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Thinking the unthinkable: managerialization of work related suicides as a framing process

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Abstract.

Managerialism has been studied in many ways, including diffusion of management techniques notably in public sectors, management ideology or the colonization of everyday life by management thought. However, the process leading to managerialism, namely managerialization, has been largely unexplored in this literature. This article draws upon framing theory to better understand managerialization processes. The article offers two case studies that investigate following theoretical assumptions: (1) managerialization acts as a framing process on every kind of issue; (2) managerialization has framing process characteristics. Two frame analysis based on newspaper articles about work related suicide show that one of the identified frames has strong managerial characteristics and suggest that managerialization took place as a set of framing processes. Taken together, these studies provide insight to characterize the process of managerialization. Research implications and limitations are discussed in order to highlight directions for further researchs.

Key words. Managerialization, managerialism, frame analysis, framing processes, work related suicide

Managerial discourse has permeated our society. It promotes a rational way of making things in order to achieve efficiency and performance. For some authors, this specific discourse, named managerialism, recovers an obvious rationality necessary to improve organizations as well as individuals and societies, for the benefit of the greatest number. Managerialism is not confined as a technical discourse used in business schools or organizations. As an efficiency discourse, it is used in order to help people to deal with their time, their stress and other aspect of their life (e.g. Mc Dermott and Shircore, 1999). Other authors are more suspicious and challenge this assumption. They underline problematic effects of managerial discourse's diffusion into everyday life (e.g. Garsten and Grey, 1997; Grey, 2009; Hancock and Tyler, 2009a).

Previous works have studied managerialism as an ideology, a set of business-oriented techniques or a spreading way of representing and acting over every kind of issue and problems. If these studies help us to define what managerialism is and in what extent its effects should be critically interrogated, only few things are known about the process of managerialization. Several studies show us that management knowledge or practices diffusion is complex and not mechanistic. Indeed, some actors named senders – mainly U.S. experts of XXth century – are promoting management discourses and techniques to receivers who could adopt or adapt them. Receivers also can resist or reject them, depending on actor's ideologies, countries and historical periods. But these studies are generally based on the diffusion of specific management knowledge and practices into organizations. They focused on already managerialized issues in a small but important part of our societies. I still don't know so far how other kind of issue, such as time or personal conduct, are being managerialized before being diffused through society in a broader sens.

This paper's aim is to better explore this process in taking into account a broader meaning of management as a « *distinctive series of often extremely complex ways of effecting*

representations and conducting interventions. » (Grey, 2009:61). To achieve this, I propose to draw our inspiration from framing theory, and especially studies on collective action frame in social movement literature. These studies indeed look at the way social actors build and diffuse « *action oriented sets of beliefs and meanings that inspire and legitimate the activities* » of a movement in order to achieve specific goals (Benford and Snow 2000:614). In this direction, I propose to consider managerialization as the mobilization of management categories (a set of beliefs and meanings) in order to frame any kind of issues or problems for the benefit of specific social actors who could act accordingly to their interests. To do so, I review framing theory in order to build those propositions: (1) managerialization acts as a framing process on every kind of issue; (2) the managerialization process has framing process characteristics.

I realize two case studies to explore these two propositions. The first case study is build around the emergence of the suicides related to work issue. This case is chosen because of its novelty and non-managerial character. By using newspaper articles, I realize a frame analysis in order to explore whether frames used to think work related suicides has managerial characteristics. I find three frames built around the work related suicide issue. Whereas two frames are built in opposition – respectively “work related suffering” and “individual’s weakness” frames – the third one, namely the “psychosocial risks management” frame, has strong managerial characteristics. Indeed, it is imbued with managerial vocabulary and overall logic. The second case study pushes further my analysis. I explore the work related suicides in a single firm: France Telecom, which was a major concern of french newspapers since mid-2009. The “psychosocial risks management” frame is also identified in this case study. I analyze this managerialization process in order to highlight whether it is readable thanks to framing theoretical insights. I find strong empirical pieces of evidence that the

managerialization of work related suicides at France Telecom has framing processes characteristics.

