning by focusing on the learner's future job; and development is a learning that does not focus on the job. In a relatively comprehensive definition, human resources development can be defined as the process of developing and stimulating human expertise through organizational development and employees' training in order to improve performance; in another definition, it can be defined as a process or a short-term or long-term activity aimed at developing knowledge, expertise, productivity, and job satisfaction at various individual, team, organizational or national levels (Meelen, 2006: 11). Human resources development refers to prospective investment in human resources. The development explains the fact that an employee needs to use a set of information, skills and abilities to succeed in his career. However, human resources development can be viewed from a wider perspective. Various definitions of human resources development have been proposed that outline the scope of this profession. **Table 1** (from Weinberger, 1998) shows the historical course of various definitions of human resources development in previous researches.

**Table 1.** Definitions of human resources development over time

| Author(s)                    | Definition   | The main elements  | Supporting theories   |
|------------------------------|--|--|---|
| Harbison and Mayers (1964)   | Human resources development is the process of promoting the knowledge, skills, and abilities of all people in the society. (page 2)  | high level empowerment of human resources and its widespread application   | Development Economics   |
| Nadler (1970)                | Human resources development is a set of organized activities directed at a specific organization and designed to create behavioral changes. (Page 3)   | behavioral change, adult learning  | Psychology  |
| Jones (1981)                 | Human resources development is a systematic development of work-related capabilities of individuals that emphasize the achievement of individual and organizational goals. (Page 188)  | performance, individual and organizational goals   | Philosophy, Psychology, Economics, and Theory of Devices                    |
| Chalafsky and Lincoln (1983) | Human resources development is to study how individuals and groups change in the organization through learning   | adult learning   | Psychology  |
| Swanson (1987)               | Human resources development is improving the organization's performance through employees' capabilities, and usually includes activities related to work design, talent, expertise and motivation.   | organizational performance   | Psychology, System, Economics   |
| Esmitt (1988)                | Human resources development involves direct or indirect educational or individual programs and activities, which positively affect the development of individuals and the productivity of the organization. (Page 1)   | education and improvement, organizational performance  | Economics, Devices, Psychology  |
| Watkins (1989)               | Human resources development is to study and experience a responsibility with the aim of long-term improvement of work-related learning capabilities at individual, group, and organizational levels. This term includes - but is not limited to - education, job development, and organizational development. (Page 427)   | ability to learn, education, and improvement of organizational development   | Psychology, System, Economics, Performance Improvement Theories             |
| McLagan (1989)               | Human resources development is the integrated application of education and improvement, job development, and organization development with the goal of enhancing individual and organizational effectiveness (Page 7)  | education and improvement, job development, and organization development   | Psychology, System, Economics   |
| Gilley and Eggland (1989)    | Human resource development is an organized learning activity aimed at improving employees' performance and growth, as well as improvement of the job, the individual and the organization (Page 5)   | learning activities, performance improvement   | Psychology, System, Economics, Performance Improvement Theories             |
| Nadler and Nadler (1989)     | Human resources development is the provision of employee-organized learning experiences over a specific time frame with the goal of individual growth and performance improvement (Page 6)   | learning and performance improvement   | Performance Improvement, Psychology   |
| Esmitt (1990)                | Human resources development is the determination of optimal methods for the development and improvement of human resources of the organization as well as the systematic improvement of the performance and productivity of employees through learning, education and improvement, and leadership for achieving individual and organizational goals (Page 16)  | performance improvement  | Psychology, Systems, Economics, Performance Improvement Theories            |
| Chalafsky (1992)             | The human resources development is to study and experience the increased learning capability individuals, groups and organizations through the development and application of learning-based interventions aimed at optimizing individual and organizational effectiveness and growth (Page 179)   | performance improvement, learning ability  | Psychology, systems, Human Performance                                      |
| Watkins and Marsick (1994)   | Human resources development as a combination of learning, job development, and organizational development, offers theoretical integration and provides for the formation of a learning organization. (Page 355)  | education and improvement, job development, organizational development, learning organization  | Individual and organizational Performance of Systems, Economics, Psychology |
| Swanson (1995)               | Human resources development is the process of developing human resources expertise through organizational development and employees' development and training aimed at improving performance. (Page 208)   | education and improvement, organizational development, performance improvement in the organization, process of work, individual levels | Systems, Economics, Psychology  |
| McLean and McLean (2001)     | Human resources development is a process or activity that permanently and in long-term develops the individual's knowledge, skills, productivity, and satisfaction. This can be at individual or group level, and for the benefit of the organization, the community of the country or the whole humanity. (Page 313)  | training and improving organizational development  | Psychology, Economics, Development  |
| Swanson (2009)               | Human resources development is the process of expertise development with the aim of improving the organization's system, work process, and group and individual performance. Often, the human resources development within the organization occurs under the constraints of education and improvement, organizational development, performance improvement, organizational learning, occupational management, leadership development, and so on. | extending expertise, improving performance   | Systems, Economics, Psychology  |
| Johnson (2016)               | Human resources development is defined as the development of human skills with the goal of optimizing processes and organizational performance through talent management.  | skills development, process optimization   | Talent Management   |



