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DETERMINATION OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES OF MANAGERS OF SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES IN ANAMBRA STATE, NIGERIA

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and Vocational Education,Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka,
Anambra State, Nigeria**Abstract:**

Small and medium enterprises are making positive contributions to economic growth and development in Nigeria, but the rate of failure is high. This failure rate may be attributed to lack of planning, employee participation in decision making and poor management. To survive and compete in this globalized world, SMEs require managers with vast experiences in human resource practices. This study determined the human resource management practices of managers of small and medium enterprises in Anambra State. Two research questions guided the study and four null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. Descriptive survey research design was adopted using a population of 2, 610 managers of SMEs in Anambra State. Taro Yamane formula was utilized to select a sample size of 347. A structured questionnaire developed by the researcher was used for data collection. Cronbach Alpha was used to establish the reliability of the instrument. The reliability index obtained was $r = 0.85$ and 0.82 . Data were analyzed using mean, standard deviation, t-test and ANOVA. Mean was used to answer the research questions and standard deviation used to explain how the responses of the respondents varied. t-test and ANOVA were used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significant. The results showed that managers agreed on the human resource management practices (resourcing and employee development) they adopted in their small and medium scale enterprises in Anambra State. The results also showed that there was no significant difference in the mean responses of managers on the human resource practices (resourcing and employee development) they adopted in their small and medium scale enterprises in Anambra State based on size of enterprise and years of experience. Based on the findings, the researchers recommended, among others, that managers of SMEs' in Anambra State should embark on capacity building of their

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members to ensure better understanding of the relevance of human resource practices on organizational growth and performance.

Keywords: human resource management, managers, small and medium enterprises, resourcing practices and employee development practices

1. Introduction

Small and Medium Scale Enterprises (SMEs) are deemed to be integral to the growth and development of any forward-thinking nation. Small and medium enterprises (SME) are seen as agents of economic development and the most important sector contributor in developing countries (Nigeria inclusive). This is because of the role SMEs play in the creation of wealth and employment generation in a nation. Muogbo (2013) was of the opinion that SMEs are very important because they are the key drivers of employment and economic growth. According to Ahmeti and Marmullaku (2015), SMEs constitute 90 to 95 percent of all enterprises worldwide and account for more than 70 percent of the products and services in the world. SMEs are seen also as key factors in employment and account for approximately 60 percent of private sector employment worldwide. Despite the fact that SMEs play a significant role in developing countries economies, they also play a crucial role in regional development.

Recent trends in Nigeria have clearly revealed the amount of respect attached to SMEs by government, educational institutions, and corporate bodies. Also, the development of SMEs has been recognized as a veritable tool for promoting poverty eradication, job creation, rural development and sustainable livelihood for the populace. Yusuf and Dansu (2013) reported that SMEs make up about 97 percent of businesses in Nigeria and provide on average 50% of Nigeria's employment and industrial output. Small and medium enterprises are largely present in Anambra State. Anambra State is a State where a large percentage of her citizens are entrepreneurs or owners of SMEs. The presence of small and medium scale enterprises has increased economic activities in the State and has helped to improve the revenue base of the State. SMEs have been a major engine of economic growth and technological progress. Eniola (2014) stated that the characteristics of SMEs not only reflect the economic patterns of a country but also the social and cultural dimensions. These differing patterns (economic, social and cultural) are noticeable within different definitions and criteria of SMEs adopted by different countries. Whereas some refer to the number of employees as their distinctive criteria for defining SMEs, others use invested capital, and some others use a combination of the number of employees, invested capital, sales and industry type (Kraja & Osmani, 2013).

Small and medium scale enterprises are business organizations set-up by individuals or group of individuals known as business operators for the main purpose of providing goods and services. Their classification into small and medium enterprises depends on the scale or size of business operators' control. Furthermore, SMEs engage in different types of activities ranging from construction, agro-allied, information

technology, manufacturing, educational establishment, business services, tourism and leisure. The criteria mostly used for the definition of small businesses in Nigeria include; capital investment (fixed assets), annual turnover, number of employees and gross output (that is total production before any product is taken away). In this regard, the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN) (2011) categorized small scale enterprises as business ventures with a minimum of 10 and maximum of 49 employees with assets within the range of five to fifty million Naira (excluding land and buildings). In the same vein, SMEDAN categorized medium scale enterprises as business ventures with a minimum of 50 and maximum of 199 employees with assets within the range of 50 to 500 million Naira (excluding land and buildings). Some of these enterprises are overseen by managers employed by the business owners.

