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# HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT (HRM) STRATEGIES IN AFFECTING ORGANISATIONAL TALENT MANAGEMENT IN THE MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY, CHINA

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#### **Abstracts**

Human resources are often considered to be the most important players in multiple business entities. It has always been the case that scientific and effective human resource management can help enterprises develop in a better direction and generate great impetus. Based on the organisational "black box" theory, this study investigates the impact of human resource management on organisational performance through the mediating effect of talent management in the top ten private manufacturing industries in Wuxi City, Jiangsu Province, China. The study adopted a positivist epistemological and quantitative approach. Based on simple random sampling, a Likert scale questionnaire was administered to 518 employees from the top ten private manufacturing industries in Wuxi to collect primary data. The results of the study show that strategic human resources and human resource development have a significant positive effect on talent management, while employee retention and employee performance appraisal have no effect on talent management. In addition, this study also found a significant correlation between strategic human resources, human resource development, employee retention, employee performance appraisal and talent management.

**Keywords:** strategic human resources, human resource development, employee retention, employee performance appraisal, talent management



#### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

Human resource management is an indispensable part of the development of enterprise management (Yiliang, Chelliah & Teoh, 2021). Enterprises should pay more attention to human resource management, because it is an important basis for improving the comprehensive competitiveness of enterprises. When formulating development strategies, enterprises should give full play to the role of human resource management, so that it can provide more satisfactory services to promote the development of enterprises. The effective combination of the concept of human resource management and the organisation's development is to explore comprehensive talents more in line with the company's development, bringing more economic benefits to the enterprise and promote in a better direction (Hadijah, 2023).

The concept of people-oriented management is combined with the concept of human resource management in the practice of management (Yongde, 2023). This coalition can make the management continue to develop in the direction of humanized management, improve the steadiness of the work of employees, and improve the loyalty and solidarity of employees (Dias, Magalhães & Choudhry, 2023). Modern employees have a strong sense of autonomy. Only by arranging them in suitable jobs and making the best use of their talents can they improve the positive initiative of employees to work to the maximum extent and create higher benefits for the organisation (Wu, Hu, Wei & Marinova, 2023). In an organisation, It is always adhered to the people-oriented management concept, in order to continuously improve the loyalty of employees, give full play to their own maximum value, lay a solid human foundation and promote the organisation to develop (Wang, 2023).

Therefore, it is vital to assess why companies succeed or fail or varying the performance levels. It seems that organisations that use proper HRM techniques do have higher levels of performance (Yeung & Berman, 2017). As such, HR process provides the employees with a system that guides them in making the correct decision not only in regards to what they have to do rather also provide them with the appropriate way for doing it (Raj & Kothai, 2019).

On the the other hand, talent management (TM) has been the objective of expanding intrigue and is thought to be a strategy by which organisation can meet the requests that are connected with expanded multifaceted nature (Fan, Javadizadeh & Aguilar, 2023). There is an imperative need for management of talent and experts in organisation (Pandey & Sarangi, 2023). Employees with specific knowledge or experts in their field of knowledge are considered talented individuals. The initiatives to retain them in organisational must be put in high consideration by the top management, which have a vital role in determining the loyalty of individual in an organisation. Talent management is considered as one of the five key areas faced by human resources profession (Collings, Vaiman & Scullion, 2022).

Hence, human resources need to identify the potentials and the capability of employees that can benefits the organisation for competitive advantage. When these talented individuals are overlooked, they might be hired by their competitors in the same area of business which can cost organisation dearly. Challenges currently facing in retaining the workforce have brought



the management of top companies and organisation to talent management. Values and money had been significantly invested in recruiting, retaining and developing talented individuals in order for significant contribution to performance (Odunukwe & Okeke, 2023; Minbaeva & Collings, 2013).

Sweis et al. (2019) further noted that good HRM practice in the manufacturing industry helps to build trust between the employees and employers. As manufacturing industry involves diverse occupational cultures, thus, it makes this particular industry as one of the most complex industries where a proper and refined HRM practice is a must (Maloney, 2017; Bernstein, 2003; Donald, 2016). As such, HR department is liable for developing a healthy and friendly work environment along with the tactics for converting those towards achieving organisation's ultimate goal. Organisations need to analyze the ability of a worker that drives the organisation smoothly. Consequently, the organisation must be cautious in managing these diverse workforce that will lead to better productivity through increased employee satisfaction.

