

# HR Practices in MSMEs of Udyambag, Belagavi

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**Abstract:** Today, the management of human resources plays a critical role in the development of micro, small, and medium-sized businesses. The ideal course of action for the expansion of the MSME is to comprehend and adhere to human resource practices and policies. About 40% of the workforce in India is employed by MSMEs, which considerably increase the GDP. Agility, cost conscience, trust, centralised decision-making, risk-taking capacity, and a culture of doing business through intuition and relationships are the fundamental principles that MSMEs most frequently exhibit. Due to the wide variety of businesses, scarce resources, and lack of professional stratification, MSMEs frequently display some informality in their management practices and procedures. One area where most MSMEs fall short is in the field of human resource management. (Economic Times, Published on Dec 24, 2020). The key HR strategy is to recruit the greatest talent or resources for the business to help it reach its objectives. If a business invests in human resources, it will get more rewards from the efficient and effective use of its resources, which will speed up the process of producing goods and services. As technology and skills advance quickly, one of HR's key responsibilities is to close the skills gap. The majority of today's talents will be obsolete tomorrow. HR's responsibility is to enhance an employee's skill set through training and development initiatives. The success and expansion of MSMEs depend greatly on the selection of the best and most appropriate HR strategy. The objective of this study is to examine the role of human resources (HR) in recruiting, skill development, and fostering a culture where everyone in MSMEs can contribute to the growth of the MSME. The recruitment process, the requirement for skill development, and the impact of an empowered environment in an organization's overall contribution are all investigated through the use of standardised questionnaires that are given to HR managers in these chosen MSMEs in the Udyambag, Belagavi region. There are around 151 MSMEs in Udyambag, Belagavi, and selected 30 samples would be considered for this study.

**Keywords:** MSMEs, HR practices, recruitment, skill development.

## 1. Introduction

MSMEs (Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises) are important, particularly in emerging nations like India. Over the last few decades MSMEs in India have emerged as developing sector in the Indian economy. MSMEs in India contribute to nearly 33 % to the GDP. (Trade Promotion Council of India, 30/01/2023). They are India's second-largest employer after the agricultural sector and make significant contributions to the industrialization of the country's rural and underdeveloped areas by maintaining regional harmony and guaranteeing fair

wealth and income distribution.

Due to their contribution to exports, innovation, and the national economy, MSMEs have taken on a significant role. MSMEs serve as supplementary units that support large businesses and contribute to the socioeconomic growth of the country. They produce a wide range of goods to satisfy both domestic and international markets. MSME generates job prospects in nations with high population densities, like India. The expansion of job options has made HRM (Human Resource Management) more important for MSME. The primary goal of HRM is to effectively utilise the company's human resources and to hire qualified employees who will enable it to compete with its rivals. First-generation business owners who operate MSMEs in India typically lack training and knowledge in resource planning, capital management, and labour management.

Given the uniqueness and significance of SMEs to national economies and local communities as sources of employment, wealth, and other social and relational benefits, examining the state of HRP within small businesses is essential and will improve our understanding of effectively managing the sector (Barrett and Mayson 2007; Baron 2003). This essay's goal is to investigate the HR policies and practices used by Indian MSMEs.

## 2. Significance of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise (MSME) & Indian Prospective

Long, C.S., Ajagbe, M.A. and Kowang, T.O. (2014), mentioned in their work that the small and medium enterprises play an important role in the development of economy. They are considered as backbone of industrial development.

According to Zakaria, N., Zainal, S.R.M., and Nasurdin, A.M. (2011), SME's account for more than 90% of all businesses worldwide, making them essential to the global economy's expansion.

While Pandya, V. (2012) concluded that SMEs had a significant part in the development of both emerging and established economies, Hung et al. (2019) contend that SMEs play a key function in developing countries.

Similar to other developing countries, Pandya (2012) noted in their report that the manufacturing sector in India benefits from small and medium-sized businesses due to better employment and export potential.

