

# Human Resource Competency Development Strategy in Msmes in the Digital Era: a Qualitative Study of Jooce Micro-Enterprise in Balunijuk

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Current digital technology advancements require micro-businesses to adapt and develop their human resource (HR) competencies to compete in the modern era. This study aims to determine HR competency development strategies at the Jooce micro-business located in Balun Ijuk, Bangka Belitung. The research approach used was qualitative, with direct interviews with the business owner and employees serving as the primary data source. The research results show that Jooce has implemented various forms of digital technology, such as the use of a cashless payment system (QRIS), app-based financial records, and promotions through social media platforms like TikTok, Instagram, and WhatsApp Business. The human resource development process is carried out independently through direct guidance from the owner and informal learning from social media, especially TikTok, to keep up with sales trends and product innovations. However, no formal training has been provided specifically. Obstacles faced include a less strategic business location and the lack of a signboard, which makes the business difficult for new customers to find. Overall, Jooce's HR competency development strategy emphasizes independent learning, good communication between owners and employees, and the simple yet effective application of digital technology. The use of social media has been shown to have a positive impact on increasing customer base, especially after their promotional content went viral. The results of this study are expected to serve as a reference for other MSMEs in developing digital-based HR competencies to adapt to the demands of the modern era.

**Keywords:** MSMEs, HR competencies, digitalization, development strategy, Balun Ijuk

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## 1. Introduction

The development of digital technology has brought about significant changes in the way micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) conduct their business activities. Currently, almost every aspect of business, from marketing and transactions to customer service, has been impacted by technological advancements. According to Wulandari (2021), digital transformation requires MSMEs to be able to integrate technology into their business processes to remain relevant in modern competition. This situation requires MSMEs to have human resources (HR) who are not only skilled in serving customers but also able to utilize digital technology to ensure their businesses can compete in an increasingly modern market. This aligns with the opinion of Pratama and Nugroho (2022), who stated that human resources' digital competence is a crucial factor in increasing MSME competitiveness in the digital economy era.

MSMEs play a crucial role in supporting national and regional economic growth because they absorb labor and create new business opportunities. However, many MSMEs still face challenges in digital literacy and managing technology-based businesses. According to Santoso (2023), most MSMEs in underdeveloped regions experience limited technological knowledge, resulting in slower digital adaptation. This challenge often arises for small businesses in the region, including in Balun Ijuk, Bangka Belitung, where some still rely on conventional methods and don't fully understand the optimal use of technology.

One MSME adapting to digital technology is Jooce, a micro-enterprise selling various types of fruit juices and snacks. The business was founded in August 2025 by two owners and one permanent employee. In its operations, Jooce has utilized digital technology through the use of a cashless payment system (QRIS), app-based financial records, and promotions using social media platforms such as TikTok, Instagram, and WhatsApp Business. Furthermore, the business has added a location point on Google Maps to make it easier for customers to find the shop. This finding aligns with Rahmawati (2022), who stated that utilizing digital platforms can increase business visibility and expand the market reach of MSMEs.

However, Jooce still faces several obstacles, including a less strategic location and the lack of a signboard, making it difficult for new customers to find the business. In terms of human resource development, the learning process is still carried out simply through direct guidance from business owners and informal learning through social media, particularly TikTok, to learn how to sell and follow popular beverage trends. This aligns with Siregar's (2021) opinion, which states that many MSMEs rely on learning-by-doing and informal learning due to limited access to structured formal training. This situation indicates a willingness to adapt, although not yet supported by more systematic training.

This phenomenon demonstrates the need for MSMEs to develop human resource competencies to adapt to rapid digital change. Communication skills, discipline, and openness to technology are key to increasing business productivity. This view is reinforced by Hidayat (2020), who emphasized that strengthening soft skills competencies and digital readiness of human resources is the foundation for MSME success in facing digital transformation. Therefore, this study was conducted to analyze the human resource competency development strategy at Jooce MSME in Balun Ijuk in facing the digital era, and to identify factors that support and hinder this development process.

Based on the above background, this study aims to: (1) Review the HR competency development strategy for Jooce's micro business. (2) Determine the type of digital technology use to support human resource skills development. (3) Jooce's obstacles in the human resource development process in the digital era. (4) Explain how the use of digital technology impacts Jooce's business operations and growth.