Business owners, according to Okolo (2014) are people who have the ability to see and evaluate business opportunities, put together the necessary resources to take advantage of them and to initiate appropriate actions to ensure success. The business owners employ and contract the managers to oversee the running of their businesses. In connection with the preceding, a manager can be seen as a person who is responsible for the realization of management processes. A manager is the person that makes plans and decisions, organizes, supervises and controls human, financial and information resources of business enterprises. Gorgievski, Ascalon and Stephan (2011) defined a manager as the person employed in an administrative position, who has comprehensive knowledge necessary for leading people and managing an organization in order to achieve optimal realization of set tasks in confined conditions. Thus, the manager of a small and medium scale enterprise is the person who is employed by the owner of the venture to oversee the management of the business which includes the management of the material and human resources on behalf of the owner of the small and medium scale enterprise.

Human resource management (HRM) is the organizational function that deals with issues related to people such as compensation, hiring, performance management, organizational development, safety, wellness, benefits, employee motivation, communication, administration, and training. Human resource management is also a strategic and comprehensive approach to managing people and the workplace culture and environment. Human resource management is a strategic and coherent approach to the management of an organization's most valued assets-the people working there, who individually and collectively contribute to the achievement of set objectives for sustainable competitive advantage (Luftim, 2014).

The main objective of human resource is to create and maintain an efficient workforce that is able to meet the organization's needs (Mayhew, 2014). Effective HRM enables employees to contribute effectively and productively to overall company direction and the accomplishment of an organization's goals and objectives. Businesses with successful HRM practices are likely to have lower absenteeism and employee turnover rates and better skills development and retention. Therefore, HRM plays a crucial role in ensuring that the right employees are hired to meet those demands and that there is relevant support structures available to ensure work productivity. Human

resource management practices according to DeCenzo and Robbins (2010) are classified into four broad categories. These include: (a) acquisition- human resource planning, recruiting, employee socialization; (b) development- employee training, management development, and career development; (c) motivation-job design, performance evaluation, rewards, job evaluation, compensation or benefits, and discipline; and (d) maintenance-safety and health, employee or labour relations. Stoner, Freeman and Gilbert (2013) prescribed seven basic activities of HRM that include human resource planning, recruitment, selection, socialization (orientation), training and development, performance appraisal, promotions, transfers, demotions and separations of human resource. For this study, the components of HRM covered are resourcing and employee development.

Resourcing is an important HRM practices that involves finding the right employees that will help to attain the goals of the business. Resourcing practices have to do with employee the right human resources in the venture. Human resources are key organizational assets as organizational performance depends on the quality of employee effort and hence, on their ability and motivation. It is the only 'crucial asset' that activates all other assets of the organization. Human resources (people) design and produce goods and services, control quality, market the products, allocate financial resources, and set overall strategies and objectives for the organization (Milkovich, Newman & Gerhart, 2013). Without effective people, it is impossible for an organization to achieve its objectives. Therefore, resourcing or manning organizations with the 'right persons' and placing them in their 'right positions' is the central task of HRM. Resourcing organization involves human resource planning, job analysis, recruitment, selection and socialization or orientation.

Employee development and training are processes that attempt to provide employees with information, skills, and understanding of the organization and its goals (Ivancevich, 2011). According to Douglas, Klein and Hunt (2015), training and development are defined as a description of a performance that employees are expected to exhibit before they are considered competent. It is a translation of skills needed into specific training objectives or desired outcomes of training activities. Objectives specify what the trainees should be able to accomplish after successfully completing training programme. Employee capabilities are balanced through training and development. Wexley and Latham (2008) opined that training and development is a planned effort to facilitate employee learning of job-related behaviours in order to improve employee performance. With ongoing trends toward greater workforce diversification, flatter organizations, and increased global competition, training and development efforts enable employees to assume expanded duties and greater responsibilities (Milkovich, Newman & Gerhart, 2013).

