

Analysis of Human Resource Competencies of MSME Actors ALFATHZI Souvenir Center Surabaya

Supriyadi¹, Mochamad Mochklas², and Dwi Songgo Panggayudi³
mochamadmochklas@um-surabaya.ac.id

*¹, Management, Faculty of Economic and Business, Muhammadiyah University of Surabaya, Indonesia;

², Management, Faculty of Economic and Business, Muhammadiyah University of Surabaya, Indonesia;

³, Management, Faculty of Economic and Business, Muhammadiyah University of Surabaya, Indonesia;

Abstract. Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSME) have a strategic role in driving national economic growth, including in the tourism and creative economy sectors. MSME of Alfathzi Souvenir Center in Surabaya is one example of a local business that is growing and depends on the quality of its human resources (HR). This study aims to analyze the condition of HR competence in the MSME, as well as to identify the factors that influence it and efforts to improve it. This study uses a qualitative method with in-depth interview techniques and direct observation. The results show that employee interpersonal competence is quite good, but there is a gap in technical aspects, especially among new employees. Factors that influence include educational background, training effectiveness, incentive systems, and limited digital facilities. This study recommends digital-based training, a fair performance appraisal system, and cooperation with educational institutions or the government to support sustainable HR development..

Keywords: MSME, Competence, Human Resources

1 INTRODUCTION

Indonesia's national economy has consistently shown a very strong dependence on the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) sector. This sector is not only the backbone of the economy in the absorption of labor, but also plays an important role in the distribution of community welfare, equitable development, and stimulation of community economic activities at various levels. Based on data from the Ministry of Cooperatives and MSMEs, the contribution of MSMEs to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) reaches more than 60%, and is able to absorb most of the national workforce. This shows that MSMEs have a strategic role in maintaining national economic resilience, especially in dealing with global economic dynamics and economic uncertainties (junaidi.,2023).

One of the areas that relies on the existence of MSMEs as a driver of the local economy is the Kenjeran Beach tourist area in Surabaya. This area is known as a marine tourism destination and a center of creative economic activities, so the existence of MSMEs, including Alfathzi Souvenir Center, not only functions as a business entity engaged in the production and trade of regional souvenirs, but also has a strategic role as a medium for promoting tourism, culinary, and local culture. As a provider of regional products, Alfathzi plays an important role in shaping the region's image and increasing the attraction of tourists to visit Surabaya again (widowati.,2024).

In carrying out their operations, MSMEs such as Alfathzi are highly dependent on the quality and competence of human resources (HR). Competent human resources are the key to business success in increasing productivity, maintaining product quality, and providing the best service to customers. In the traditional souvenir industry, human resource competencies include not only technical skills such as product production, processing, and packaging, but also marketing skills, *customer service*, and the ability to manage business effectively. Human resources who have adaptive, creative, and innovative skills will provide more value for companies to survive and compete in an increasingly competitive market (Ananta., 2024).

However, the reality faced by MSMEs, including Alfathzi, shows that there are still a number of fundamental obstacles in human resource management. These challenges include a business management system that is still traditional or conventional, limited knowledge and skills of the workforce, lack of training and competency development in a structured manner, and lack of use of digital technology to support business operational activities. In addition, the uneven level of digital literacy and lack of understanding of technology-based marketing strategies are additional obstacles in dealing with changes in consumer behavior in the digital era (Suliyanto & Rahab, 2012).

By understanding these conditions, the competence of human resources in the MSME sector plays a crucial role as a determining factor for business success. These competencies include technical skills in the production and marketing process, managerial skills such as planning, organizing, and controlling the business, and the ability to innovate and adapt to technological developments and market needs (Nurudin, 2017). Therefore, this study aims to comprehensively analyze the actual condition of HR competencies in Alfathzi MSMEs of the Surabaya Souvenir Center, identify internal and external factors that affect them, and formulate relevant and applicable HR competency development strategies. With this approach, it is hoped that this research can make a practical contribution to increasing the competitiveness of MSMEs, as well as supporting local and national economic

development in a sustainable manner..

2 LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Human Resources (HR)

Human resources (HR) are a crucial factor in determining organizational success, particularly in micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs). According to Hasibuan (2019), human resources refer to the integrated capacity of individuals' physical and intellectual abilities that are utilized to achieve organizational objectives. In the context of MSMEs, human resources play a strategic role due to limited capital and technology, making human competence the primary driver of business sustainability.

MSME actors are not only labor providers but also planners, managers, and decision-makers in daily business operations (Tambunan, 2019). Therefore, the quality of human resources significantly affects the competitiveness and continuity of MSMEs.