Human resources have typically been considered the most vital role in many kinds of business entities (Anwar & Abdullah, 2021). All along, scientific and effective human resource management can enable enterprises to develop in a better direction with great impetus (Peng & Bao, 2023). Especially in the context of continuous development of modern management, the role of human resource management in promoting enterprise development is becoming more and more obvious (Lu, Zhang, Yang & Wang, 2023), so organisation increasingly pay more attention to human resource management, laying a solid foundation for them to develop in a better direction.

On the contrary, organisations aim to transform from one situation to another by preparing employees for future responsibilities in achieving organisational goals. Development refers to the problem of people, which is a long-term educational process using systematic and organized procedures through which managers learn conceptual and theoretical knowledge of general purposes (Sinambela, Darmawan & Mendrika, 2022). Human resource development (HRD) is the effort to develop the quality or capability of human resources to achieve the best results through the process of education, planning, training and management of personnel or employees.

In achieving the organisation transformation in term of HRD, talents are the key elements in contributing to the achieving the goals. In that sense, talent management integrates strategy, organisation, implementation, and assessment to generate capable and effective people resources for the purpose of attaining organisational objectives. Gasperz (2013) believes that talent management is a human resource management process that involves three main processes, namely developing and strengthening employees when they first enter an organisation, retaining and developing existing employees, and attracting as many employees as possible. There is no doubts for organisations to give more attention and focuses on the talent management concept in order to develop and increase skills, knowledge and abilities of their employees. Soud (2020) stated that talent management is a term that covers a range of



activities such as succession planning, employee loyalty, employee trust, human resource planning, employee performance management etc.

With the emergence of markets and economic growth, Chinese firms are expanding and operating globally, and the roles and responsibilities of human resource management (HRM) and talent management (TM) are critical to organisational performance. It is the most important new concepts in management field that involves the process of acquisition, career planning and retaining through attracting, selecting, rewarding, developing and retaining employees (Downs & Swailes, 2013). Thus, this study aims to explore the relationship between HRM and talent management in the manufacturing industry in Wuxi, Jiangsu Province, China.

### 1.2 HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

This part focuses mainly on the concepts, development and the practice of HRM. The concept of human resource management is one of the management areas that has gained popularity in the last 30 years or so. Although human resource management is the hottest field of study, there is no universally accepted and accepted single definition (Chelladurai & Kim 2022). Greer (2021) defines human resource management as "a strategic, integrated and clear view of the employment, development and well-being of people working in an organisation". Similarly, Sinambela, Darmawan & Mendrika (2022) define human resource management as a term that represents an organisation's activities to attract, develop and manage employees. In the literature of human resource management, some scholars have different definitions of human resource management. Guest, Sanders, Rodrigues & Oliveira (2021) argued in their empirical study that there is no consensus on the definition and measurement of human resource management. The ultimate goal of human resource management is to properly manage human resources as an asset (Jumady & Lilla, 2021).

Human resource management has grown into a critical and most integral part of the organisation. It mainly deals with management functions such as hiring, firing and payroll. As such, it involves employee satisfaction and legal compliance (Noe et al., 2020). According to Boxall and Purcell (2008), human resource management can be defined as "all activities related to people management in an enterprise". Furthermore, Schulte et al. (2019) point out that "Human resource management includes multiple management activities rather than a single management activity." In addition, Noe et al. (2020) define human resource management as "a philosophy, policy, system, and practice that can influence employee behavior, attitude, and performance."

More recently, human resources have been viewed as "the talent and energy available to an organisation as potential contributors to creating and achieving the organisation's mission, vision, strategy, and goals" (Boselie et al., 2019). Gardner and Wright (2019) refer to human resource management as "a model of planned human resource development and activities designed to enable an organisation to achieve its goals."



The implementation of human resource management is defined as a set of practices that significantly affect the effectiveness of organisational activities (Daspit et al., 2018), where resource management focuses on three related aspects: employee competence, motivation, and engagement (Kooij and Boon, 2018). From the perspective of strategic human resource management theory, high performance in implementing human resource management will affect the improvement of performance (Al-Abbadi, 2018).