Employee development is a continuous process in the most successful firms (Ivancevich, 2011). Thus, employee development has become a strategic goal for organizations today. Success depends upon the way organizations choose to approach development. Organizations must be prepared to develop individual managers and

management teams that are not only flexible, adaptable and innovative in technical, financial and business issues, but skilled in human resource management as well, in order to achieve success. To achieve this, organizations are to establish, as a strategic imperative, greater investment in continuous management education and development. Organizations will also provide the right training to the right people to create and maintain a well-trained and stable workforce.

However, certain factors like size of business enterprise and years of experience of SMEs managers could influence their human resource practices in the management of the business. The ability of SMEs to adopt HRM practices is dependent on their size. According to Muhammad (2009), medium scale enterprises have better capacity to adopt HRM practices in their ventures than small scale enterprises. In support, Saravanan and Vasumathi (2015) opined that the size of a business could influence the adoption of HRM practices by managers of SMEs. Years of experience could also be another variable that could influence the SMEs managers' human resource practices in organizations. Years of experience in this study refers to field of knowledge acquired over months or years of actual practice and which, presumably, has resulted in superior understanding or mastery. It is believed that ninety percent (90%) of business failures are associated with management inadequacy, which consists of either management inexperience or incompetence (Perry and Pendleton in Mugo, 2012). Mugo further observed that many SMEs owners or managers lack managerial training and experience. Experience is the best predictor of business success, especially when the new business is related to earlier business experiences.

Managers with vast experiences in managing business are more capable of finding ways to open new business compared to employees with different career pathways. It is possible that successful SMEs are handled by experienced managers who personally observe the day to day activities of their enterprises and also involve the employees in decision making process to increase productivity. However, the extent to which these assertions apply in Anambra State demands an empirical investigation, hence, the need to determine the human resource management practices of small and medium scale enterprises in Anambra State.

2. Statement of the Problem

Small and medium scale enterprises (SMEs) are agents of national and economic growth hence individuals, government and other stakeholders exert much efforts to achieve personal, organizational and national economic growth and development through sustainable SMEs. However, it has been widely observed and reported that most small firms are short-lived. Several SMEs die shortly after their establishment and some of those that survive die following the ageing or physical incapacitation or death of their owners. In Nigeria, failure rate of small and medium enterprises is high and some new entrepreneurial ventures disappear within the first five years after their establishment. The same could be said of the situation in Anambra State. Factors such as managerial

ineptitude and transfer of the management of businesses from the initial owners (in most cases the parents) to a member of the family who may lack entrepreneurial skills could be responsible for this high failure rate. Other possible contributory factor could be human resource management practices of these SMEs. It should be noted that business failures result in heavy personal loss for entrepreneurs, their workers and other clients/customers. All these add up to very huge losses for the government in particular and the country in general. The problem of this study, therefore, is that small and medium scale enterprises in Anambra State seem not to be surviving and succeeding, thereby adversely affecting their owners, employees and customers as well as the government and contributing to increasing rate of unemployment and crimes in the state.

2.1 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine the human resource management practices of managers of small and medium scale enterprises in Anambra State. Specifically, the study determined the:

- 1) Resourcing practices of managers of small and medium scale enterprises in Anambra State.
- 2) Employee development practices of managers of small and medium scale enterprises in Anambra State.

2.2 Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study.

- 1) What are the resourcing practices of managers of small and medium scale enterprises in Anambra State?
- 2) What are the employee development practices of managers of small and medium scale enterprises in Anambra State?

2.3 Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

- 1) There is no significant difference in the mean responses of managers of small and medium enterprises in Anambra State on the resourcing practices they adopt in their enterprises.
- 2) There is no significant difference in the mean responses of managers of small and medium enterprises in Anambra State on the resourcing practices they adopt in their enterprises based on years of experience (5 years and below, 6-10 years and above 10 years).
- 3) There is no significant difference in the mean responses of managers of small and medium enterprises in Anambra State on the employee development practices they adopt in their enterprises.
- 4) There is no significant difference in the mean responses of managers of small and medium enterprises in Anambra State on the employee development practices

they adopt in their enterprises based on years of experience (5 years and below, 6-10 years and above 10 years).