2.2 Human Resource Competence

Competence is a fundamental characteristic of an individual that is closely related to effective job performance. Spencer and Spencer (1993) define competence as an underlying characteristic of an individual that is causally related to superior performance in a job or situation.

Wibowo (2017) states that competence is an individual's ability to perform tasks based on knowledge, skills, and work attitudes in accordance with established standards. In MSMEs, human resource competence is essential because business actors are often required to perform multiple roles simultaneously.

2.3 Dimensions of Human Resource Competence

Human resource competence generally consists of three main dimensions: knowledge, skills, and attitude.

2.3.1 Knowledge

Knowledge refers to an individual's understanding of specific fields obtained through education, training, and experience. Notoatmodjo (2015) explains that knowledge forms the foundation for decision-making and work behavior.

In the case of ALFATHZI Souvenir Center Surabaya, the knowledge of MSME actors includes product knowledge, marketing strategies, basic financial management, and an understanding of customer needs and preferences.

2.3.2 Skills

Skills are the abilities to apply knowledge effectively in practical work situations. Robbins and Judge (2018) argue that skills represent an individual's capacity to carry out tasks efficiently and accurately.

Skills required by MSME actors include production skills, communication and customer service skills, marketing skills, and the ability to utilize digital platforms such as social media and online marketplaces.

2.3.3 Attitude

Attitude refers to an individual's tendency to respond positively or negatively toward work and the work environment. According to Mangkunegara (2017), work attitude reflects discipline, responsibility, and commitment to organizational goals.

In MSMEs, positive work attitudes such as honesty, perseverance, teamwork, and customer orientation greatly influence service quality and business sustainability.

2.4 Human Resource Competence in Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs)

MSMEs are generally characterized by simple organizational structures and informal management systems. Tambunan (2019) states that many MSMEs are still managed traditionally, making human resource competence a key factor in improving business performance.

Human resource competence in MSMEs includes managerial ability, entrepreneurial orientation, innovation capability, and adaptability to changes in the business environment (Armstrong, 2016).

2.5 MSME Actors

MSME actors are individuals or groups who operate businesses that meet the criteria established by Law No. 20 of 2008 concerning Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises. MSME actors play a strategic role in national economic development by creating employment opportunities and supporting local economic growth.

In this study, MSME actors refer to the owners and workers of ALFATHZI Souvenir Center Surabaya who are directly involved in production, marketing, and business management activities.

2.6 Relationship between Human Resource Competence and MSME Performance

Human resource competence has a significant relationship with MSME performance. Armstrong (2016) asserts that higher levels of competence contribute directly to increased productivity, work quality, and organizational effectiveness.

MSME actors with strong knowledge, skills, and positive work attitudes are more capable of improving product quality, delivering excellent customer service, and maintaining competitiveness in a dynamic market environment (Wibowo, 2017).

3 RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses a qualitative method. The qualitative approach was chosen because this study aims to analyze, identify factors, and formulate efforts to improve human resource competence, which requires exploration and in-depth understanding of the condition of the research object.

Place and Subject of Research: The research was carried out at the Alfathzi MSME Souvenir Center Surabaya. The subjects of the study, or key informants, were Alfathzi MSME actors, where data was collected from 1 MSME owner through interviews and observations. The subjects were chosen because they had in-depth knowledge of the conditions of utilizing human resources skills in the location.

Data Collection Techniques: Primary data is collected through two main techniques:

1. **In-depth Interview:** Conducted to MSME owners to obtain reliable information about the condition of human resource competencies, factors that affect them, and development strategies that have been carried out.
2. **Direct Observation:** Conducted to directly observe operational processes, such as *packaging processes* and employee interactions, in order to validate the information obtained from interviews.

Data Analysis Techniques: The data analysis techniques used in this qualitative research focus on the interpretation of interview and observation results to present an in-depth and holistic description of the competencies of Alfathzi MSME human resources.

4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Result

The Condition of Human Resources Competency of Alfathzi MSMEs: The results of the study show that the human resource competence in Alfathzi MSMEs as a whole is developing very well.

- **Interpersonal Competencies (*Soft Skills*):** These competencies are considered strong, especially in the ability to communicate with customers and teamwork. This is due to the family culture that is applied, encouraging harmonious interaction and collaboration between employees.
- **Competency Gap (*Hard Skills*):** Although *soft skills* are strong, there is a competency gap in the technical aspect (*hard skills*), especially among new hires who do not have direct experience in the field of digital production or marketing.

