

# **THE INFLUENCE OF HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT PRACTICES & EMPLOYEES' OUTCOMES IN THE ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE OF SMALL BUSINESSES IN BAGHDAD**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Human resources best practices are functional activities and strategic plans that enable improved services to employees and increased profitability for the employer. Using data from Iraq, paper investigates the relationship among human resources management practices, the employees' outcomes, and the organizational performance in small businesses. This study derives from three fields of knowledge: human resources management, employee outcomes, and organizational performance. Questionnaires are distributed to 16 small businesses in Baghdad, Iraq and analyze by using Arithmetic mean, Standard deviation, Coefficient of variation, Spearman, Simple linear regression and Mann Whitney test. The finding suggests that there are significant relationships between a group of human resources management practices in small businesses, and commitment, trust, involvement, cooperation, while it did not record a clear relationship with the latter variable.

## **INTRODUCTION**

The establishment and nurturing of small businesses is a vital ingredient in creating dynamic market economies in the economic and social development of transition countries. Small businesses are the big drivers of economic growth, innovation, regional development and job creation. A strong and vibrant small businesses sector provides a strong foundation to increase standards of living and to reduce poverty.

Given the difficult circumstances faced by third world countries, and an exceptional circumstances through which Iraq passed, and the most important of which; Problems of funding for large projects, the difficulty of competition with the industrial projects of developed countries, the declining role of the state to support the idea of a large-scale projects, it has become attracted to small businesses as a basis for industrial progress. To provide the needs of the local market to reduce imports, the availability of foreign exchange required for the development, reduce poverty and underdevelopment, and reduce the economic dependence of the capitalist states.

Small businesses are the main pillars of the economy in most countries of the world. Over the last decade, crafts, handicrafts, services, and commercials were fertile ground for the establishment and growth of small business at the level of city and village. This type of businesses are considered safety valve to contain the surplus labor in the public sector and new entrants to the labor market, as well as for reducing economic and social disparities between members of the community.

Previously small businesses is known as family projects, which are mostly poor families due to their need to fight poverty by working in a particular activity by geographical region and the needs of its members. The value of the work is multi-dimensional, especially in the Islamic perspective; it's a religious and humanitarian tool, to make human producing people in society. Despite the internationally recognised importance of small businesses, they still face major challenges in many developing and transition countries today. The challenges of business entry, survival and growth are often substantial. The availability of financial resources and lack of capacity to handle complex business management issues, a complicated and bureaucratic environment as well as human resources

management present major obstacles. As a result, there is an urgent and continuous need to improve the different elements that make up a good entrepreneurial climate.

One of the important strategies to improve the situation of small businesses and improve its' performance is through focusing on the human element in small businesses. Although the importance of the human element in achieving success and development of small businesses "focuses attention on the people who do the work rather than the work done by those people" (Dubois et al., 2004, p. 10).but the management of human resources is new fields in this new field are little.

Human resource management (HRM) is a new area for enterprises. A variety of studies have discussed human resource management practice their main focus has been on large and medium sized enterprises in particular of joint ventures. There are few studies which have emphasis on human resource management practice and its impact on enterprise performance.

Hence the selection of a theme for this proposal study "The Influence of Human Resources Management Practices & Employees' Outcomes in the Organizational Performance of Small businesses in Baghdad : examining causal order" in order to highlight the importance of human resources management in organization performance.

This study derives from three field of knowledge: human resources management, employee outcomes, and organizational performance.

## **RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

This study aims to achieve the following objectives:

- Defining of small businesses and their importance and their role in the national economy and the need for attention to these small businesses.
- To identify the nature of human resources management practices used in small businesses under study.
- Try to identify the impact of such practices in the employee's outcomes.
- Demonstrate the influence of behaviors in organizational performance of these small businesses.
- Attempt to link the impact of human resources management practices used in the organizational performance of small businesses.

## **SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY**

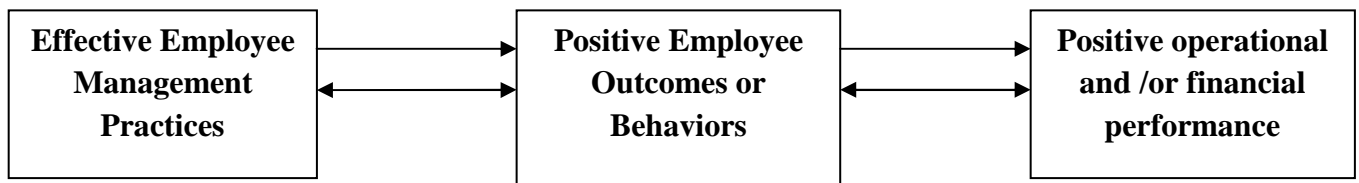
Represent an attempt to persuade the leaders of small businesses (owners, managers) to have interest in human element in these projects, which represents a cornerstone in the success of these small businesses, by highlighting the impact of personnel in the performance of the project.