### **Research Conceptual Framework**

The theory of human resource competency, MSME digital adaptation, and field interviews are the cornerstones of this research concept. This framework explains how the studied variables interact with each other:

1. Human resource capability development, namely through independent learning, direct guidance from the owner, previous work experience, and work perspectives (diligence, honesty, and friendliness).
2. Digital technology applications, namely QRIS cashless payments, online promotions on TikTok, Instagram, and the company's WhatsApp, digital financial management, and Google Maps as a business location.
3. Supporting factors, namely good team communication, the owner's openness to technology, and social media trends.
4. Inhibiting factors, namely inappropriate location, lack of formal training, minimal digital literacy among human resources, and the absence of name tags.
5. Impact of digital technology, namely operational efficiency, increased client base, enhanced company reputation, and increased sales after viral content.

## 2. Method

This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach because it focuses on an in-depth understanding of the human resource (HR) competency development strategy at Jooce's business in Balun Ijuk. This approach was chosen to gather information directly from business owners, thus depicting the actual conditions on the ground. The descriptive method allows researchers to explain facts, behaviors, and strategies implemented without any manipulation or special treatment of the research subjects.

The research was conducted at the Jooce shop in Balun Ijuk, Bangka Regency, Bangka Belitung Islands Province. This location was chosen purposively because Jooce is a micro-enterprise that has utilized digital technology in its operations. The research took place from September to November 10, 2025, with the main activities consisting of interviews, observations, and recording field findings.

The data used in this study consisted of primary and secondary data. Primary data was obtained through direct interviews with Jooce's business owners and employees to obtain information on HR competency development strategies, the implementation of digital technology, and challenges in running the business. Meanwhile, secondary data was obtained from journal references, literature related to MSMEs and HR competencies, and relevant online sources. Data collection was conducted through in-depth interviews with two owners and one employee of Jooce. The interviews were semi-structured to allow respondents to share their experiences and perspectives openly. Direct observations were also conducted to observe operational activities at the shop, such as how employees serve customers, the use of QRIS in the payment process, and promotions through social media.

Data analysis employed the Miles and Huberman (1994) model, which includes data reduction through selection and simplification of interview results, presentation of data in narrative form for ease of understanding, and drawing conclusions to interpret findings regarding the HR competency development strategy implemented by Jooce, including emerging obstacles and their impact on business performance.

To ensure data validity, researchers employed source triangulation techniques by comparing the results of owner and employee interviews with field observations. Respondent statements were also cross-checked to ensure the consistency and accuracy of the information obtained. This research focuses on the strategies Jooce employs to develop human resource competencies through self-directed learning and direct guidance from the business owner, the use of digital technologies such as QRIS and social media to support operations, and efforts to foster a positive work attitude, effective communication, and adaptability to changing digital trends. Overall, this research methodology aims to provide a comprehensive overview of how Jooce develops human resource competencies amidst the challenges of the digital era through hands-on experience and the use of simple yet effective technology.

## 3. Results And Discussion

### Research Type and Approach

Jooce is a micro-enterprise selling various fruit juices, as well as light and heavy meals. The business was established in August 2025 in the Balun Ijuk area of Bangka Belitung. It is managed by two owners who are also actively involved in operations, assisted by one permanent employee.

The primary objective of Jooce is to provide healthy drinks at affordable prices to the local community, particularly students and young people. Over time, Jooce has adapted to the digital era through the use of a cashless payment system (QRIS), promotions through social media platforms like TikTok, Instagram, and WhatsApp Business, and app-based financial records. The business also has a Google Maps location to

make it easier for customers to find the shop. Despite its small scale, Jooce has demonstrated strong adaptability to technological changes.

### **Human Resource Competency Development Strategy**

According to interviews, human resource (HR) competency development at Jooce is conducted informally and is oriented towards direct work experience. The primary learning process occurs through direct guidance from the business owner to employees, providing guidance on tasks, customer service, cleanliness, and work time management.

Furthermore, employees learn independently by watching content on social media, particularly TikTok, for inspiration on engaging sales strategies or the latest beverage trends.

Despite having never received formal training, this hands-on learning system is quite effective because it aligns with the practical and flexible characteristics of MSMEs. This demonstrates that competency development in micro-enterprises does not always require certified training but can be achieved through intensive communication and daily work experience.

This finding aligns with Armstrong's (2014) argument, which explains that human resource development strategies in small businesses often occur naturally and unstructured, yet can still improve work capabilities if communication and learning are consistent.