A further study conducted by Nishii and Wright (2008) have noted HRM as "A general approach to the management of human resources in accordance with the intentions of the organisation on the future direction it wants to take. It is concerned with longer term people issues as part of the management processes of the business." According to Deb (2016), "HRM is the process by which an organisation ensures that it has the right number and right kind of people, at the right place, at the right time, capable of effectively and efficiently completing those tasks that will help the organisation achieve its overall objectives."

Personnel management became a clearly defined field in the 1920s (at least in the United States), primarily concerned with the technical aspects of hiring, evaluating, training, and compensating employees, and was a function of "employees" in most organisations. The field generally does not focus on how different employment practices relate to overall organisational performance, nor on the systematic relationships between these practices. The field also lacks a uniform paradigm (Mahapatro, 2021).

In the late 1970s, due to factors such as globalization, deregulation and rapid technological change, American business organisations began to experience a substantial increase in competitive pressure, and human resource management emerged. These pressures have led businesses to focus on strategic planning that is the process of anticipating future changes in environmental conditions such as the nature and level of the market. This way could help organisation in adjusting the various components of the organisation to improve organisational efficiency (Kaufman, 2012).

Frederick Taylor, known as the father of scientific management, played a major role in the development of the personnel function in the early 20th century. In his book Store Management, Taylor advocated a "scientific" approach to selecting and training workers, and created incentive systems that rewarded employees for meeting or exceeding performance standards (Taylor, Doherty & McGraw, 2015). Although Taylor was primarily concerned with optimizing the efficiency of the manufacturing environment, his principles laid the foundation for the future development of human resource management. At the same time, other pioneers worked to apply psychological principles to worker recruitment, selection, and training. The field of industrial psychology came to fruition during the First World War, as early career and employment-related tests were used to assign recruits to appropriate positions (Chukwunonso, 2022).

In the 1940s and 1950s, collective bargaining led to a huge increase in the benefits offered to workers. The personnel function evolved to deal with labor relations, collective bargaining, and a more complex compensation and benefits environment. Human relations philosophy and



labor relations were the main concerns of human resource management in the 1940s and 1950s. While in the 1960s, human resource management was revolutionized with the passage of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act and other anti-discrimination legislation, as well as presidential executive orders requiring many organisations to take affirmative action to correct past discriminatory practices. The requirements of equal employment opportunity and affirmative action have greatly complicated the human resource management function, while also increasing its importance in modern organisations. Finally, since the 1980s, changes in workforce demographics, technology and globalization have had a significant impact on the human resource management function. These factors are also discussed in more detail in the following sections (Chukwunonso, 2022).

Human resource management today is a far cry from its status as a rule enforcer in the early 20th century (Sims, 2023), especially the outbreak of COVID-19, the role of human resource management has changed dramatically. Human resources not only care about people's working health, but also care about people's well-being. Their role has expanded to include quasi-consultants who provide support to employees. As a result, HR departments need to revise job descriptions and decide who can work in a given situation in the absence of other employees. In other words, human resources assist entire families, help care for children and the elderly, and distribute accurate information about the virus to keep people safe. The human resources department deals with employees who are stressed, depressed, experiencing physical symptoms such as fatigue and headaches.

Modern businesses see human resources as a key factor in gaining a competitive advantage. Companies that attract, hire, engage, develop, and retain the best talent will perform better than those that don't do these things well (Susano, Subiantoro & Meirinaldi, 2023). Dooley (2001) stated that the biggest changes in human resources have occurred in the past 30 years. "The world is getting smaller," he said. "Society's needs and expectations are always changing rapidly. Hr must work with businesses to develop strategies to anticipate and adapt to change and optimize the use of human capital in the workforce." This, he says, "is the most significant change in human resources in the last 100 years" (Widarni & Bawono, 2020).

In conclusion, human resource management (HRM), also known as personnel management, refers to all activities undertaken by an organisation to ensure the effective use of employees to achieve individual, group, and organisational goals. The human resource management function of an organisation focuses on the people aspect of management. It includes practices that help organisations deal effectively with their people at all stages of the hiring cycle, including prehiring, staffing, and post-hiring. The pre-employment phase includes planning practices, organisations must decide what types of job openings will be available in the coming period and determine the necessary qualifications to do those jobs. During the recruitment phase, the organisation selects its employees. Selection practices include recruiting applicants, assessing their qualifications, and ultimately selecting those deemed to be the most qualified.