To shed light on a new field in small businesses which suffered from absence, neglect, namely, human resource management.

It is hoped that this study would be an introduction and incentive for future studies contributing to the strengthening of the small business knowledge that will help them develop their resources and their potential and achieve success.

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### *Model of the study*



**Source:** Collins, Christopher, Ericksen, Jeff & Allen, Mathew, (2005), “Human Resource Management Practices & Firm Performance In Small Businesses”, A research prepared by Cornell research team, Sep., Cornell University & Gevity institute U.S.A.

## HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

This study will examine four hypotheses:

- “There is a significant relationship between the human resources management practices and employee’s outcomes”.
- “There is a significant relationship between employee’s outcomes and overall organizational performance”.
- “Increase of human resources management practices will increase the employee’s outcomes”.
- “The positive employee’s outcomes affect the achievement of positive organizational performance”.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Research on HRM practices dates back to the early decades of the twentieth century (Scott, 1915). Between mid-century and the late 1970’s HRM research primarily focused on the development of valid and fair HRM practices in large organizations (Asher, 1972; Campbell et al, 1970; Ghiselli, 1966; Guion, 1965) and sources of discrimination bias in hiring and promotion (Cann et al, 1981; Tenbrunsel et al, 1996). More recent research examines the impact of HRM practices on organization-level performance measures generally (though not always) supporting a positive linkage between the two (Delery and Doty; 1996; Guest, 1997; Huselid, 1995; Huselid et al, 1997; Ichniowski et al, 1997; Koch and McGrath, 1996; de Kok, 2001; Litz and Stewart, 2000; MacDuffie, 1995; Schulze et al, 2001; Schultze et al, 2003; Welbourne and Andrews, 1996; Wynarczyk, et al, 1993).

There is a growing body of literatures that support the correlation between high performance as a result of HRM practice and various measures of firm performance. Poole & Jenkins (1996) examined the development of comprehensive human resource management policies by surveying 909 firms in Britain, and found that HRM is one of the major keys for firms to gain a competitive edge or a lasting and sustained advantage over their competitors in the modern world. Results from Purchell (1995)’s quantitative analysis on 176 companies show that there is no direct link between human resource management strategy and corporate strategy, it is obvious though that from resource-based approach, unique human resource capabilities - development of a core competence will create competitive advantage for firms, hence could contribute to profits and growth.

Dunphy and Stace (1992) seem to echo Purchell in linking business strategy with human performance and argue that people themselves and their skills are the key to added value, the management of people becomes the critical factor in achieving organizational excellence, hence HRM should be included in

setting up firms' business strategy. Wong et al (1997)'s study looked at management training and development based on intensive survey and interviews on 138 firms during 1990-1991, and displayed the subtle impact of management training and development on the organization and performance of small and medium enterprises. Other studies (Bratto & Gold 1994, Bearwell & Holden 1994 and Storey 1995) demonstrated that a firm's drive to improve performance and pursue 'excellence' leads to the greater emphasis on HRM. These studies have indicated that HRM policies and practices contribute to business success; hence there are interrelationships between HRM and organizational performance.

Nonetheless, some empirical studies dispute the above results. Among them, the most interesting one was the study done by Lee and Chee (1996) who examined 48 South Korean manufacturing firms and concluded that business strategy is certainly associated with company financial performance, but participative HR strategy and its interaction with the business strategy are not related to organizational performance. It could be because Lee and Chee used the four variables of power, information, reward and knowledge within the participative HR strategy that aren't fully applicable to the cases of South Korean firms. It could also be possible that HRM is too remote to the firm's performance to reveal any meaningful direct impact. It may increase employees productivity (per capita value added), but not necessarily the firm's overall performance.

After reviewing the implications of previous studies the following facts should be clarified:

- Most previous studies focused on two variables of the variables of the study except those that have adopted as the basis for this study.
- Lack of Arabic studies looking at human resource management applications and its impact on Organisational Performance in Small Size.
- Previous studies have helped in building the initial perceptions of this study formed the introductions to the whole conceptual and methodological.
- Previous studies showed a significant variation in the level of complexity of human resource management practices used in large and small businesses, which is reflected in its impact on performance for those projects.
- All studies confirmed the importance of the human element and its clear impact on Organisational Performance.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **SAMPLE AND DATA COLLECTION**

The theoretical part of the study depends on Arabic and foreign books as well as studies, research, theses, and articles are available from libraries and the Internet. For the practical part of the study Data was collected by means of questionnaire sent to 16 small businesses. The questionnaire was developed by team of the Cornell University and Gevity institution consisting of Collins, Erickson & Allen. The answers were received personally by the President of the research team Professor Christopher Collins. There are two questionnaires the first questionnaire for owners/ managers of small businesses which include 50 questions, the second one for the employees of small businesses which includes 31 questions.