This paper contributes to the debate about managerialism and managerialization in the following ways. First, my findings show that framing theory could provide valuable insights to think managerialism processes. In both case studies presented here, a single issue is framed in three main ways. It appears that one of these frames has strong managerialism characteristics. Secondly, the results show that managerialization has framing process characteristics. I could now offer a description of managerialization as a contested process, developed through several strategies in order to counteract other frames and grow on in debates.

This paper is structured as follows. I'll first provide a review of managerialism in organizational studies and the appropriateness to cross-fertilize these works with framing theory. Secondly, I'll discuss successively my two case studies and related method, findings and discussion. I'll conclude in a final section with limitations and directions for further researchs.

Managerialism in organizational studies

Organizational studies and scholars are referring to managerialism in many ways. I classify them in three main sets: (1) the development of new business practices and their diffusion, notably in the public sector; (2); the spreading ideology of management and (3) a critical view of managerial colonization of all kind of issues, not only in organizational context.

First of all, managerialism is used to design the promotion of managerial techniques such as TQM, business process re-engineering, empowerment and so on. One key idea that links all these studies is that management techniques are believed superior than others, especially in the public and administrative sector (Deem & Brehony, 2005; Osborne and Gaebler, 1992).

Then, managerialism could be defined by a « *privileging political and economic measures of success* » (Glow and Minahan, 2008:134) based on the adoption of « *organizational characteristics, such as organizational forms, technologies, management instruments and values that originate from the private sector organizations* » (Smeenk et al., 2009). Besides this “business-like management” pattern, I could add two characteristics: customer-orientedness and market competition ideal (Kickert, 1997). Studies explicitly or implicitly built around this definition are generally dealing with managerialism from a national or broader context (e.g. studies on the New Public Management reform) or from a single organizational or sectorial level (e.g. the influence or process of managerialization). These studies show that managerialism strikes all public sectors like education and university (e.g. Saravanamuthu and Tinker, 2002), health care services (Cribb, 2001), arts (e.g. Glow and Minahan, 2008), NGOs (e.g. Roberts et al., 2005), etc. Other studies follow a performance perspective and look at the efficacy of this managerialization (e.g. Smeenk et al., 2009). Other scholars are more skeptical and challenged the assumption that management is a universal model better than others. Indeed, this managerial lionization doesn’t take into account the different types of organizations, their activities, the craft importance, their specific goals and values conflicting with a strict economic view (e.g. NGOs or public policies), the cultural traditions and so on. In short, it ignores numerous factors that called for a large range of solution to govern organizations in complex environments (Glow and Minahan, 2008; Kickert, 1997). In doing so, on the contrary of its promise, the managerialization of all type of organizations leads to unappropriated governance solutions, that is softly called “managerialism contradiction” (Smeenk et al., 2006). However, this conception of managerialism is strongly dependant of occupational issues and specific management practices. The differences of level and the large range of these practices

fragilized the definition of what is managerialism. I will now turn on a second set of studies which allowed us to push further this conception of managerialism.

In the second set of studies, « *[t]he most obvious meaning would be to understand managerialism as an ideology that secures and legitimates the interests of managers as a social group.* » (Grey, 1996:601). This analysis is well developed in Anthony's works (1977). By this view, managerialism is a set of control tools to the benefits of managers. Managerialism is disguised in scientific language which produces unity of purpose and values. This allows the integration of organizational members and maintains the empowerment of managers over them. But this conception raises critics because several key terms of this concept are subject to intense debates. For example, are managers a single social group, an elite or a class with international and transcultural similarities, concerned with taking power over employees? This critic is overcome if I move from who manages to social construction of manageability (Grey, 1996:602). To that extent, it is well accepted that managerialism is « *the generalized ideology of management* » (Parker, 2002:10). This turns us to another set of studies.

