



INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY MANAGEMENT OF MSMEs IN INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS SCENARIO

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Abstract: *Micro, Small, and Medium-Sized Businesses (MSMEs) are essential to the world's economic expansion, job creation, and innovation. By protecting inventions, encouraging market expansion, and supporting sustainable growth, intellectual property rights (IPR) are essential for improving MSMEs' competitiveness in the global business environment. Nevertheless, obstacles like ignorance, a lack of funding, and ineffective enforcement practices prevent MSMEs from effectively utilizing IPR. It investigates the ways in which intellectual property management can boost brand value, promote research and development, and safeguard discoveries. The study highlights the significance of customized approaches, such as education, government assistance, and the implementation of policies that fill in the gaps in IPR understanding and implementation.*

Key Words: *Micro, Small, and Medium-Sized Businesses (MSMEs), Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) economy, business..*

1. INTRODUCTION :

Micro, Small, and Medium-Sized Enterprises (MSMEs)⁽¹⁾ are the foundation of many economies, making substantial contributions to GDP, employment, and innovation. These businesses must contend with fierce competition, quick technical breakthroughs, and changing customer needs in the globalized marketplace. MSMEs find that managing their intellectual property rights (IPRs) is an essential tool for protecting their ideas, improving their market position, and navigating the challenges of doing business internationally.

Assets like patents, trademarks, copyrights, and trade secrets that safeguard inventions and creations are all included in intellectual property. By giving MSMEs a competitive edge, efficient IP management not only encourages innovation but also makes it easier for them to join global value chains. Nevertheless, many MSMEs face challenges in managing their intellectual property due to a lack of institutional support, insufficient resources, and low knowledge, notwithstanding their significance. These difficulties are made worse in international company, when complexity is increased by jurisdictional variations and enforcement concerns.

MSMEs may develop strong business models, adjust to shifting market conditions, and safeguard their competitive advantages in the global marketplace by utilizing IPR as a strategic tool.

The function of intellectual property management in helping MSMEs prosper in the global business environment is examined in this study. It highlights these businesses' vital role in innovation and economic development while addressing important obstacles, possibilities, and tactics to improve the IP environment for them. MSMEs may protect their intellectual property while simultaneously boosting global competitiveness and sustainable economic growth by improving IPR utilization.

2. HISTORY OF IPR IN INDIA

The history of Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) in India reflects a journey of transformation, from colonial foundations to a modern, globally aligned framework. During the British colonial era, India's IPR system was primarily designed to serve colonial interests, with laws such as the Indian Patents Act of 1856 and the Copyright Act of 1914



modelled after British regulations. After independence in 1947, India sought to create an IPR system tailored to its developmental needs. This led to significant reforms, including the Patents Act of 1970, which emphasized process patents to promote local manufacturing, particularly in the pharmaceutical sector, and the Copyright Act of 1957, which provided comprehensive protection for creative works.

With economic liberalization in 1991 and India's entry into the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 1995, the country embraced globalization and committed to aligning its laws with the Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) Agreement. Subsequent amendments to the Patents Act introduced product patents in key sectors like pharmaceuticals and agriculture, while the Geographical Indications (GI) Act of 1999 safeguarded region-specific products such as Darjeeling Tea. In recent years, India has strengthened its IPR framework through initiatives like the National IPR Policy of 2016, aimed at fostering innovation, increasing awareness, and improving enforcement mechanisms.

India's IPR evolution also reflects sector-specific progress. For instance, the establishment of the Traditional Knowledge Digital Library (TKDL) protects indigenous knowledge systems from bio-piracy, while reforms in copyright laws address challenges posed by digitalization. Although challenges remain, such as enforcement issues and low public awareness, India's modern IPR ecosystem supports innovation, protects cultural heritage, and ensures compliance with international standards, positioning the country as a key player in the global intellectual property landscape.⁽²⁾

3. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS (IPR)

Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) are legal protections granted to creators and innovators to safeguard their intellectual creations, such as inventions, artistic works, and brand identities. These rights empower individuals or organizations with exclusive authority to use, produce, and commercialize their intellectual assets, ensuring recognition and economic benefits. Key forms of IPR include patents, which protect inventions for a specific period; trademarks, which secure brand identities like logos and names; and copyrights, which cover original creative works such as literature, music, and software. Other types include Geographical Indications⁽³⁾ (GI) for region-specific products like Darjeeling Tea, industrial designs for product aesthetics, and trade secrets for confidential business information. IPR plays a crucial role in fostering innovation by incentivizing research and development, driving economic growth, ensuring consumer protection, and enhancing global competitiveness. However, challenges such as limited awareness, high registration costs, and enforcement difficulties often hinder its effective utilization. A robust IPR framework, supported by education, streamlined processes, and strong enforcement mechanisms, is essential for maximizing its potential benefits.