### **METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS AND STATISTICAL METHODS**

Used a set of methods and means in the analysis of statistical data, compilation and scheduling:

- Arithmetic mean.
- Standard deviation.

- Coefficient of variation.
- Spearman.
- Simple linear regression.
- Mann whiteny.
- SPSS program was used on the PC for implementing these programs.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

### RESULTS OF THE VARIABLES OF STUDY

This section contains three paragraphs for each variable of the study variables:

- ***Results of human resources management practices***

	Mean	Standard deviation	Coefficient of variation %
Practices for employees selection	3.769	0.539	14.3
Practices for employees management	3.533	0.477	13.5
Practices for motivation	3.618	0.734	20.3
Human resources management practices mean	3.635	0.481	13.2

The table shows the following results:

- High level of use human resources management practices for employee selection in small businesses, the mean was 3.769, the standard mean 3, and the coefficient variation 14.3%.
- High level of use human resources management practices for employee management, the mean was 3.533 and it was higher than standard mean 3, the coefficient variation 13.5%.
- High level of use human resources management practices for employee motivation in small businesses, the mean was 3.618, the standard mean 3, and the coefficient variation 20.3%.

- ***Results of employee outcomes***

	Mean	Standard deviation	Coefficient of variation %
Commitment	3.317	0.8573	25.8
Trust	4.0854	0.7454	18.2
Cooperation	3.854	0.221	5.7

Involvement	2.9125	1.1977	47.7
Turnover	2.5083	1.1977	47.7
Employee outcome mean	3.3355	0.309	8.9

- High level of commitment of employees, the mean was 3.317 it was higher than standard mean 3.
- High level of involvement of employees, the mean was 4.0854 it was higher than standard mean 3.
- High level of the cooperation, the mean was 3.854 it was higher than standard mean 3.
- Low level of trust between employees, the mean was 2.9125 it was lower than standard mean 3.
- Low level of employees turnover, the mean was 2.5083 it was lower than standard mean 3.

- ***Results of organizational performance***

	Mean	Standard deviation	Coefficient of variation %
<b><i>Financial performance</i></b>	3.0094	<b><i>0.6192</i></b>	<b><i>20.5</i></b>
Financial growth	<b><i>2.8438</i></b>	<b><i>0.9612</i></b>	<b><i>33.7</i></b>
Financial performance compared with competitors	<b><i>3.1750</i></b>	<b><i>0.636</i></b>	<b><i>20</i></b>
<b><i>Operational performance</i></b>	<b><i>4.1528</i></b>	<b><i>0.6677</i></b>	<b><i>16</i></b>
Customer satisfaction	<b><i>4.1875</i></b>	<b><i>0.6663</i></b>	<b><i>15.9</i></b>
New products development	<b><i>4.3333</i></b>	<b><i>0.7794</i></b>	<b><i>17.9</i></b>
Quality	<b><i>3.9375</i></b>	<b><i>0.8002</i></b>	<b><i>20.3</i></b>
Organizational performance mean	<b><i>3.6954</i></b>	<b><i>0.4603</i></b>	<b><i>12.4</i></b>

- The high level of financial performance was 3.0094, the financial growth was 2.8438 it was lower than mean, and the financial performance compared with competitors was 3.1750, it was higher than standard mean 3.

- The high level of operational performance of the three Variable customer satisfaction, new products development, and quality of products, it were 4.1875, 4.3333, 3,9375, and all of this are higher than standard mean 3.
- The rise of both financial and operational performance led to a high organizational performance. It was 3.6954, and it was higher than standard mean 3.

- **Results of the correlations and influence among the variables examined**

Depending on the model study and its hypotheses, and for the purpose of determining the correlations and effect between the variables examined, have used statistical methods, Spearman correlation coefficient and simple linear regression coefficient.

- **The results of correlations between the human resources management practices and employees outcomes of the study**

To test the first hypothesis we can find that human resources management practices had significant relationship, positive, and strong with employees outcomes, it was 83.3%. that means we can accept this hypothesis.