Omolo, J.W., Oginda, M.N. and Otengah, W.A. (2013),

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mentioned in their work that SME's are substantiating out to be a constant source of improving poverty and employment opportunities. These organisations are seen as sources for creating jobs as well. (Ardic, O.P., Mylenko, N. and Saltane, V., 2012).

SME's employ about 40% million people in India across several units. The SME sector in India has demonstrated a great deal of flexibility in the previous years, according to the report of the leading SME's of India, published in 2017. As a result of their significant role in fostering economic expansion and employment creation, it has become the foundation of national economies. In terms of new work patterns, innovation, and job creation, it is predicted that SMEs will rule the future (Atkinson, 2007).

Despite numerous government measures, these organisations nevertheless face a few major obstacles, such as limited marketing assistance, a shortage of trained labour, infrastructural problems, and slow access to low-cost loans. These issues are the main impediment to the expansion of the SME sector in India.

One of the industrial areas that significantly boosts the secondary sector of the economy is Udyambag in Belagavi. According to the annual report of the MSME Development Institute, Hubali, the cities of Udyambag and Belagavi are fast developing thanks to the recent advancements in transit and recent foreign investment.

Although these industries face a variety of challenges, the ones related to human resource management practices—such as the lack of sufficient manpower and a skilled labour force with low productivity—force researchers to examine the HR practices used in SME's based in Udyambag, Belagavi. These practices are what enable workers at any organisation to be more productive and efficient. Following the foregoing debate, it became clear that a qualitative study in the form of a research-based case study was necessary to further investigate different HR practices at SME's in Udyambag, Belagavi.

### 3. HR and MSMEs

The Indian MSME sector has been the engine of economic growth for several decades. The success of MSMEs depends on their ability to attract, retain, and develop talent. However, they face many obstacles when it comes to People management because of a lack of resources and a deficient HR management system. (hr.economic times, Updated On Jun 27, 2022). Managing human resources in MSMEs is a more difficult and particular task, particularly in terms of luring and keeping staff. While larger organisations grapple with maintaining and developing the right employees, SME have the fundamental challenge of finding the right individual for the right role.

It is generally known how human resources can improve a company's efficacy and efficiency (Guo *et al.*, 2011).

Regardless of the size of the business, people are a crucial and necessary resource for attaining an organization's goal, according to the resource-based view of management (Barney, 1992).

The mainstream management has concentrated on investing in the importance of HRP in larger firms research, disregarding

them in the SME sector, despite the crucial role that HRP play in improving organisational efficiency (Purcell & Kinnie, 2007). We truly know very little about the science and practise of HR in (small enterprises),' Huselid (2003: 297) noted in a comment regarding the dearth of research on HR policies and practises in SME's.

### 4. Literature Review

The majority of HRM-related research conducted in MSMEs is conceptual, with an emphasis on a wide range of HRM subjects including recruiting, selecting employees, paying them well, providing them with training and development opportunities, maintaining sanitary working conditions, and reducing attrition.

1. SINGH, Lata Bajpai, (2020) The SME's are important for the growth of the country and HR practices are predictor of business performance of SME's thus the formal human resource practices must be followed to increase the effectiveness of employees. Formal HR practices would be beneficial for innovation and creativity. As transition from one to other form of approach would take time, the SME's may adopt the mix of approaches i.e., indigenous and formalization of HR practices in future
2. Mamta Sharma (2022) Nearly 71% of MSME business owners believe HR departments are more about employees' interests and less inclined towards the company and 58% of company owners say the HR department does not need information on the company's financial statistics. The goal of setting up an HR department is only realised by 33% of business people and a very small percentage of the respondents believe that HR contributes to the success or failure of their company, whether in good times or bad times.
3. Sourabh Banthia, (2021) As per Edgar Schein's model of Organisations, every organisation is made up of three levels- Artefacts, Values and Assumptions. By performing an analysis of this mode, the MSME can better understand the key values and assumptions prevalent in the company. This is crucial as the identified values would be key drivers of the company's HR policies and processes and help create the right environment and expectations from employees. Identifying key values of the firm and framing HR processes around these values, including hiring, compensation, promotion strategies etc., is key for building a sustainable model for the talent pipeline. By designing these processes, MSMEs can reduce dependency on the entrepreneurs and bring more transparency to be current and prospective employees.
4. Madan (2012): The recruitment challenges faced by the MSMEs can be overcome by implementing approaches like Leveraging multiple candidate resources, Recruitment through social media and Creating job portal and online advertising the recruitment. Creating healthy working environment is