**Figure 1.** Explanatory Model of Human Resources Capabilities (Source: Soltani, 2006: 268)

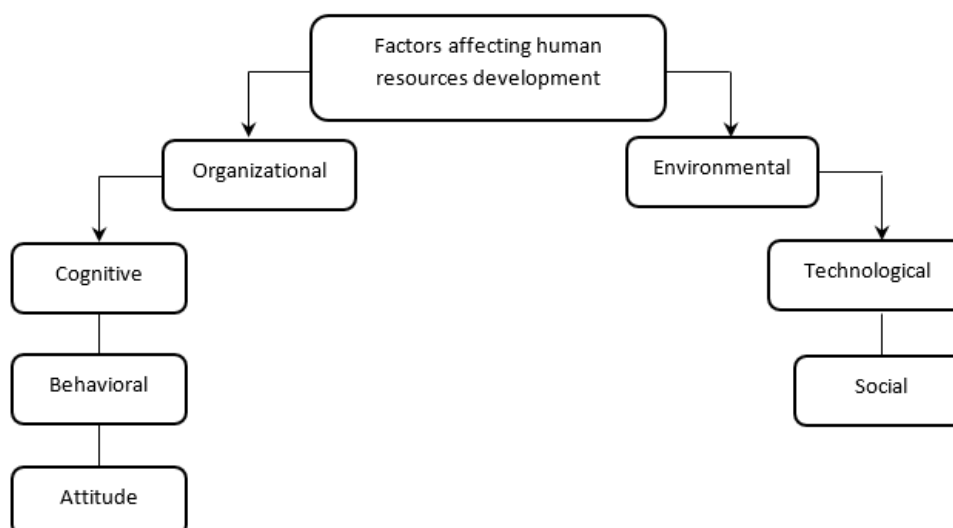
According to the definitions, human resources development is a process. Specifically, the process of human resources development begins with the commitment of the CEO and top managers to develop human resources to support the organization's improvement plan. In order to implement the organization's improvement plan, managers and supervisors together with the participation determine their educational needs based on the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to meet the specific business objectives of the organization. Having identified the existing gaps, a comprehensive training plan is developed for all staff in the organization that provides the skills they need. This phase is combined with the employees' career development plan and then the employees and resources needed to implement these plans are selected. In the next step, the organization will first communicate human resources development plans and existing training opportunities to all employees in order to implement its plans. In addition, educational apprenticeships are provided for the convenience of new and old employees in their new job and business plan of the organization. To systematically train employees, a timetable will be prepared and employees' participation in the program will be monitored in order to that training space and facilities are utilized. In order to pre-period reviews, direct supervisors will inform employees about expected performance goals at the end of the training program.

In next steps, the employees' development activities are followed up to ensure that the comprehensive training plan works better. The organization assigns employees scores for learning and updates their new skills in their personnel records. Also, direct supervisors carry out post-course reviews with employees in order to confirm learning and following up the training plan.