#### 1.3 HRM AND TALENT MANAGEMENT MODEL

A general model was proposed by Cassoni and Labadie (2013) where the authors show a direct linkage between HRM, talent management and organisational success as shown in Figure 1. They categorised talent management process into three categories namely engagement (e.g. workforce planning, recruiting, on boarding), competencies (e.g. performance management, training and performance support, succession planning, compensation and benefits) and retention (e.g. based on critical skills gap analysis) which can be considered as the elements of talent management. They have confirmed a strong relationship between HRM and talent management.



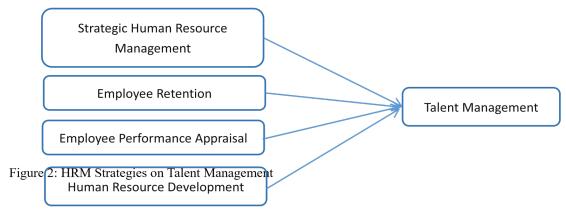
Figure 1: HRM and Talent Management Model (Source: Cassoni & Labadie, 2013)

Furthermore, according to Cassoni & Labadie (2013), there are three forms of talent management: HRM computational practices, which comprise skills and experiences; HRM collaborative practices based on long-term goals; and HRM practices, which involve referral selection. HRM in this sense plays an important role in improving organisational success by making appropriate provisions for talent management (Al Nasser, & Jais, 2020). Rapid globalisation and technological advancement have prompted organisations to develop new HRM strategies in order to set the course for the future (Duvvuri, 2021). This is due to the fact that HRM ensures that employees are equipped with the latest skills and knowledge, which is essential in achieving organisational goals and future objectives.

According to Cania (2019), organisations select one or more indicators to measure their performance through strategic human resource management (SHRM) and achieve organisational goals. There are six HRM strategic factors which are recruiting and selection of appropriate staff, career mangement, training and development of employees, job promotion, creating a dynamic environment, and motivating employees that affect the talent mangement. Figure 2 depicts the conceptual framework of this study, which includes four



major aspects such as human resource management techniques that influence talent management.



Johari et. al., (2012), HRM makes adequate specifications for compensation and benefits for the employees. However, rewarding structure in the modern organisations has changed nowadays. As the assessment and planning appraisal for employee performance is not an easy task, organisations must use proper mechanism and accurate tools effectively for managing its diverse workforce (Sims, 2002). An organisation must remember that a properly managed human resource can be an essential tool for the organisation. Therefore, there is a need for strategic HRM policies through which moulding individual expectations will be easier that ultimately help employees to adapt their behaviour.

In this study, there was a large focus on the significance behind the alignment of HRM with organisational strategy through the mentioned four factors. It is stated that the fast changing environment of the current time gives rise to the need of HRM strategies that are relatively more comprehensive in nature. Henceforth, SHRM should use proper strategies in the recruitment process, career management, timely training, increase job promotion, create a dynamic work environment and motive employees towards the goal of the organisation (Mahapatro, 2021). If all these are taken care of, the organisational performance would be expected to have positive impact.

#### 1.4 RESEARCH METHODS

The minimal sample size for this cross-sectional survey, which took into account the overall population, was 500 employees from the top ten private manufacturing enterprises in Wuxi, Jiangsu Province, China. The respondents were picked systematically using random sampling from the specified organisations, and an introductory letter from the supervisor was utilised to collect data from these identified companies. The researchers' purpose was communicated to the responders. This study used the literature review to create domains that represented the important elements of the research topics and allowed for methodical questioning.

A questionnaire survey was chosen as the survey approach for this study because it is an excellent tool for gathering participant information in social science research. Social features,



present and past behaviour, standards of behaviour or attitude, beliefs, and motives for taking action against the survey respondent (Bulmer, 2004). Questionnaires can be delivered in person, electronically, or sent to respondents (Sekaran & Bougie, 2012, p. 197).