Factors Affecting Competence: Factors identified to affect the competence of human resources in Alfathzi MSMEs include:

- **Educational Background:** Employees with an educational background in tourism or business tend to understand how to work faster and adapt.
- **Training Effectiveness:** Internal and external training is routine, but it is still common and does not focus on the use of digital tools that are crucial in today's era.
- **Incentive System:** Performance-based incentive systems have the potential to increase motivation, but the way they are assessed still needs to be improved to be fairer and clearer.
- **Organizational Support:** Business owners provide strong support through training from scratch and create a comfortable and open work atmosphere, which triggers employees' intrinsic motivation to keep learning.

4.2. Discussion

The results of the study show that the competence of human resources in Alfathzi MSMEs is dominated by strengths in the aspect of interpersonal competence (*soft skills*). This aspect is reflected in the ability of employees to establish good communication with customers (hospitality) and effective collaboration between colleagues. This is in line with Spencer and Spencer's statement that competence involves not only knowledge and skills, but also attitudes and motives that drive superior performance. In the context of Alfathzi, the family culture applied by MSME owners is the main catalyst for the development of these *soft skills*, creating a supportive work environment and minimizing internal conflicts.

However, there is a significant gap in the aspect of technical competence (*hard skills*), especially related to modern operational needs. This gap is most pronounced in newly joined employees, who, despite having high work intentions, have not mastered MSME-specific operational techniques, such as *efficient packaging methods or integrated online sales handling*. This indicates that the existing knowledge transfer and technical

training processes are still unstructured and effective, requiring longer adaptation time for new employees and an obstacle in the development of digital skills and online marketing strategies

4.2.1. Digital Competency Gap Challenges

In the current era of digitalization, MSMEs located in souvenir centers (which rely heavily on tourism and online promotion) must have qualified digital competencies. The key finding in this study is the lack of training focus on the use of digital tools and *software*, such as product photo techniques, *simple editing*, and *marketing strategies through social media*.

The limitation of digital competence is exacerbated by the limitations of supporting facilities, such as the absence of a dedicated space for product photos or the lack of *adequate editing software*. This condition is the main obstacle for Alfathzi to compete in the *online market*. According to the theory of MSME development, *digital readiness* is a prerequisite for competitiveness. Without digital competence and facilities, Alfathzi MSMEs risk losing market share from consumers who tend to look for souvenirs online before or after visiting physical locations. Therefore, strong *soft skills* alone are not enough to ensure business sustainability

4.2.2. Determinants of Human Resource Competency

Factors that affect human resource competence in Alfathzi MSMEs can be grouped into driving and inhibiting factors:

1. Driving Factors (Motivation and Culture):

- Organizational Support: The full support of MSME owners, which is reflected in creating a comfortable and open work atmosphere, is a key driver of employees' intrinsic motivation to learn.
- Educational Background: A relevant educational background (e.g. in tourism or management) accelerates the process of internalizing knowledge, although it does not guarantee the mastery of specific *hard skills*.

2. Inhibiting Factors (Structural and Facilities):

- Training Effectiveness: Less specific training, especially in the digital field, fails to bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical needs in the field.
- Incentive System and Performance Appraisal: Although the incentive system exists, the performance appraisal is still perceived as less transparent and fair by employees, which has the potential to lower extrinsic motivation. The existence of a fair appraisal system is key in performance management theory to encourage continuous competency improvement.

The implication of this discussion is that the competency development strategy in Alfathzi MSMEs must shift from focusing on internal adaptation (family culture) to **improving external technical capabilities** (digitalization and specialization). This is in line with the view that MSMEs need to integrate *elements of Knowledge, Skills, and Attitude (KSA)* to achieve optimal performance, where *technical skills* must be aligned with the demands of an increasingly digital market

4.1 Citations and references

Citations. For citations in the text use consecutive numbers in square brackets: [1], [2], [3], etc.

References. All references must be in the same format as the ones at the end of this document and the reference list must include all cited literature.

4.2 acknowledgements

Acknowledgments. The heading should be treated as a 3rd level heading and should not be assigned a number. Intellectual Capital

5 CONCLUSION

Human resource competencies at Alfathzi MSMEs Surabaya Souvenir Center show excellent development, especially in the interpersonal aspect (*soft skills*) which is supported by a harmonious family work culture. However, there is a competency gap in technical aspects, especially in terms of mastery of digital technology and marketing *Online*. The main factors that affect HR competencies are employee educational backgrounds, strong organizational support, but hampered by the lack of digital-specific training and limited digital support facilities.

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