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Moving Beyond Unified Talent Management Implementation: Examining the Involvement of Line Managers in Talent Management Philosophies

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Abstract

Existing literature reveals a paucity of in-depth empirical research on the extent of line managers' (LMs') involvement across different talent management (TM) philosophies. Most previous studies have examined TM as a unified concept, overlooking the existence of five distinct philosophies that underpin its implementation. This study addresses this gap by investigating the extent of LMs' involvement in TM philosophies within a Malawian bank. An embedded single-case study design was adopted, drawing on 47 in-depth semi-structured interviews with multiple stakeholders, including LMs, Human Resources Department staff, senior management, the Staff Representative Council, supervisors, and officers. Documentary analysis complemented the interview data. The findings indicate that the Malawian Bank adopted a hybrid TM approach, combining an exclusive key-position philosophy with an inclusive self-initiated philosophy. Overall, LMs were moderately involved in both TM philosophies, suggesting no significant difference in the extent of their involvement across the two approaches. By examining LM involvement within individual TM philosophies in a hybrid TM context, particularly in an under-researched setting, this study provides empirical insights into TM literature and extends current understanding beyond the predominantly generic treatment of TM in previous research.

Keywords: Line Managers (LM), Talent Management (TM), Human Resource Management (HRM), Banking, Malawi