

Talent Management in Small and Medium Sized Companies: A Multilevel Approach Contextualized in France

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Abstract : The aim of this paper is to better understand talent and talent management (TM) in small French companies as well as in medium-sized ones (SME). While previous empirical investigations have largely focused on multinationals and big companies and concentrated on the Anglo-Saxon context, we focus on the pressing need for implementing TM strategies and practices, not only on a new ground of SME but also within a new European context related to France and the French context. This study also aims at understanding strategies adopted by those firms as means to attract, retain, maintain and to develop talents. We contribute to TM issues by adopting a multilevel approach, holding the goal of reaching a global holistic vision of interactions between various levels while applying TM, to make it more and more familiar to us. A qualitative research methodology based on a multiple-case study design, bottomed firstly on a qualitative survey and secondly on two in-depth case study, both built on interviews, will be used in order to develop an ideal analysis for TM strategies and practices. The findings will be based on data collected from more than 15 French SMEs. Our theoretical contributions are the fruit of context considerations and the dynamic of multilevel approach. Theoretically, we attempt first to clarify how talents and TM are seen and defined in French SMEs and consequently to enrich the literature on TM in SMEs out of the Anglo-Saxon context. Moreover, we seek to understand how SMEs manage jointly their talents and their TM strategies by setting up this contextualized pilot study. As well, we focus on the systematic TM model issue from French SMEs. Our prior managerial goal is to shed light on the need for TM to achieve a better management of these organizations by directing leaders to better identify the talented people whom they hold at all levels. In addition, our TM systematic model strengthens our analysis grid as recommendations for CEO and Human Resource Development (HRD) to make them rethink about the companies' HR business strategies. Therefore, our outputs present a multiple lever of action that should be taken into consideration while reviewing HR strategies and systems, as well as their impact beyond organizational boundaries.

Keywords : french context, multilevel approach, small and medium-sized enterprises, talent management

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