This step may include revision of existing performance standards, determination of new responsibilities for employees whose skills have been increased, as well as assessment of the performance of individuals. In addition, the comprehensive system and human resources development activities are reviewed in order to determine their impact on business performance and to review training commitments. Finally, the results of feedback are used to formulate future human resources development plans and to continually improve existing programs. The process of human resources development in different organizations can be seen in **Figure 1**.

The Human Resources Development Standard requires organizations to create eight basic systems. These eight systems include analysis of educational needs, career development, resources allocation, briefing training, communication, monitoring, evaluation, and feedback. For each of these systems, three types of actions should be taken (Soltani, 2004: 72):

- a) Prominent actions: includes a set of actions that leaders take towards their followers and employees for their development and growth.
- b) Standard measures: includes a set of actions carried out by followers and employees, and in many cases these measures go beyond the minimum standard requirements.



**Figure 2.** The primary model extracted from the research background

- c) Potential factors for development: includes areas where there is potential for development, and in many cases they are not fully invested for the purpose of training people (Soltani, 2004: 74).

### Basic Conceptual Model

Various models have been introduced in the area of human resources development. Many of these models have examined the factors affecting the human resources development from a variety of perspectives. But various classifications have led to a comprehensive look at this area. In some studies, such as Hughes (2010), attempts have been made to examine the factors from an organizational perspective, which has led to examination of more issues in terms of technological and cultural dimensions. In this context, Johnson (2016) has stated that a system that is continually linked to its external dimensions - and this link continually influences external factors and is influenced by external factors - finally improves organizational performance. Chang et al. (2017), in explaining the factors of human resources development, despite focusing more on areas related to organizational factors, suggested that one of the weaknesses of the models related to this area is the lack of attention to the environmental dimensions associated with human resources development. Finally, due to the comprehensive approach in this research, in the final model, we tried to use both organizational and environmental dimensions in order to identify factors related to human resources development and indices of this main variable. In previous human resources development models, most experts in human resources development had a strategic and macro approach to the human resources development and emphasized the role of some factors such as contingency, cultural, attitudinal, behavioral, ethical, human, and economic factors as human resources development dimensions. In addition, the role of top-level and supportive managers, coordination and coherence, and environmental interactions assumed to be necessary. It is necessary to recall that the role of factors such as having a vision, mission, goals and strategy in the area of organization and human resources management is emphasized in detail. Considering that this research has been done with the aim of designing a human resources development model in the Ministry of Education, this design and explanation is a development plan that, in addition to synchronization and coherence with the above models, has a shared point of view with the view of human resources development experts and somehow, while having a long-term strategic approach, its competency-oriented and systemic aspects, as well as its holistic look, have been seriously considered; Therefore, the primary model of this research is presented in **Figure 2**.

### RESEARCH METHODS

There are three general methods for research, which include quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods. Considering the fact that in this research, the researcher seeks to formulate the model through interview, the research design is qualitative. The statistical population includes the experts of the ministry of education headquarters who had at least 10 years experience in were familiar with human resources development issues. The total number of these people was 165. The interview process was initiated with employees who are treated by the ministry of education as experienced and knowledgeable employees. The number of sample members