**Table 1: Sections in Questionnaire** 

| Section                                    | Description                   | No. of items         |  |  |
|--|-------------------------------|----------------------|--|--|
| 1  | Demographic                   | 5 questions          |  |  |
| 2  | Strategic Human<br>Management | Resource 7 questions |  |  |
|  | Employee Retention            | 7 questions          |  |  |
| Employee Performance Appraisal 5 questions |                               |                      |  |  |
|  | Human Resource Development    | 6 questions          |  |  |
|  | Talent Management             | 7 questions          |  |  |

#### 1.5 RESULTS

This study had a total of 518 individuals. 32%, or 166 respondents, were male, while 68%, or 352 respondents, were female. This indicates that both men and women are willing to respond and take part in the study.

Path analysis is the second major stage in SEM analysis after evaluating the fit of the measurement model. The structural model provides particular information about the relationship between the independent and dependent variables (Hair et al., 2010). The structural model is evaluated with an emphasis on overall model fit. The size, direction, and significance of the hypothesised parameter estimations are then presented. As Hair et al. (2010) suggest, if any three to four of the above goodness-of-fit indices are within the stipulated threshold, then the structural model fits and further analysis can be conducted to test hypotheses. The last part involves the confirmation of the proposed relationship based on the research hypotheses. The CR and p values estimated by standardised regression were utilised to examine the four proposed hypotheses, of which two were directly related. Table 3 presents the regression weights and normalised regression weights ( $\beta$ ) in the final structural model. of proposed relationship of the based on the research hypotheses. The CR and p values estimated by standardized regression were utilized to examine the 4 proposed hypotheses, out of which two were directly related. Table 3 presents the regression weights and normalized regression weights ( $\beta$ ) in the final structural model.

Following the establishment of the structural equation model, the calculation of model fitting yields estimates for detection path value, standardised path coefficient, standard error S.E., *t*-value, and significance *p*-value. Generally, when the *t*-value exceeds 1.96 and the *p*-value is below 0.05, it can be considered that the path coefficient successfully passes the significance test within a 95% confidence interval, thereby confirming validity of corresponding path hypothesis in the preset model.



According to Table 3, the regression coefficient value of strategic human resource management is 0.268 (t=4.457, p=0.000), implying that strategic human resource management had a significant positive impact on talent management. Besdies, the regression coefficient value of employee resource is -0.002 (t=-0.041, p=0.968), implying that employee resource had no significant influence on talent management. The regression coefficient value of employee performance appraisal is 0.018 (t=0.322, p=0.747), implying that it does not have an influential relationship with talent management. The regression coefficient value of human resource development is 0.369 (t=5.461, p=0.000), implying that human resource development had a significant positive impact on TM.

Table 3: Direct Relationships of Structural equation path test results

Note: SHRM-Strategic Human Resource Management, ER-Employee Retention, EPA-employee performance appraisal,

| Variables            | Estimate | β      | SE    | t      | p     |
|----------------------|----------|--------|-------|--------|-------|
| SHRM→TM              | 0.264    | 0.268  | 0.059 | 4.457  | ***   |
| $ER \rightarrow TM$  | -0.002   | -0.002 | 0.053 | -0.041 | 0.968 |
| $EPA \rightarrow TM$ | 0.021    | 0.018  | 0.064 | 0.322  | 0.747 |
| $HRD \rightarrow TM$ | 0.366    | 0.369  | 0.067 | 5.461  | ***   |

HRD-Human Resource Development, TM-Talent Management

Pearson's correlation analysis in this study is the depcit the correlation between the five involved variables that are on equal footing (Abounaima et al., 2020). This analysis would be able to show the signs of a connection in the aggregate, the main body of which is the analysis of the signs that have a causal relationship in the aggregate (Saccenti et al., 2020). Even if there is no major influence, it is useful to define the close relationship between the variables and express it using relevant statistical indicators (Gnambs, 2020). The degree of correlation between two variables is indicated by the correlation coefficient r (Makowski et al., 2020). The value of the correlation coefficient r in this study lied between 0.215 and 0.447 which is positively correlated among the variables. The closer the absolute value of r is to 1, the stronger the correlation between the two variables, and the closer the absolute value of r is to 0, the weaker the correlation between the two variables (Makowski et al., 2020). While for a positive correlation explains when one variable increases and the other increases (Yu & Hutson, 2024). This meant the correlations between the variables were relatively weak and moderate, but significant.