2.1 INDIA'S IPR STATUS

India's position on intellectual property rights (IPR) has changed dramatically over the years, moving from a system that was largely protective to one that encourages innovation and conforms to international norms. This change is a reflection of India's increasing economic connection with the rest of the world and its understanding that intellectual property rights are essential to economic growth and competitiveness.

Comprehensive laws, such as the Patents Act of 1970, the Trademarks Act of 1999, the Copyright Act of 1957, and the Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act of 1999, regulate India's intellectual property rights system. In order to conform to international agreements, such as the World Trade Organization's (WTO) Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS), these laws have undergone periodic updates. Notable revisions include the National IPR Policy, which was established in 2016 with the goal of promoting innovation and enhancing IPR administration and enforcement, and the 2005 amendment to the Patents Act, which added product patents for pharmaceuticals and agriculture.

With an increasing number of patent applications and trademark registrations, India is a major force in worldwide innovation. Initiatives like Make in India and the Startup India Initiative highlight how crucial it is to safeguard intellectual property, especially for startups and small enterprises. In order to promote wider involvement in the IPR regime, the government has also lowered fees for startups and MSMEs and expedited the IP application procedure using online platforms.

Even with these developments, problems still exist. IPR enforcement is still problematic because of the serious risks posed by piracy and counterfeiting. Furthermore, there is a lack of public knowledge on IPR, especially among small firms and rural enterprises. India's IPR framework can be further improved by addressing these problems with more robust enforcement tools, extensive awareness efforts, and financial assistance. All things considered, India's intellectual property rights (IPR) system is developing steadily, strengthening its economy and making it a significant player in the world of intellectual property.



3. THE STATE OF MSMEs

- MSMEs contribute 33% to India's GDP, 40% to manufacturing value addition, and 35% to exports, highlighting their role as a cornerstone of the economy.
- The sector employs approximately 114 million people, constituting 80% of manufacturing jobs and significantly supporting rural employment.
- Over 11 million MSME units produce 8,000+ products, making India one of the largest MSME bases globally.
- Limited access to affordable credit, high collateral demands, and high-interest costs impede MSME growth.
- Inadequate investment in modern technology and lack of digital readiness hinder global competitiveness and innovation.
- Initiatives like "Make in India"⁽⁴⁾ cluster development, credit access programs, skill training, and procurement policies aim to strengthen MSME resilience and market presence.
- Addressing infrastructure gaps, enhancing IPR awareness, fostering innovation, and reducing regulatory burdens are critical for the sector's global competitiveness and sustainability.

4. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

- The ability of Micro, Small, and Medium-Sized Enterprises (MSMEs) to safeguard and market innovations is hampered by a notable lack of knowledge regarding Intellectual Property Rights (IPR). Their ability to compete in international markets is hampered by this disparity, particularly in light of the quickening pace of technical development and globalization.
- Modern technology and reasonable credit are hard to come by for MSMEs in India, which limits their ability to grow and compete. The difficulties are made worse by exorbitant fees, collateral needs, and antiquated procedures, which prevent them from satisfying the demands of a globalized market.
- The lack of awareness and utilization of Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) among MSMEs limits their ability to protect innovations and build sustainable brands. This challenge undermines their capacity to differentiate products and compete effectively in global markets.

5. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- Examine the role of MSMEs in India's GDP, employment, and export sectors to understand their significance in national economic growth.
- Identify and evaluate the major challenges faced by MSMEs, such as financial constraints, lack of technological adoption, and limited awareness of Intellectual Property Rights (IPR).
- Explore ways to enhance MSMEs' understanding and use of IPR to protect innovations, foster brand building⁽⁵⁾, and improve market competitiveness.
- Evaluate the impact of government policies and initiatives on the growth, sustainability, and global competitiveness of MSMEs.
- Recommend actionable strategies to address infrastructural gaps, enhance access to credit, promote digital adoption, and foster innovation within the MSME sector.

6. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study delves into the multifaceted role of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in driving India's economic development, focusing on their contributions to GDP, employment generation, and export performance. It examines the structural and operational challenges faced by MSMEs, including limited access to affordable finance, inadequate technological adoption, insufficient infrastructure, and a lack of awareness about Intellectual Property Rights (IPR). The study emphasizes the importance of leveraging IPR for innovation, brand building, and enhancing competitiveness in domestic and international markets. Additionally, it evaluates the impact of government initiatives and policy frameworks designed to support MSMEs in overcoming these challenges. By identifying areas for improvement and recommending targeted strategies, the study aims to provide insights that enable MSMEs to achieve long-term growth, sustainability, and successful integration into global value chains.

7. NEED FOR THIS STUDY

- MSMEs play a vital role in India's economy by making substantial contributions to GDP, employment, and exports. Maintaining and strengthening their contribution to economic growth requires an understanding of their potential and difficulties.