**Table 2.** Indices affecting human resources development in organizational and environmental dimensions

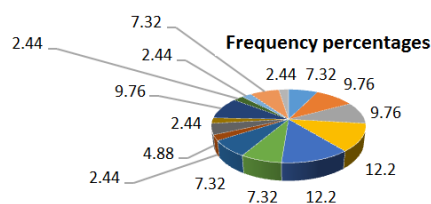
| No.                           | Index  | Frequency of similar words | Frequency percentage |
|-------------------------------|--|----------------------------|----------------------|
| <b>Organizational indices</b> |  |                            |                      |
| 1                             | Learning culture   | 10                         | 10/10                |
| 2                             | Commitment to Development  | 5                          | 5/05                 |
| 3                             | Capabilities for strategic partnership                                   | 7                          | 7/07                 |
| 4                             | Alignment with the strategies and missions of the Ministry               | 3                          | 3/03                 |
| 5                             | Effective leadership   | 11                         | 11/11                |
| 6                             | Private sector capacities  | 5                          | 5/05                 |
| 7                             | Presence of strategic vision   | 6                          | 6/06                 |
| 8                             | Establishing an alignment between all managerial sectors and employees   | 3                          | 3/03                 |
| 9                             | Creating trust at all levels   | 8                          | 8/08                 |
| 10                            | Effective management of organizational changes                           | 4                          | 4/04                 |
| 11                            | Creating a systematic human resources development architecture           | 2                          | 2/02                 |
| 12                            | Determination of organizational criteria for human resources development | 6                          | 6/06                 |
| 13                            | Benchmarking of successful domestic examples                             | 5                          | 5/05                 |
| 14                            | Development of functional standards                                      | 3                          | 3/03                 |
| 15                            | Proper knowledge management  | 10                         | 10/10                |
| 16                            | Increasing open (multi-faceted) communication                            | 5                          | 5/05                 |
| 17                            | Promoting learning culture   | 3                          | 3/03                 |
| 18                            | Parliamentary support  | 2                          | 2/02                 |
| 19                            | Simplifying the processes of human resources                             | 1                          | 1/01                 |
| 20                            | Applying successful international experiences                            | 3                          | 7/32                 |
| 21                            | Development of international communication                               | 4                          | 9/76                 |
| 22                            | Applying international capacities  | 4                          | 9/76                 |
| 23                            | Social development culture   | 5                          | 12/20                |
| 24                            | Community-wide learning culture  | 5                          | 12/20                |
| 25                            | Social support culture   | 3                          | 7/32                 |
| 26                            | Social norms   | 3                          | 7/32                 |
| 27                            | Measuring human resources development performance                        | 1                          | 2/44                 |
| 28                            | Government support   | 2                          | 4/88                 |
| 29                            | Comprehensive support from government                                    | 1                          | 2/44                 |
| 30                            | Economic Development   | 4                          | 9/76                 |
| 31                            | Private section entry  | 1                          | 2/44                 |
| 32                            | Providing required budget  | 1                          | 2/44                 |
| 33                            | Legal protection   | 3                          | 7/32                 |
| 34                            | Alignment of regulations   | 1                          | 2/44                 |

in the qualitative part of the research has been based on the sampling adequacy. The sampling adequacy is realized on the basis of the saturation and repeatability of the collected data, which indicates that sufficient data has been collected for all aspects of the phenomenon (Danaeifard et al., 2008). Therefore, the sampling at qualitative part was purposeful and non-random and census sampling was used. The number of statistical population in this part has been determined according to the standards of expertise at the ministry's headquarters as 28 people. In the present study, qualitative data were collected using interviews and semi-structured interviews. To analyze the data, the criteria of the research were first identified by content analysis method using Maxqda software.

## FINDINGS

In this section, based on interviews and analyzes conducted in the context of Maxqda software, indices were identified. But it's worth mentioning that these indices are extracted by summarizing the identified 140 codes of the previous sections, such that these 140 codes were initially reduced to 60 codes based on code repetition. Then, based on the level of conceptual similarity and proximity of the codes, these codes were combined and finally 34 main indices were identified. As outlined in the appendix to this design, in the interviews conducted in this study, experts were asked to express their desired indices in terms of two major environmental and organizational divisions. The results of these surveys are presented in **Table 2**.

As shown in **Table 2**, 99 codes were identified in the form of 19 indices at the organizational level and 41 codes were identified in the form of 15 indices at the environmental level.