- another challenge faced by the MSMEs and it can be overcome by motivating employees which can reduce the absenteeism. Highlighting the opportunities of personal growth, job growth by the organization. Introducing grievance handling procedures can reduce the organizational conflicts. Knowledge management is the major challenge facing by MSMEs. The main purpose of HRM is to fill skill gap is by positive entrepreneurial support and leadership form owners. Enforcement of labor training and development of leadership quality is essential.
5. Ashu Katyal (2015) focused on the major problems related to HR practices and suggestion to overcome them. The paper address issues in recruitment, retention, empowerment, job security, motivation, employee engagement, training and development, compensation and work force diversity.
  6. Bohlander G. W. (2009) highlighted the role of institutions, government policy makers to focus on providing support to the SMEs on facilities like recruitment process outsourcing which can help SMEs to get the right candidate from right source at less cost. Getting the talented candidates and retaining them in the SMEs is a matter of great concern for many, government should consider making work experience in SMEs as an additional achievement for considering to offer jobs in private or public sector and preference should be given to such experienced candidates.
  7. Roper & Hart (2013) Human Resource Management in SME sector has gained research interest of many researchers over last decade and the same is evident with the special issues of many journals (Rahman et.al. 2018). It has been seen that small and medium enterprises experience difficulty in identifying and adopt innovative technologies and working methods due to poor internal resources.
  8. Hung et.al (2019) In SMEs the HRM has been identified as key success factor.
  9. Wognum & Bartlett (2002) strongly put emphasis on creating new policies for SMEs to acquire knowledge.
  10. Hung et. al. (2019) It has been observed that almost all the organizations have some or other sort of HR activities in place.
  11. Zakaria, N., Zainal, S.R.M. and Nasurdin, A.M. (2011) also mentioned that the use of HR practices is considered quite lesser in SMEs with comparison to large organizations.
  12. Khan, N.R., Awang, M. and Zulkifli, C.M. (2013) mentioned that the SME's do not make the best use of their human resources and they ignore their people, the researchers further mentioned that it is because of scarcity of efficient human resource professionals with them.
  13. Steffensen et.al. (2019) So far the researches have been conducted on the theme of HRM and role of the HR professionals have been ancillary to this area of research and thus better focus should now be on the managers who are responsible for design, adoption, enactment and then implementation of relevant HR strategies and practices.
  14. Long et. al. (2014), argue that business owners and HR managers of SME play a crucial role to deal with the challenges of employee's turnover intentions. Apart from it the managers looking for business survival need to motivate their employees to innovate and for the same also they need to be good in implementing HR practices.
  15. Curado, 2018 & Honyenuga, (2011) also found that the SMEs experience lots of challenges namely, attitude of its employees towards work and increased demands for benefits, with a mismatch in their level of performance.
  16. Long, C.S., Ajagbe, M.A. and Kowang, T.O., (2014) In SMEs, the appropriate administration of HR function seems difficult as the line managers and Human resource professionals need to work closely with each other to execute different functions such as hiring and preparing the workforce, developing and executing compensation policy and very importantly managing relations.
  17. There is a link between the social responsibility of the firm and its practices towards employees has nurtured another stream of research known as human resources management (HRM) in responsible firms, introducing a new as socially responsible human resources management (SRHRM) (Shen and Zhu, 2011).
  18. Wright, Snell, & Dyer, (2005) The relationship between HRM practices and company performance has been established by researchers.
  19. McEvoy, (1984), The performance of small businesses can also be significantly impacted by well-managed human resource practices. However, it has been discovered that one of the major causes of company failures in SMEs is a lack of emphasis on human resources.
  20. According to a recent study by Puplampu (2005), human resource effectiveness and performance were the primary causes of any SME's failure.
- First, small businesses are really huge businesses on a smaller scale (Welsh & White, 1981), and what works for one business is likely to work for another (Hendry et al., 1995). Therefore, it is frequently believed that huge companies should serve as the "model" for small businesses to follow. Second, the enthusiasm, skill, resources, and dedication of the one individual (owner) who serves as the centre of the business are crucial to its success. People concerns are frequently taken for granted and managed informally because owners frequently participate in manual labour and assume responsibility for employment issues, including pay decision (Wilkinson, 1999).
- The results of several HR functions studies conducted in the past by various researchers have been collated, and it is clear that in the previous 20 years, functions including hiring, selecting, training, development, performance reviews, and pay practices have received the most attention. Based on the