- Despite their importance, MSMEs face persistent issues such as limited access to finance, technology, and infrastructure. This study is needed to explore solutions and strategies to address these barriers effectively.
- Many MSMEs lack awareness of IPR and its potential to protect innovations and enhance market competitiveness. The study emphasizes the importance of IPR as a tool for growth and sustainability.

8. LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

- The study may rely on secondary data sources, which might not capture the nuanced challenges and strategies of MSMEs in managing intellectual property at the global level.
- The study could focus more on certain regions or industries, limiting the generalizability of findings across diverse international markets.
- Intellectual property laws and regulations evolve rapidly, and the study might not account for the latest amendments or variations across countries.
- Due to resource or time constraints, the study may not comprehensively cover all sectors of MSMEs or delve deeply into specific international case studies.

9. CONCEPT OF THE TITLE

A thorough analysis of how MSMEs deal with the challenges of managing intellectual property (IP) in the context of international business is reflected in the title. A crucial element of the research is conveyed by each of the title's major terms. The strategic procedures involved in developing, safeguarding, and utilizing intellectual property, including trade secrets, patents, trademarks, and copyrights, are referred to here. For MSMEs to protect their ideas and keep a competitive edge, especially in the global marketplace, effective intellectual property management is crucial. MSMEs are important forces behind employment, innovation, and economic progress. Since they frequently have little resources, effective IP management is both difficult and essential to protecting their intellectual property and luring in investments. Global marketplaces, multinational corporations, and cross-border trade⁽⁶⁾ are all part of the international business environment. As they compete with larger firms, MSMEs must deal with disparate IP rules, enforcement strategies, and cultural differences. The study explores the ways in which MSMEs handle their intellectual property in order to adjust to the demands of global marketplaces. It looks at how they deal with resource constraints, adhere to international IP rules, and use IP as a vehicle for innovation and growth in a cutthroat global environment. The relationship between intellectual property and MSMEs' worldwide growth is highlighted in this title, which also stresses the necessity of strategic IP strategies for international success.

10. FINDINGS

- Many MSMEs lack sufficient knowledge about the importance and processes of Intellectual Property Rights (IPR). This gap leads to underutilization of IP assets and makes them vulnerable to infringement, especially in international markets.
- Limited financial and human resources hinder MSMEs from effectively protecting and enforcing their intellectual property. High costs associated with IP registration and litigation further exacerbates these challenges.
- Navigating the differences in IP laws and enforcement mechanisms across countries remains a significant challenge for MSMEs. This complexity increases compliance costs and risks in international trade.
- Effective IP management allows MSMEs to enhance their competitiveness by protecting innovations, building strong brands, and establishing market differentiation in global arenas.
- Although various government programs exist to assist MSMEs in managing their IP, such as subsidies for registration or training initiatives, these resources are underutilized due to low awareness or bureaucratic hurdles.
- MSMEs that collaborate with research institutions or adopt digital tools⁽⁷⁾ for managing and marketing their IP show better outcomes in international markets. These practices enhance visibility, streamline IP processes, and facilitate access to broader consumer bases.

11. SUGGESTION

- Governments and industry associations should organize targeted workshops and training programs to educate MSMEs on the importance of intellectual property rights (IPR), the processes for obtaining protection, and their role in international markets.



- Introduce or expand subsidies, low-interest loans, and grants specifically aimed at helping MSMEs cover the costs associated with IP registration, renewal, and enforcement in both domestic and international markets.
- Governments should streamline IP registration processes by introducing simplified online portals, reducing bureaucratic hurdles, and offering multilingual support to assist MSMEs navigating international IP frameworks.
- Promote partnerships between MSMEs, research institutions, and industry bodies to foster innovation and share knowledge about IP management. Collaboration can also facilitate access to global markets through shared resources and strategies.
- Encourage MSMEs to adopt digital tools and platforms for managing intellectual property. These tools can simplify the monitoring of IP portfolios⁽⁸⁾, streamline enforcement, and provide better market insights for global expansion.
- Advocate for international cooperation to create robust enforcement mechanisms for protecting MSME intellectual property in global markets. This includes signing agreements with trade partners to ensure fair treatment of IP violations.

12. CONCLUSION

Effective intellectual property (IP) management is essential for MSMEs to protect their innovations, enhance competitiveness, and succeed in global markets. However, challenges such as limited resources, lack of awareness, and complexities in navigating international IP frameworks hinder their potential. Addressing these issues requires increased education, financial support, streamlined IP processes, and robust enforcement mechanisms. Encouraging collaboration, leveraging digital tools, and tailoring strategies to MSME needs can empower them to safeguard their intellectual assets and drive innovation. By fostering a supportive IP ecosystem, MSMEs can thrive in the global economy and contribute significantly to sustainable growth and economic development.

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