- Applying successful international experiences
- Social development culture
- Social norms
- Comprehensive support from government
- Providing required budget
- Development of international communication
- Community-wide learning culture
- Parliamentary support
- economic development
- legal protection
- Applying international capacities
- Social support culture
- government support
- private sector entry
- alignment of regulations

**Figure 3.** The frequency percentages of identified codes at different levels

**Table 3.** Indices identified in content analysis section and weights of main indices

| Factors  | Factors  | Factors                               |
|--|--|---------------------------------------|
| Learning culture   | Creating a systematic human resources development architecture           | Applying international capacities     |
| Commitment to Development  | Determination of organizational criteria for human resources development | Social development culture            |
| Capabilities for strategic partnership                                 | Benchmarking of successful domestic examples                             | Community-wide learning culture       |
| Alignment with the strategies and missions of the Ministry             | Development of functional standards                                      | Social support culture                |
| Effective leadership   | Proper knowledge management  | Social norms                          |
| Private sector capacities  | Increasing open (multi-faceted) communication                            | Parliamentary support                 |
| Presence of strategic vision   | Promoting learning culture   | Government support                    |
| Establishing an alignment between all managerial sectors and employees | Measuring human resources development performance                        | Comprehensive support from government |
| Creating trust at all levels   | Applying successful international experiences                            | Economic Development                  |
| Effective management of organizational changes                         | Development of international communication                               | Private section entry                 |

Generally, In general, the indices identified here have created a wide range of possibilities, so that new factors have been extracted from human resources development. **Table 3** presents the identified indices.

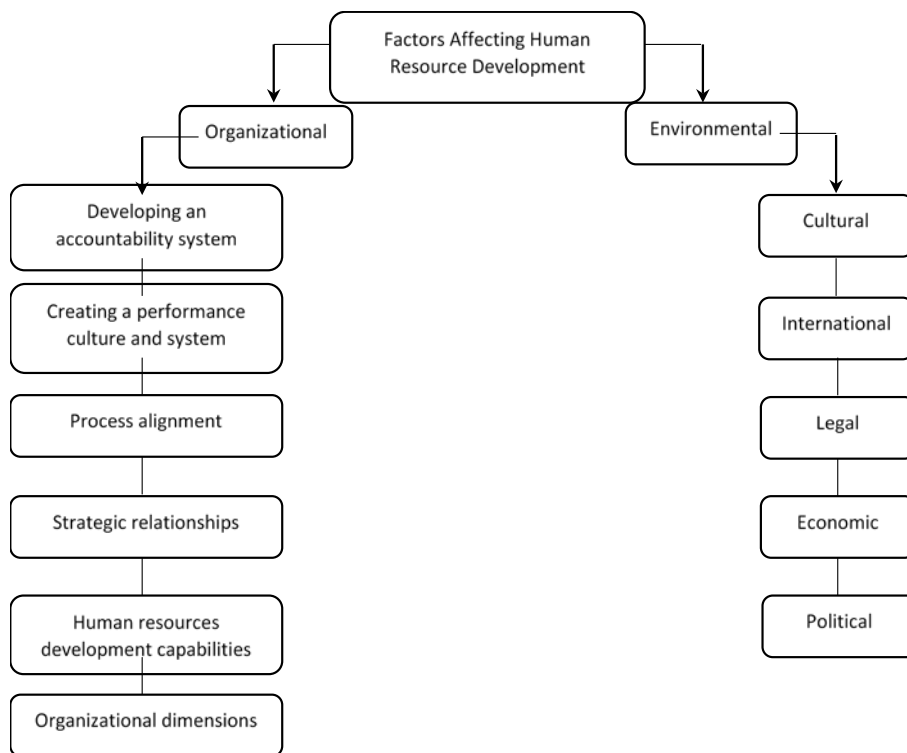
## DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSION

In this research, we first tried to properly collect all the data in the form of interviews with the experts of the Ministry of Education. In total, 140 codes (indices and dimensions) have been identified based on the interviews conducted. In terms of distribution of these indices, it can be stated that 75 codes have been identified in the part of top managers, 45 codes in the part of middle managers and 20 codes in the part of operational managers. In the next section, based on interviews and analyzes conducted in the framework of Maxqda software, indices have been identified. To summarize, these indices are presented in the following table. But it's worth mentioning that these indices have been extracted by summarizing the identified 140 codes of the previous sections, such that these 140 codes were initially reduced to 60 codes based on code repetition. Then, based on the level of conceptual similarity and proximity of the codes, these codes were combined and finally 34 main indices were identified. In the interviews conducted in this study, experts were asked to express their desired indices in terms of two major environmental and organizational divisions. The results of these surveys are presented in **Table 4**.