3. Method

The design that was adopted in this study is a descriptive survey. According to Nworgu (2015), descriptive survey is a design which aims at collecting data on, and describing in a systematic manner, the characteristics, features or facts about a given population. The study was carried out in Anambra State of Nigeria. The population of the study comprised 2,610 SME managers (1,732 small scale and 878 medium scale) of enterprises in Anambra State who are registered with the State Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Technology (2018). The sample size of 347 SME managers (230 small scale managers and 117 medium scale managers) was used for the study. The sample size was derived using the Taro Yamani formula. Instrument for data collection in this study was a structured questionnaire titled "Questionnaire on Human Resource Management Practices of Small and Medium Scale Enterprises (QHRMPSME)". The questionnaire was structured on a 5- point rating scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Moderately Agree (MA), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). The instrument designed for this study was subjected to face and content validation by three experts. Cronbach Alpha was used to establish the reliability of the instrument. The reliability index obtained was $r = 0.85$ and 0.82 .

Data was collected with the aid of six research assistants who were briefed by the researchers. Out of the 347 copies of the questionnaire administered, a total of 298 (85.88%) were returned and used for the study. The data collected from the respondents were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation. The mean value was used to analyze data related to the research questions while the standard deviation was used to ascertain the homogeneity or otherwise of the respondents' ratings. For the hypotheses, t-test and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) were used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. P-value was used for decision making for the hypotheses. Where the calculated p-value is less than or equal to the stipulated level of significance 0.05 ($p \leq 0.05$), it implies that there was significant difference between respondents' mean scores. Under this condition, the null hypothesis of no significant difference is rejected. On the other hand, if the p-value is greater than or equal to the alpha level of 0.05 ($p \geq 0.05$), the null hypothesis of no significant difference is accepted.

4. Results

Research Question 1: What are the resourcing practices of managers of small and medium scale enterprises in Anambra State?

Analysis of data relating to this research question is presented in Table 1:

Table 1: Mean responses of Managers
on the resourcing practices in SMEs (N= 298)

S/no	Items on Resource practices	Mean	SD	Decision
1.	Ensure that relevant information about the organization is made available to applicants at the time of recruitment	4.35	0.53	Agreed
2.	Ensure that relevant information about the job is made available to applicants at the time of recruitment	4.06	0.67	Agreed
3.	Ensure that the nature of the job is specified during recruitment interview.	4.45	0.56	Agreed
4.	Ensure that pay for the job is commensurate to the level of employee qualification	3.29	0.48	Moderately agreed
5.	Specify the requirements for the job to the employees.	4.32	0.47	Agreed
6.	Ensure that the appraisal system for the job is known to employees.	4.33	0.47	Agreed
7.	Place the right persons on the right job	3.30	0.46	Moderately agreed
8.	Ensure that job vacancies are made open to the public	3.61	0.65	Agreed
9.	Ensure that existing employees are considered when there are vacancies for higher positions	3.93	0.68	Agreed
10.	Involve heads of units in the recruitment process	4.08	0.67	Agreed
11.	Use suitable media to advertise vacancies	3.99	0.71	Agreed
12.	Ensure that the recruitment process is fair to all prospective employees.	4.38	0.61	Agreed
	Cluster Mean	3.96		Agreed

Data in Table 1 show a cluster mean of 3.96 indicating that the managers agreed on the resourcing practices applied in small and medium scale enterprises in Anambra State. Item by item analysis in Table 1 shows that items 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13 with mean scores ranging from 3.61 to 4.45 are the resourcing practices agreed to by managers of SMEs, while items 4, 7 and 8 with mean scores ranging from 3.29 to 3.41 are the resourcing practices moderately agreed to by managers of SMEs. The standard deviations of 0.46 to 0.68 showed homogeneity in SMEs managers' responses indicating greater consensus of opinion.

Research Question 2: What are the employee development practices of managers of small and medium scale enterprises in Anambra State?