literature that has been supplied, it is clear that human resource practises play a key role in the expansion of small and medium-sized businesses, which improves the nation's economy.

## 5. Research Methodology

Through a review of the literature and discussions with HR specialists in the field, the various elements of HRM practices and organisational performance were determined. Based on discussions and a review of the literature, a structured questionnaire was given to HR managers in the chosen MSMEs in the Udyambag, Belagavi region as part of the research approach. The questionnaires were designed to gather information about the hiring practices used by MSMEs, the identification of skill development needs and the planned processes for skill development, and the role of HR in empowering the organisation internally for the organization's overall contribution. Allen, Poteet, and Burroughs (1997) pointed out that respondents' responses can be based more on beliefs and opinions than on actual behaviours or practices. Because of this, respondents were questioned further when thought necessary for clarification and instances that broadened and deepened their responses. Participants received assurances that any information submitted would be kept private. With approval, each interview in each company lasted for about three to four hours. Digitally recorded interviews were then transcribing.

In Udyambag, Belagavi, there are about 151 MSMEs, and 30 samples were chosen for this investigation.

## 6. Findings and Interpretation

### 1) Recruitment

The recruitment procedure is where an employee's relationship with the company first begins (Rousseau, 2001). 25 percent of small businesses consider a shortage of competent staff as a threat to not only their goals for growth and expansion but, more crucially, as a threat to their own existence, according to studies on the role of recruitment and selection in small firms. Despite its significance, recruiting is frequently difficult for small businesses (Gupta & Tannenbaum, 1989) due to a lack of financial and material resources (Freeman, 1984), a lack of reputation as a desirable employer (Heneman & Berkley 1999), and the prevalence of jobs where employees frequently perform multiple roles with ambiguous boundaries and job responsibilities (May, Korczynski & Frenkel, 2002). According to several studies (Deshpande & Golhar, 1994; Heneman & Berkley, 1999), hiring in small businesses typically involves using convenient, affordable, and directly controllable sources like direct applicants, personal and employee referrals, and newspaper ads.

MSMEs lack the resources to promote the openings, pay salaries, and train the personnel like larger organisations do, the main challenge of MSMEs in HR practices is attracting the right talent, motivating employees, and retaining critical people. In MSMEs, HR procedures are typically thought to be more expensive to implement. 70% of MSMEs lack an established HR department or a dedicated employee to handle HR-related

tasks.

In the modern economy, the success of any organisation depends on its ability to attract and retain competent personnel. MSMEs frequently experience a talent shortage, which affects their survival and growth. MSMEs struggle to locate skilled staff, in addition to trying to close the talent gap.