The following table shows the results in detail

Employees outcomes Human resources management	Commitment	Involvement	Cooperation	Trust	Work turnover	Employee outcomes	Significant relationship	
							n	significant
Employees selection practices	0.193-	0.038	0.066-	0.161	0.244-	0.152-	-	-
Employees management practices	0.195	0.530*	0.307	0.224	0.275-	0.186	1	16.7%
Employees motivation practices	0.323	0.632**	0.595*	0.480	0.155-	0.457	2	33.3%
Human resources management practices	0.573*	0.587*	0.530*	0.541	0.066	0.655**	5	83.3%
significant relationship	1	3	2	1	-	1	8	
	25%	75%	50%	25%	-	25%		

\*P 0.05    \*\*P 0.0

- Employees' selection practices as a one of human resources management practices did not show a strong positive significant relationship with the variables of employees outcomes were mostly negative, weak, and was strongest with the trust by a factor of 0.161 and the lowest correlation with the turnover by a factor of 0.244- .
- Employees' management practices as a one of human resources management practices showed a significant relation with the employees outcomes, with involvement by a factor 0.530, and the importance of correlation of 16.7% and significant level of 0.05, and showed an inverse relationship with the turnover by a factor of 0.275-.
- Employees' motivation practices as a one of human resources management practices showed two strong positive significant relationships with the variables of employees outcomes, the involvement by a factor of 0.632 and with significant level 0.01, the cooperation with a factor 0.595, significant level 0.05, and the importance of correlation 33.3% , and showed an inverse relationship with the turnover by a factor of 0.155%.

• *The results of correlations between the employee's outcomes and organizational performance*

To test the second hypothesis we can find employees' outcomes had significant relationship, positive, and strong with organizational performance, it was 0.663%. That is mean we can accept this hypothesis.

The following table shows the results in detail

financial performance employees outcomes		Financial growth	Financial performance compared with competitors	Customer satisfaction	New products development	Quality	Organizational performance	significant relationships	
Commitment		0.515*	0.378	0.771**	0.595*	0.641**	0.714**	5	83.3%
Involvement		0.475	0.495	0.513*	0.513*	0.698**	0.636**	4	66.6%
Cooperation		0.328	0.400	0.554*	0.658**	0.693**	0.664**	4	66.6%
Trust		0.398	0.442	0.151	0.307	0.394	0.356	-	-
Turnover		0.233	0.264	0.014	0.020	0.176-	0.016	-	-
Employees outcomes		0.609*	0.610*	0.568*	0.577*	0.570*	0.663**	6	100%
significant relationships	N	2	1	4	4	4	4	19	
	%	33.3%	16.7%	66.6%	66.6%	66.6%	66.6%		

\*P 0.05

\*\*P 0.01



- Commitment showed five strong positive significant relationships with organizational performance, financial growth, customer satisfaction, new products, quality, and the total of organizational performance 83.3%. The strongest correlation with customer satisfaction 0.771, with significant level 0.01.
  - The involvement has four strong positive significant relationships with organizational performance, customer satisfaction, new products development, quality, and total organizational performance 66.6%, the strongest one with quality 0.698, with significant level 0.01.
  - Cooperation showed four strong positive significant relationships with organizational performance, customer satisfaction, new products development, quality, and total of organizational performance 66.6%. The strongest correlation with quality 0.693. and with significant level 0.01.
  - Trust didn't show strong positive significant relationships with organizational performance, all relationship are positive and weak. The strongest one with financial performance compared with competitors 0.442, and the weakest one with customer satisfaction 0.151.
  - Turnover didn't show strong positive significant relationships with organizational performance, all relationship is positive and weak. Except one relationship with quality, it is weak inverse relationship 0.176- .
- *The results of simple linear regression between the human resources management practices and employees outcomes of the study*

We can observe from the results the constant higher than zero 0.8987 that means good relationship between dependent variable (employees' outcomes) and independent variable (human resources management practices). We can see F calculated 10.500 more than F Tabulated 4.60 that is mean the human resources management practices effect on employees outcomes. B factor 0.615 showed the change in human resources management practices followed by increase 0.615 in employees' outcomes. Adjusted R square 0.388% explain the change in the variable that gets independent variable (employees outcomes) as a result of the change in the independent variable (human resources management practices).

independent variable	dependent variable	constant	B value	R	F Calculated	p-value	The level of significance 0.05
Human resources management practices	Employees outcomes	0.8987	0.615	0.388	10.500	0.006	There is effecting

F from schedule= 4.60

- *The results of simple linear regression between employees outcomes and organizational performance of the study*