Analysis of data relating to this research question is presented in Table 2

Table 2: Mean responses of Managers
on the employee development practices in SMEs (N = 298)

S/no	Employee development	Mean	SD	Decision
1.	Consistently assessing training needs of employees	4.07	0.67	Agreed
2.	Recommend personnel for training based on merit	3.80	0.67	Agreed
3.	Seek out opportunities for employee's development	3.74	0.65	Agreed
4.	Ensure that employees appreciate their need for further training	3.37	0.50	Moderately agreed

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5.	Ensure that contents of the training programmes are relevant to the functions of the employees sponsored for training	4.11	0.67	Agreed
6.	Sponsor employees to training to develop their skills	3.34	0.73	Moderately agreed
7.	Encourage employees to attend workshops on business skills development	3.71	0.67	Agreed
8.	Encourage employees to pursue higher degree programmes	3.06	0.68	Moderately agreed
9.	Sponsor employees to local and foreign conferences to enhance their performance	4.34	0.58	Agreed
10.	Invite experts to train employees on the job.	3.31	0.58	Moderately agreed
	Cluster Mean	3.67		Agreed

Data in Table 2 show a cluster mean of 3.67 which reveals that the managers agreed on the employee development practices applied in small and medium scale enterprises in Anambra State. Item by item analysis in Table 2 shows that items 14, 15, 16, 18, 20 and 22 with mean scores ranging from 3.71 to 4.11 are the employee development practices agreed to by managers of SMEs, while items 17, 19, 21 and 23 with mean scores ranging from 3.06 to 3.37 are the employee development practices moderately agreed to by managers of SMEs. The standard deviations of 0.50 to 0.73 are within the same range showing homogeneity in SME managers' responses.

4.1 Testing of Null Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference in the mean responses of managers of small and medium enterprises in Anambra State on the resourcing practices they adopt in their enterprises.

Table 3: Summary of t-test result on the resourcing practices of managers of small and medium enterprises in Anambra State (N = 298)

Resourcing practices	N	\bar{X}	SD	df	P-value	Decision
Small	202	3.96	0.16	296	.275	Not significant
Medium	96	3.97	0.17			

Data in Table 3 show that there is no significant difference in the mean responses of managers of small and medium enterprises in Anambra State on the resourcing practices they adopt in their enterprises. This is shown by the p-value of 0.275, which is greater than the significant level of 0.05. This shows that there is no significance difference in the mean responses of SMEs managers. Therefore, the null hypothesis of no significant difference between the two groups is accepted.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference in the mean responses of managers of small and medium enterprises in Anambra State on the resourcing practices they adopt in their enterprises based on years of experience.

Table 4: Summary of analysis of variance on the mean responses of SME's managers on the resourcing practices adopted based on years of experience (N= 298)

Sources of variance	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	P-value	Decision
Between Groups	41.574	2	20.787	1.759	.01	Significant
Within Groups	1290.822	295	4.394			
Total	1332.396	297				

As shown in Table 4, there is a significant difference among the three groups in terms of their mean responses on the resourcing practices they adopt in their enterprises based on years of experience (5 years and below, 6 -10 years and above 10 years), as the F-ratio (2, 295) is 4.759 and *P-value* (.01) is less than the stipulated 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Table 5: Scheffe post hoc test on mean responses of SME's managers on the resourcing practices adopted based on years of experience

Type of tertiary institution (I)	Type of tertiary institution (J)	Mean difference (I-J)	P-value
5 years and below	Above 5-10 years	.06591	.043
	Above 10 years	.00924	.935
6-10 years	5 years and below	-.06591	.043
	10 years and above	-.05666	.027
Above 10 years	5 years and below	-.00924	.935
	6-10 years	.05666	.027

*significant

The Scheffe test of multiple comparisons in Table 5 shows that the difference is between managers with 5years and below and above 10 years experience in small and medium enterprises in Anambra State.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant difference in the mean responses of managers of small and medium enterprises in Anambra State on the employee development practices they adopt in their enterprises.

Table 6: Summary of t-test result on the employee development practices of managers of small and medium enterprises in Anambra State (N = 298)

Employee development	N	\bar{X}	SD	df	P-value	Decision
Small	202	3.68	0.19	296	.221	Not significant
Medium	96	3.69	0.21			

Data in Table 6 show that there is no significant difference in the mean responses of managers of small and medium enterprises in Anambra State on the employee development practices they adopt in their enterprises. This is shown by the p-value of

.221, which is greater than the significant level of 0.05. This shows that there is no significance difference in the mean responses of SMEs managers. Therefore, the null hypothesis of no significant difference between the two groups is accepted.

Hypothesis 4: There is no significant difference in the mean responses of managers of small and medium enterprises in Anambra State on the employee development practices they adopt in their enterprises based on years of experience.