Retaining them in the organisation would be the next problem, even if they were to find quality and skilled staff. According to research, the owners' overemphasis on personal beliefs and attitudes is the cause of this impact.

The following things can be considered by an HR for recruitment in MSMEs,

- i. HR should determine the abilities, expertise, and knowledge required by the company to fill a position.
- ii. Create a job description and a person specification outlining the qualifications needed for the position.
- iii. The job description should support every applicant without any form of prejudice against their gender, ethnicity, religion, or political views.
- iv. The use of word-of-mouth recruiting should be avoided; instead, consider posting an advertisement and accepting all applicants without bias.

### 2) Retention

Due to a lack of competitive pay, the biggest problem for HR in MSME is keeping their talented and skilled personnel. Retaining talented workers during a crisis would provide a significant problem for HR.

HR can use the following techniques to keep its qualified staff:

- i. By providing a competitive compensation to meet the employees' expectations.
- ii. Encouraging workers with incentives and prizes.
- iii. Maintaining open lines of communication between management and workers.
- iv. Training workers at the company and giving them responsibility.
- v. Exit and retention interviews to gauge how well MSMEs meet employees' expectations.

### 3) Job security

The most crucial element for employees in any organisation is job security. MSMEs should try to give their employees job stability in order to lower attrition. In order to give employees in MSMEs a sense of security about their jobs, HR could play the following roles:

- i. Foster an environment where employees are eager to contribute to the expansion of the company.
- ii. Increase workplace excitement.
- iii. HR should keep track of all of an employee's significant accomplishments and work that they voluntarily performed.
- iv. Give them the chance to study and succeed.

### 4) Empowerment

Giving MSMEs' employees a sense of empowerment encourages them to actively participate in decision-making and carry out plans as intended to achieve the desired objectives. Employees that feel empowered aim to be more effective and efficient at work and take ownership of the responsibilities that

have been allocated to them. Giving staff the necessary decision-making power will enable them to carry out their duties as effectively as possible. Additionally, empowered employees' decisions should be welcomed and supported in order to improve performance.

#### 5) *Employee Engagement*

MSMEs are in trouble due to fierce competition, a lack of resources, and picky customers. Employees in MSMEs must be passionate about their work and emotionally invested in it. By referring the company to other qualified potential recruits, these employees play a crucial part in introducing innovation and diversity to the organisation.

According to research, just 8% of industries have a formal HR representative managing employee interactions and HR administration. This role is not empowered in 91% of the industries. Owners are in charge of all HR/employee relations policies.

#### 6) *Workforce Diversity*

More interaction between people of different cultures, religions, and backgrounds is necessary in this age of globalisation. With competition coming from almost every continent, people are becoming a part of a global economy. Programmes for managers, supervisors, and all other staff must be created to address cultural diversity. They will benefit from this training by becoming more aware of the various cultures and beliefs that exist throughout the company's varied workforce. In a similar vein, team building seminars or workshops should be regularly held and put into practice for cohesion and unity despite the diversity of the task. The HR staff should inform his employees of the advantages of working with a diverse workforce.

#### 7) *Training and Development*

Banks, Bures, and Champion (1987) examined the differences in formal training between large and small organisations and found that for small organisations, the expense of training programmes and the amount of time away from productive work are crucial factors in deciding whether and what kinds of training opportunities should be offered to employees (Bankins, 2011). Unstructured training, informal on-the-job training, and organisational socialisation are the most significant sources of formal training processes in small enterprises due to financial and time restrictions (Chao, Cheung, & Wu, 2011). In reality, many small businesses take pride in giving employees greater opportunity for hands-on, interactive learning (Rollag, 2002) and eschewing formalised procedures and practices that are more typical of large bureaucratic organisations.

It seems that most training is focused on product sales and customer service. There is no proof that technical or behavioural training can improve employees' skill levels in a variety of roles. The data demonstrate:

Only 28% of businesses offer the on-the-job and off-the-job training that is essential for technical jobs. Additionally, 78% of businesses lack development programmes that give employees the chance to advance their knowledge, skills, and attitudes for both the workplace and the business.