### **Utilization of Digital Technology in Business Operations**

Interview results indicate that Jooce has adopted several digital technologies to support its business activities. The use of QRIS as a cashless payment method simplifies transaction processes and increases time efficiency. Furthermore, financial reports have begun to be compiled digitally to make it easier for the owner to monitor daily revenue. In terms of marketing, Jooce actively uses social media platforms such as TikTok, Instagram, and WhatsApp Business to promote its products. One promotional content uploaded on TikTok even went viral, increasing the number of customers and expanding its market reach. This demonstrates the crucial role social media plays in building a business's image and attracting new consumers, especially the younger generation.

These findings support the theory of Kotler & Keller (2016), which states that digital marketing can strengthen the position of small businesses with low costs and broad reach. In Jooce's case, the use of social media serves not only as a promotional tool but also as a learning tool for employees to understand market trends.

### **Employee Attitudes and Performance**

Interviews revealed that Jooce employees are honest, disciplined, and friendly. These attitudes serve as a distinct competitive advantage by creating a positive customer experience. The business owner also emphasized the importance of good communication, patience, and thoroughness, especially in serving customers and maintaining product and premises cleanliness.

This positive work attitude demonstrates that human resource competence is not only measured by technical skills, but also by behavior and work ethics. In the context of micro-enterprises, loyalty and honesty are crucial assets for maintaining long-term business sustainability.

### **Challenges Faced**

Despite being able to utilize digital technology, Jooce still faces several obstacles, including:

1. The business location is not strategic, as it is quite far from the center of activity and lacks a signboard in front of the shop, making it difficult for new customers to find it;

2. There is no formal training related to digital business management, so employee skills are limited to self-taught skills;
3. Human resources are limited, as there are only two owners and one permanent employee, resulting in a relatively high workload.
4. However, these obstacles do not hinder the business owners' enthusiasm for continuous innovation. Through open communication and a clear division of tasks, they are able to maintain operational stability and generate a turnover that covers their initial investment.

### **Positive Impacts of Using Digital Technology**

The use of digital technology has brought several positive impacts to Jooce's business, including:

1. Improving operational efficiency, as transactions and financial records become faster and more accurate;
2. Expanding marketing reach, especially after promotions via TikTok successfully attracted new customers;
3. Improving the business's image, as customers perceive Jooce as a modern business that keeps up with the times.
4. Furthermore, utilizing social media also helps Jooce understand market trends and consumer preferences. Thus, digital technology serves not only as a promotional tool but also as a source of information that aids business decision-making.

### **Positive Impacts of Using Digital Technology**

From interviews, Jooce's owner plans to continue developing the business by:

1. Increasing the variety of beverage menu items in line with market trends;
2. Improving employee skills through self-learning and simple training;
3. Installing a sign in front of the shop for easier discovery;
4. Opening a new branch in a more strategic location if sales continue to increase.

These steps demonstrate a long-term focus on developing human resource competencies and business management. The owner's hope of creating new jobs also reflects a social spirit that aligns with the role of MSMEs as drivers of the community economy.

### **General Discussion**

Based on the overall research findings, it can be concluded that Jooce's HR competency development strategy focuses on informal learning, digital adaptation, and harmonious work communication. Despite facing limitations in terms of training and location, Jooce successfully leveraged simple technology to improve business efficiency and competitiveness.

These results reinforce the view that HR development at the micro-enterprise level does not have to be carried out through formal training systems, but can be realized through practical approaches tailored to the business's capacity. Through self-directed learning and a willingness to adapt to technology, MSMEs like Jooce are able to survive and thrive amidst the challenges of the digital era.

## **4. Conclusion**

Based on research conducted at the Jooce micro-enterprise in Balun Ijuk, it can be concluded that the human resource (HR) competency development strategy is implemented simply yet effectively through on-the-job learning. The business owner plays a crucial role in providing guidance to employees on customer service, cleanliness, and instilling the values of discipline, honesty, and friendliness. Although formal training is not

provided, the natural learning process, supported by good communication between business members, has been proven to improve work skills and create a positive work environment.

The use of digital technology has also been crucial to Jooce's business development. Through the use of a cashless payment system (QRIS), app-based financial records, and promotions through social media platforms such as TikTok, Instagram, and WhatsApp Business, the business has successfully improved operational efficiency and expanded its market reach. The positive impact of this technology implementation was evident when one of its promotional content posts on TikTok successfully attracted public attention and increased customer numbers. However, Jooce still faces challenges such as an unstrategic business location and the lack of clear signage, as well as a limited workforce and a lack of formal training. However, the spirit of adapting to change and commitment to utilizing digital technology shows that this business has great potential to continue to grow and compete in the digital era.

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