Table 7: Summary of analysis of variance on the mean responses of SME's managers on the employee development practices adopted based on years of experience (N = 298)

Sources of variance	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	P-value	Decision
Between Groups	1.9	2	1	.247	.782	Not Significant
Within Groups	1162.3	295	3.9			
Total	1164.3	297				

Data analysis in Table 7 show that there is significant difference among the three groups in terms of their mean responses on the employee development practices they adopt in their enterprises based on years of experience (5 years and below, 6 -10 years and above 10 years), as the F-ratio (2, 295) is .247 and *P-value* (.782) is less than the stipulated 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected.

5. Discussion

The results of the study indicated that managers agreed on the resourcing practices they adopted in their small and medium scale enterprises in Anambra State. The findings are similar with the findings of Hung, Cant and Wiid (2016) who stated that most of the respondents agree that human resource management tasks such as analyzing and classifying work; hiring and firing employees; motivating employees; developing and ensuring adherence to personnel rules are important for a business and that they need help with these HR tasks. In support of this, Ekwoaba, Ikeije and Ufoma (2015) held that resourcing or manning organization with 'right persons' and place them in their 'right positions' is the central task of HRM. Resourcing organization involves human resource planning, job analysis, recruitment, selection, socialization or orientation.

The test of the first hypothesis indicated that there was no significant difference in the mean responses of managers of small and medium enterprises in Anambra State on the resourcing practices they adopted in their enterprises. This disagrees with Kanu (2015) who stated that there was a significant positive relationship between HRM practices and SMEs performance. This implies that the more SMEs engage in formal HRM practices, the more they observe higher sales and generate more employment. Also, the second hypothesis revealed that years of experience influences the mean responses of managers of small and medium enterprises in Anambra State on the resourcing practices they adopted in their enterprises. This agrees with the findings of Denver, Gibson,

Tonderayi and Severino (2018) who stated that owner/managers with previous work experience had significant impact on performance of SMEs.

The results of the study revealed that managers agreed on the employee development practices adopted in small and medium scale enterprises in Anambra State. This corroborates with that of Akintunde (2017) who reported that training and development are processes that attempt to provide an employee with information, skills, and understanding of the organization and its goals. Akintunde further stated that organizations will provide the right training to the right people to create and maintain a well-trained and stable workforce. Also, the findings disagree with that of Hassan (2016) who revealed that the organization did not effectively adopted HRM practices which affect their business performance. Development of employees through training is a corner stone of continuous improvement of SME performance. Training employees increases SMEs productivity by development of employee skills, improving productivity by the use new technology and augmenting skills of staff with highly motivated teamwork.

The results of the third hypothesis indicated that there was no significant difference in the mean responses of managers of small and medium enterprises in Anambra State on the employee development practices they adopted in their enterprises. Also, the fourth hypothesis revealed that year of experience does not influence the mean responses of managers of small and medium enterprises in Anambra State on the employee development practices they adopted in their enterprises. This disagrees with Akintunde (2017) and Hassan (2016) who reported that training and development had a significant positive effect on corporate enterprises and on employees' performance.

6. Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it is clear that Human Resource Management (HRM) practices (resourcing, employee training and development, employee compensation and employee relations) has a positive role in increasing the employee's performance, so the managers of SMEs should implement these practices to achieve the desired goals. The organizations should utilize a variety of reward and recognition programs to drive behavior that promotes high performance. SME managers should revise their human resource policies by keeping in view the above factors in order to attain the targeted goals.

6.1 Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

- 1) Managers of SMEs' in Anambra State should embark on capacity building of members to ensure better understanding of the relevance of human resource practices on organizational growth and performance. This could be achieved by collaborative efforts with relevant educational institutions, government agencies and consultants through the organization of seminars, workshop, conferences and training programmes for both the managers and employees of the organizations.

- 2) Firms should fully adopt HRM practices as part of their formal strategic competitive tools. These HRM practices should consciously include variables such as, recruitment and selection, training and development of employees in order to make them a key sustainable competitive tool.
- 3) Best practices of recruitment and selection processes must be followed to result in choosing candidates with the appropriate knowledge, skills, abilities, and personal qualities; and also eradicate the problems like nepotism and discrimination.

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