#### 8) *Performance Management*

Performance management procedures, in particular, have been found to be crucial in determining employee-employer expectations across the many HR practices (King *et al.*, 2007).

According to studies, evaluation and appraisal are the biggest problem and the biggest contribution HR can make to the evolving employment landscape (King, 2000). Employers set performance expectations and provide employees feedback on their performance as part of the performance evaluation (PA) process. According to Rousseau and Parks (1993), performance management entails understanding work responsibilities, evaluating performance fairly, promptly, and accurately, allocating compensation and career possibilities fairly, and giving staff feedback.

The MSMEs routinely evaluate their staff members once a year. However, it seems that each division has a distinct format. No indication of such a deliberate performance approach has been discovered in the different interactions that have been had so far. Only 32% of businesses have formal performance management systems in place.

#### 9) *Compensation and Benefits*

The business has a prompt payment policy and offers a range of benefits to employees. Because it has a substantial impact on attempts to recruit and retain employees, compensation is a particularly crucial component of people management. The compensation and reward system is also a crucial tool for signalling legitimacy to outside stakeholders and for fostering and emphasising desired behaviours (Graham, Murray, and Amuso, 2002).

However, it is unclear how payroll is handled for both its regular staff and contract workers. Employee dissatisfaction results from interactions when the policy of awarding rewards across several divisions looks to be highly arbitrary. For some divisions, the relationship between performance and incentive seems straightforward, but the administration of the incentive system or programme is opaque. The majority of businesses (69%) does not use personnel planning, which is extremely beneficial for keeping a company lean and mean.

## 7. Discussion

Micro, Small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) are regarded as the foundation of an economy, and it is reasonable to argue that these businesses have been found to greatly enhance the state of the economy and serve as a major source of innovation (see Storey, 1994). However, due to the size of this industry and the high failure rate of small businesses, the small business sector is actually to blame for the majority of employment losses. According to the resource-based perspective, businesses make use of the distinctive resources they have created (Conner & Prahalad, 1996). The thesis holds that an organization's human resources can act as a unique and incomparable source of competitive advantage. The goal of this study was to investigate the human resource practices of Indian MSMEs because HR practices are crucial for improving the human resource effectiveness of businesses.

One of the most crucial growth indicators for any organisation nowadays is its human resource management. The

handling of HR issues in MSMEs is not formalised enough. In contrast, global corporations operating in India have implemented formalised and organised human resource management systems. According to surveys, only the proprietors of new small business units handle HR procedures, and relatively few MSMEs have established HR departments.

A basic HR functional training method should be included in the skill training for owners so that they can first manage HR Functions and comprehend the significance of HR in their organisations.

Later, as small units become profit-oriented units, they can establish a professional HR department to carry out each HR duty in an organised manner. The second choice for MSMEs is to outsource their HR duties to an outside organisation or authority, which can then take over the tasks after the business has established itself as a self-sufficient and lucrative entity. In order to maintain their competitiveness, business owners or HR managers should ensure appropriate HR practices in their organisations.

## 8. Conclusion

This study has several restrictions. First off, no software programme has been employed for analysis; rather, the qualitative analysis provides human interpretation of the themes that arose from the key instances.

Second, the survey did not consider the viewpoint of the employees while examining MSME owners' perspectives on human resource practices. Future research may take into account how employers and employees perceive their working relationship. Third, although the study was done in a small number of MSMEs, it did not include all of the sector's industries. The study's sample may be expanded in further research.

MSMEs are managed extremely casually, with implicit and trust-based commitments between the employer and employee. The informality of MSMEs and the intimate personal ties between employers and employees offer intriguing concerns concerning the psychological contract between the owners of MSMEs and their employees, giving it a unique framework for studying employment relationships. Future research can look at the type and content of the psychological contract in MSMEs.

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