Introduction

OBJECTIVE OF THE BOOK

The main aim of this book is to provide a channel of communication to disseminate HRM in SMEs knowledge between academics/researchers and managers. It serves as a useful reference for academics, researchers, managers, engineers, and other professionals in related matters with HRM in SME. Taking into account these concerns, this book looks to:

- Find out how SMEs around the world are tackling today’s employment challenges and changes.
- Critically evaluate alternative strategies for improving working conditions and develop effective relationships between employers and their employees in SMEs.
- Identify the effective organizational and HRM strategies in SMEs.
- Keep at the forefront of innovative theories and the latest research activity relating to HRM in SME.
- Participate in an international, interdisciplinary exchange of information, ideas, and opinions about SME.
- Examine best practice on HRM in SME.
- Share knowledge through debate and information exchange about the best HRM practices and politics in SME.
- Keep up to date with current developments and emerging trends about HRM in SMEs.

Considered an important tool, both to academics and practitioners, as it contributes to a more effective advance and tools of communication in what concerns the understanding of key issues related to HRM in SME, this book looks to identify HRM strategies, politics, and practices necessary to develop and implement SMEs, allowing these organizations to obtain more efficient and competitive management models.

The book is written and organized in order to help readers develop a coherent understanding about HRM in SMEs, as well as to provide readers with original and cutting-edge contributions in the HRM and SMEs subject, allowing them to learn and transfer this new acquired knowledge to new and different situations.

CONTRIBUTIONS

Following these main aims, the contributors look to explore the different processes, politics, practices, and strategies of how to manage human resources in small and medium enterprises in a global perspective in order to contribute to a better understanding, as well as to improve an effective HRM in this type of organization.
After this introductory chapter, the concerns about the antecedents and consequences of strategic HRM in SMEs are explored in chapter 1. Here, the authors, from a survey of SMEs in Malaysia and the Philippines, find that the adoption of a strategic HRM is at a moderate level.

Chapter 2 explores human capital in Malaysian SMEs. Given the critical importance that the human capital infrastructure SMEs assume, this chapter, based in a sample of Malaysian SMEs, offers insights into human capital uniqueness and human capital value in these firms.

Effective human resources management practices in SMEs is the subject that follows. Focusing on the MIST countries (Mexico, Indonesia, South Korea, and Turkey), the findings of this study suggest that HRM practices adopted both individually and as a cluster reflect the components of universalistic, contingency, resources bases, and institutional perspectives of the strategic HRM model. A model of HRM practices adopted by SMEs in the MIST economies is also presented.

In Chapter 4, the synergistic potential of HRM in SMEs is explored. Considering HR as a key synergistic element in SMEs strategic configuration, this chapter examines the characteristics of entrepreneur-founders, strategic orientation, and strategic configuration in a globalized world.

Considered a specified type of SMEs, family business is also a relevant topic of study in what concerns the HRM subject. This is what happens in chapters 5, 6, and 7. Focusing on HRM in family business, chapter 5 makes a review on the current state of research, at the same time it presents new proposals for the future.

Chapter 6 studies the HRM practices and problems in family-owned SMEs. It looks to analyze the current HRM practices in this kind of organization, as well as to identify the existent practices and problems.

The intergenerational transition in a small family business is addressed in chapter 7. In order to analyze the processual nature of intergenerational transition, the authors have implemented a study in a small Italian family business seen as an interesting example of three different intergenerational transitions taking place at different time periods.

The next chapter attempts to develop an analysis about the implications for SMEs resulting from the role of HR in conflict management. Looking to provide a conceptual basis on the role of HR practices in conflict management in SMEs, this chapter emphasizes the importance of managing human capital effectively in terms of managing conflicts.

Chapter 9 focuses on the role of occupational health and safety in SMEs. It aims to facilitate the development of an informative perspective about occupational health and safety management systems in these organizations by emphasizing the drivers, benefits, and barriers of SMEs that are trying to adopt that system.

The entrepreneur’s educational level and its impact on the employment creation by new SMEs is the subject of chapter 10. In order to study the effects of different types of start-up rates on subsequent employment change, the authors have used longitudinal data on start-ups and employment in different Portuguese regions in a period of 11 years.

Chapter 11 looks to place SMEs at the forefront of strategic HRM literature. Advancing the strategic HRM literature, the authors provide a better understanding of the common high performance work practices used by U.S. SMEs.

Questions related to HR recruitment are explored in chapter 12. Based in a case study of two selected cities in Tanzania, this chapter studies HRM practices in the recruitment process among the SMEs in a car maintenance sub sector.
Considering that there has been little boundary-spanning between HRM and location theories, in chapter 13, the authors seek to redress this in relation to the rise and decline of industrial districts of SMEs, as well as to draw implications for their potential regeneration.

Self-managing teams in SMEs is the focus of the next chapter. The authors propose self-managing teams as a good way to manage HR in SMEs, looking to explore how they can help to create organizational effectiveness and, consequently, competitive advantages in SMEs.

Chapter 15 deals with the decision-making process, taking some insights from business ethics and entrepreneurship. The author looks to provide a different perspective about the understanding of the decision-making process in SMEs through the development of a bridge between individual moral psychology and the entrepreneurial decision-making process.

In a world characterized by changes and high complexity and diversity, the questions related with innovation are a challenge to organizations, namely SMEs. Taking into account this reality, chapter 16 looks to give us a global perspective of the innovation strategies in SMEs. In other words, it looks to identify and analyze the innovation strategies and drivers of innovation in SMEs from a global perspective, and to understand the need for effective HRM to drive innovation.

Taking back the subject of entrepreneurship, chapter 17 evaluates the implications of SME entrepreneurship for enhanced HRM in hospital management.

Chapter 18 addresses its attention to the study of recruitment and selection in SMEs. It looks to understand the role of recruitment and selection on HRM at SMEs in Portugal, as well as be a contribution to a better knowledge of this area, still briefly studied in this country.

Giving a special focus to the future directions of the current internationalized services, the following chapter addresses its attention to the analysis of the SMEs internationalization process, with a special attention to the services that are provided, as well as the support given by private and public agencies to international SMEs.

Finally, the concluding chapter explores the relationship between the entrepreneurship and entrepreneur’s characteristics, as well as the factors that influence the entrepreneurial decision in a particular country, namely Turkey.

Giving a global perspective of effective HRM in SMEs, the chapters presented in this book are a very important tool and can be very useful for academics, researchers, managers, engineers, and other professionals that are involved in different matters related with HRM, with a special emphasis in SMEs, both in private and public sectors.

The professional and scientific interest in this book and subject is evident for many universities/schools in the world with courses (graduate and undergraduate) in HRM, Management, Business Management, International Business, Production Engineering, among others.