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REVIEWER'S REPORT

Manuscript No.: IJAR-55310

Title: LA GESTION DES TALENTS ET LA PERFORMANCE ORGANISATIONNELLE DES PME AU BENIN.

Recommendation:

Accept after minor revision.

	Rating	Excel.	Good	Fair	Poor
Originality		✓			
Techn. Quality		✓			
Clarity		✓			
Significance		✓			

Reviewer Name: Dr. Bishwajit Rout

Reviewer's Comment for Publication.

(To be published with the manuscript in the journal)

The reviewer is requested to provide a brief comment (3-4 lines) highlighting the significance, strengths, or key insights of the manuscript. This comment will be Displayed in the journal publication alongside with the reviewers name.

- Significance:** The study is significant because it extends talent management research to SMEs in Benin, a context rarely examined empirically. By highlighting how informal yet strategic talent practices influence multiple dimensions of organizational performance, the paper contributes valuable insights for scholars and policymakers concerned with SME sustainability, human capital development, and economic growth in sub-Saharan Africa.
- Strength:** The main strength of the paper lies in its rich qualitative data and strong contextual grounding. The integration of dynamic capabilities theory provides a relevant conceptual lens. The inclusion of multiple SME stakeholders enhances credibility, and the findings offer actionable managerial insights. The extensive literature coverage further demonstrates strong engagement with contemporary talent management and performance research.
- Key Insight:** The key insight of this research is that talent management, even when informal, functions as a strategic capability in SMEs. Practices related to skills development, motivation, and retention indirectly enhance performance by strengthening engagement, adaptability, and organizational resilience. The study demonstrates that contextualized, flexible talent practices can yield sustainable performance benefits despite resource constraints.

Reviewer's Comment / Report

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The paper titled “*LA GESTION DES TALENTS ET LA PERFORMANCE ORGANISATIONNELLE DES PME AU BENIN*” examines talent management practices and their impact on organizational performance in Beninese SMEs through a qualitative study involving 42 semi-structured interviews analyzed with NVivo. Grounded in dynamic capabilities theory, it finds that talent attraction, development, motivation, and retention enhance engagement, innovation, and adaptability, serving as key performance drivers. The research fills a literature gap on SMEs in developing contexts, offering practical recommendations for managers. Strengths include contextual relevance and robust methodology; limitations involve sample size and generalizability. A valuable contribution to HR in African SMEs.

Suggestions for Improvement:

1. Condense contextual background to improve focus and readability. Clearly articulate the research gap earlier in the section.
2. Explicitly link the Beninese context to broader talent management debates.
3. Present objectives as numbered and concise statements. Distinguish clearly between exploratory and explanatory objectives.
4. Synthesize studies instead of listing them sequentially. Clearly differentiate global, African, and Beninese literature.
5. Clarify criteria used to define SMEs in the study. Provide details on interview duration and example questions.
6. Explain steps taken to ensure reliability and validity (e.g., triangulation).
7. Justify the exclusive reliance on qualitative methods.
8. Reduce reliance on word frequency as primary evidence. Include richer verbatim excerpts to support interpretations.
9. Clearly differentiate findings from interpretation. Improve integration between tables, figures, and narrative.
10. Structure discussion around key findings rather than themes repetition.
11. Explicitly address how findings confirm or challenge prior studies.
12. Strengthen theoretical contribution beyond contextual confirmation.

This paper addresses an important and underexplored issue by examining the role of talent management in SME performance within a developing-country context. The qualitative approach and strong

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theoretical grounding are commendable. However, excessive length, descriptive bias, and limited analytical synthesis reduce academic sharpness. With improved structure, stronger theoretical integration, and clearer articulation of contributions, the paper has solid potential for publication in IJAR. A minor revision is recommended before publication. Addressing the identified weaknesses will make it suitable for publication in IJAR.

I recommend this paper for publication after minor revision.