We can observe from the results that the constant is higher than zero 0.455 that means good relationship between dependent variable (organizational performance) and independent variable (employees' outcomes). We can see F calculated 10.987 more than F Tabulated 4.60 that means the employees outcomes effect on organizational performance. B factor 1.033 showed the change in employees outcomes followed by increase 1.033 in organizational performance. Adjusted R square 0.400% explains the change in the variable that gets in dependent variable as a result of the change in the independent variable (employees outcomes).

independent variable	dependent variable	constant	B value	R	F Calculated	p-value	The level of significance 0.05
Employees outcomes	Organizational performance	0.455	1.033	0.400	10.987	0.005	There is effecting

F from schedule= 4.60

## CONCLUSION

### THE CONCLUSION FROM THE THEORETICAL SIDE

- Despite the importance of small projects for the economies of the countries in general, the academic interest in such projects is still relatively limited.
- Agreement of most researchers that human resources have a significant effect on the success of organizations.
- Multiple divisions and designations of human resource management, but in fact it does not come out for three groups: Select a human resource, human resource management, and motivation and retention of human resource.
- Represents the employees' outcomes an important field in organizational behaviour because it's strong effective on organizational performance.
- Lack of studies and research which examines the relationship of the three variables: human resources management practices, employees outcomes, and organizational performance.

### THE CONCLUSION FROM THE PRACTICAL SIDE

- There are significant relationships between a group of human resources management practices in small businesses, and commitment, trust, involvement, cooperation, while it did not record a clear relationship with the latter variable.
- There is a clear relationship between total practices and employees outcomes variables, which confirms the correctness of the fact that human resources in small businesses has an integrated process affect on employees outcomes as a whole cannot be disaggregated.
- There is a clear relationship between total employees outcomes and organizational performance.
- The partial correlation between employees' outcomes and the financial, operational performance, where the results showed that commitment, involvement, and cooperation have an important relationship with the operational performance of more than financial performance.
- The existence of positive effects for human resources management practices in the employees' outcomes, as well as the existence of a positive impact on the commitment, trust, involvement, and cooperation. While not showing the impact on turnover.

- Affect the employees outcomes on the overall Organisational performance, as shown by the existence of such an effect to the total employees outcomes on each of the financial growth and financial performance compared to competitors, and operational performance of customer satisfaction, new product development, and product quality.
- Most of the small businesses in this study do not have the management of human resource and perhaps due to the small size of these businesses and the weakness of their means, or to the small number of employees and the nature of social relations which are usually between workers and management in these businesses.
- the sample of owners \ managers and employees confirmed that the weakness in the financial performance is not due to the impact of employees outcomes, but to the exceptional circumstances experienced by Iraq, which forced a lot of small businesses to reduce its activity significantly.
- most of the owners \ managers of small businesses under study exercise a group of human resources management practices in the selection, employees management, and motivate them, in whole or in part, and irregularly.

### **LIMITATION OF THE STUDY**

- The wide geographical spread of small industrial projects and the determinants of the security situation and the difficulties of mobility make the researcher to focus the study on sample of manufacturing industries operating in Baghdad only.
- The difficulties of working face small industrial projects as a result of war conditions in Iraq have led many of these projects to close down and stop the activity, which increased the difficulties of sampling required and contact them to get the necessary data and information.
- Lack of books and written sources on small businesses, and human resources management practices in the small businesses, has made the researcher uses the Internet as the primary means to obtain adequate modern sources.
- The results of the study depend on the scientific background of the researcher, answers by the owners of small businesses and their employees.

### **SUGGESTIONS**

#### **SUGGESTIONS TO OWNERS/ MANAGERS OF SMALL BUSINESSES**

- Work to improve the performance of small businesses through attention to the employees' management, is considered one of the keys to success.
- The need to exercise human resource management practices according to a regular basis, in order to strengthen the commitment, trust, involvement among workers.
- When selecting new individuals, focus should be on the potential contribution of workers in the long term and not just the current business day.
- Develop a set of professional standards that help in the employees' management in small enterprises.
- Building environment family- like community to motivate employees.

#### **SUGGESTIONS TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN**

- To improve the economic situation makes it imperative for the state need to lend a helping hand to all economic sectors and from the industrial sector and by providing support and guidance and counselling.

- Establish advisory offices to strengthen the role of the existing advisory, in order to provide help and advice for those small businesses in order to strengthen the management of human resources and support skills and experience to the owners \ managers of these businesses.
- Contribute to the establishment of employment offices in order to attract individuals to facilitate the selection process for small businesses.
- Establish an information office for small businesses to follow up the activities of small businesses and news, through newsletters or through the issuance of a specialized magazine looking at the achievements of these projects and their effectiveness.

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