

A Review of the human resources approaches on strategy implementation among SMEs in Zimbabwe

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Abstract

Zimbabwe has been ravaged by a serious brain drain since 2000 as a result of the poor economic performance in the country and a desire for greener pastures by Zimbabweans across the globe. The brain drain has affected different sectors of the economy but the worst affected were SMEs due to unavailability of resources and as a result the performance of SMEs has been marginal at best. This study sought to establish the human strategies used by these SMEs and their contribution to the overall performance of these organisations. This was a qualitative study using the multiple case study approach involving 8 organisations. In depth interviews and non-participant observations were used to collect data from owner/managers. The major findings were that SMEs found it difficult to recruit employees. Only two organisations emphasized skills and experience, while the other six looked at loyalty as an employment and retention criteria. Where possible SMEs should offer in house training for educated employees and when skills are needed urgently, efforts should be made to subcontract specialists or to hire the skills on a part time basis. To increase organisational performances SMEs should focus on tangible rewards rather than buying loyalty.