Table 3 Correlation analysis of variables

| Variables         | r     | p       |
|-------------------|-------|---------|
| SHRM <b>←</b> —TM | 0.426 | 0.000** |
| ER <b>←</b>       | 0.215 | 0.000** |
| EPA TM            | 0.323 | 0.000** |
| HRD <b>←</b> TM   | 0.447 | 0.000** |

Note: SHRM-Strategic Human Resource Management, ER-Employee Retention, EPA-Employee Performance Appraisal, HRD-Human Resource Development, TM-Talent Management

Table 3 shows a significant positive correlation between strategic human resource management and talent management r=0.426, p=0.000 at the 0.05 level. The correlation coefficient between human resource and talent management was r=0.215, p=0.000), demonstrating a substantial positive relationship between employee resource and talent management. The value of correlation coefficient between employee performance appraisal and talent management is r=0.323, p=0.000 thus indicating a significant positive correlation coefficient between human resource development and talent management is r=0.447, p=0.000 thus indicating a significant positive correlation between human resource development and talent management.

#### 1.6 DISCUSSION

This research ascertains the impact of strategic human resource and talent management in the manufacturing industry. Corroborating prior studies (Azizi et al., 2021; Hamouche, 2023; Al-Ghazali & Afsar, 2021; Kravariti & Johnston, 2020) that strategic human resource has a positive impact on talent management (TM), including strengthening internal efficiency, talent acquisition, and smooth operation. Besides, some researchers like Kalaiselvan & Naachimuthu (2016) and Wassell & Bouchard's (2020) explores how organisations innovatively integrate technology into strategic human resource management (SHRM) practices to drive talent management and create greater competitive advantage.

Another variable which also showed significant correlation and impact towards talent management is human resource development. The finding is consistent with the overall mean score of this construct and those reported in previous studies (Kosasih, 2021; Werdhiastutie, Suhariadi & Partiwi, 2020; Mushkudiani et al., 2020; Dirani et al., 2020) validating the importance of human resource development to talent management. Therefore, the results of the related researches showed that there is a positive and significant relationship between human resource development to talent management.



On the contrary, the interesting finding of the study indicated that there was no significant influence between employee retention and talent management. This is not supprting the hypothesis that was generated otherwise. As there are number of researches such as Al Hammadi & Noor (2020), Jindal & Shaikh (2021), and Pandey & Kaur (2021) who investigated the relationship between employee retention and talent management and their results show that employee retention is positively influence talent management. Furthermore, the variable had shown low correlation with talent management though they are significantly correlated. This might be affected by the manufacturing industry where the respondents are from. According to the statistics by Hansen (2024), the manufacturing turnover rate is the second highest among the industries after the construction sector.

Lastly, there is a positive relationship between talent management and employee performance appraisal. However, the correlation has no significant effect of employee performance appraisal on talent management. The finding is not consistent with previous studies on the relationship between employee performance appraisal and talent management (Mitosise et al., 2021; Camilleri,2021). This could be attributed to the nature of the manufacturing industry, which prioritises productivity when evaluating success. Employee performance appraisal is the collective analysis and evaluation of workers' efforts and achievements within the organisation over a set period of time (Pozzi, Rossi, & Secchi, 2023) in order to control staff efficiency and productivity. As a result, talent management may be unaffected, notwithstanding their correlation.

On the basis of the empirical findings, the study recommends authorities could use the findings to develop policies that will assist and encourage the organizational human resource management on talent mangement especially recruitment strategies, organizing strategic training and a dynamic environment, job promotion ways provided as well as a competitive compensation system, an internal recruitment policy, flexible working hours and a transparent promotion policies are provided.

A people-oriented corporate culture management atmosphere, and work-life balance facilities, a formal evaluation, feedback of employee performance appraisal results, performance evaluation from the supervisors, the goal settings, and the procedural justice from the organizational entrepreneurs are advised to provided to employees to improve their retention in talent management. Besides, leadership development programs, developmental activities, training on firmspecific skills/knowledge, developmental growth agenda, training activities on cultivating or identified the talents are the motivating measures to retain employees.

The findings of the study will also serve as a guide to nascent and prospective entrepreneurs or young industries to develop their weaknesses based on what has been identified in the study. Similarly, improvement in human capital by means of enhancing business skills such as planning skills, interpersonal relationship with customers, employees and suppliers, marketing skills through specific capacity training. Organizing skills and experiences obtained in the previous businesses would lead them to a better performance.



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