**Table 4.** Indices identified in content analysis section and weights of main indices

| Factors  | Factors  | Factors                               |
|--|--|---------------------------------------|
| Learning culture   | Creating a systematic human resources development architecture           | Applying international capacities     |
| Commitment to Development  | Determination of organizational criteria for human resources development | Social development culture            |
| Capabilities for strategic partnership                                 | Benchmarking of successful domestic examples                             | Community-wide learning culture       |
| Alignment with the strategies and missions of the Ministry             | Development of functional standards                                      | Social support culture                |
| Effective leadership   | Proper knowledge management  | Social norms                          |
| Private sector capacities  | Increasing open (multi-faceted) communication                            | Parliamentary support                 |
| Presence of strategic vision   | Promoting learning culture   | Government support                    |
| Establishing an alignment between all managerial sectors and employees | Measuring human resources development performance                        | Comprehensive support from government |
| Creating trust at all levels   | Applying successful international experiences                            | Economic Development                  |
| Effective management of organizational changes                         | Development of international communication                               | Private section entry                 |
| Developing international relationships                                 | Alignment of regulations   | Providing required budget             |
| Simplifying the processes  |  |                                       |



**Figure 4.** Extractive Conceptual Model of the Research

As shown in the **Table 4**, 99 codes were identified at the organizational level as 19 indices, and 41 codes were identified as 15 indices at the environmental level. As outlined in the previous sections, the main indices were identified at the two environmental and organizational levels in the content analysis section. Factor analysis section has also identified the dimensions of the executive model by categorizing these indices. In this section, based on experts' reviews, these dimensions were drawn up in the form of an executive model that has been developed as a process, so that factors of organizational dimensions and human resources development capabilities are selected as inputs of this process model. In addition, the communication strategy, alignment in processes and devices, the creation of a high-performance culture and system, the development of the accountability system are drawn as process dimensions and, finally, the human resources development are outlined as an input to this model. This model is presented in **Figure 4**.



Finally, according to the results, the followings are recommended:

- Developing a learning culture by offering discounts on the use of cultural products as well as the use of different media to develop a learning culture among the staff and teachers of the ministry.
- Creating a sense of commitment to personal and organizational development in employees by creating a sense of mutual trust and loyalty between different departments of the organization.
- Creating opportunities for partnerships between all organizational sectors and engaging employees and managers in decisions and planning in different sectors.
- Aligning with the missions and values defined in the Ministry of Education in the department of human resources development and applying forces in accordance with organizational missions and values.
- Creating effective leadership in the human resources development, especially in the human resources department, taking into account the need for a charismatic figure in this department.
- Using private sector capacities to develop the activities and trainings required for the development of human resources management.
- Create a strategic vision across all organizational sectors to create a shared understanding of the necessity for human resources development at all levels.
- Establishing an alignment between all organizational sectors (i.e., in the managerial and human resources areas), taking into account the current needs in the field of human resources development.
- Effective management of organizational change by public mobilizing and creating a change culture and supporting change at all managerial levels as well as preparing employees for change.
- Determining criteria for examining the status of human resources development in the Ministry of Education in order to evaluate the current situation and the distance to the desired position.
- Creating multi-layered and open communication across all sectors to create an open stream of information at all managerial levels
- Simplifying human resources development processes in all sectors in order to speed up organizational operations
- Using successful domestic and international experiences to improve and develop human resources in different parts of the organization
- Developing international communication in order to utilize the experiences and capacities of successful foreign examples and organizations
- Aligning laws approved at macro-level by the human resources development program in the organization
- Providing legal protections for human resources development programs at the Ministry of Education

### Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

### Notes on contributors

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