Finally, managerialism could be seen « *in terms of the social consequences of a particular way of looking at the world which stresses, first, that the world is manageable and second that the world should be managed.* » (Grey, 1996:601-602). More precisely, it implies « *the almost direct transference of the imperatives, logic and values associated with managerial expertise [...] into cultural resources* » associated with every aspect of our occupational and mundane life (Hancock, 2009:11-12). This analysis takes place in a long range of studies following Weber's initial works about world rationalization (1968). The operator of this rationalization, management, is qualified as a dominant expertise that pervades into society, producing oppressive effects. Hidden under apparent neutrality, management is a form of control over labor and social relationships. Authors challenge this lionization of management

as the solution to all economic, social and self-oriented problems. Management is becoming a problem (Parker, 2002). In this approach, management is clearly criticized for its pretentiousness to be the only « *one [response] that is directed at resolving the implacable contradictions of what is, in effect, an irrational mode of subjective existence (mass mediated, time pressured, performative and so on).* » (Hancock and Tyler, 2004:631). This approach goes further than previous ones because it doesn't address only managerial techniques or their diffusion in specific public sector, nor that it seeks to find who the “master of puppets” is. It embraces management itself and its colonization of every kind of topics. Critics of managerialism are focusing more on management's diffusion as the only way to do things than on management itself (e.g. Costea et al., 2008; Deetz, 1992; Grey, 1996; 2009; Hancock, 2009; Parker, 2002). Everything, every human and natural domain seems to fall under the realm of management. Critics underline the effects of this process. Under a performative imperative, reduced to a calculable individual, people follow a strict rationality that strongly reduces the possibilities of human existence (Grey, 2009). This managerialism doesn't concern just the workplace (Hancock and Tyler, 2004). For example, there is a managerialization of everyday life which concerns sexuality, health, sleep, domestic issues, retirement and so forth through managerial gurus, “how to” books, self-help coaches or lifestyle magazines (Cullen, 2009; Hancock and Tyler, 2009a). Furthermore, managerialization embraces the self and subjectivity. Our inner thoughts and actions become subject to managerialism, « *leaving little room for an 'authentic', irrational or simply 'unmanaged' experience of everyday life in which we have the opportunity to feel that we can just be, or rather become, ourselves.* » (Hancock and Tyler, 2004:640). In and out our day-to-day working life, managerialism produces a normative set of principles that requires self-work to improve ourselves, relying on the “therapeutic habitus” of our time (Costea et al., 2008). This knowledge of the self is instrumentally used to enhance individual performance –

and finally, it is hoped, the organizational one – leading to the production of a type of conduct close to a “corporates athletic” style (Kelly et al., 2007). That is to say that managerialism is a way of increasing control for private and limited interests, notably corporations, whatever inequalities result. However – and fortunately – managerialization is not a totalizing process, « *such managerial incursions into everyday life are uncertain, contradictory and sometimes even incoherent* » (Hancock and Tyler, 2009b:xii). Resistance and subversion are still possible inside (e.g. Fleming and Spicer, 2007) and outside the workplace (e.g. Thanem and Linstead, 2007).

To sum up, managerialism is a key word used to speak about the process of the diffusion of management categories in order to think about and control all aspect of life and world and to denounce oppressive effects resulting from this process. However, we know little about managerialization as a process. Few elements could be found in previous studies. Some case studies of the managerialization of single firms over time tell us that this process is a complex dynamic, depending on elite actors and their interactions, both inside and outside organizations (e.g. State institutions), their ideological and professional underpinnings, the national business system, etc. (McLean et al, 2007; Mueller and Carter, 2007). Managers, consultants and academics are also implicated in this process, trapped in « *an unholy (but well-compensated) trinity of self-interest and back-slaping* » (Parker, 2002:2). Management has also been studied at a major scale as the growing power, during the XXth century, of new professional experts coming originally from U.S. and their models and discourses in shaping social relations and action (Frenkel, 2008). Their results are valuable. Indeed, these studies identify how senders, receivers and carrying organizations are interacting in the diffusion of management knowledge or practices. The diffusion process is not mechanistic. Receivers – individuals, groups or organizations – could adopt, adapt or resist and reject them. Moreover, these reactions depend on specific cultural context such as the role of State or elites

ideologies in this diffusion and reception process (Kipping et al., 2008; McLean et al., 2007; Üsdiken 2004). But these approaches are generally focused only on the diffusion of existing knowledge processes or particular managerial practices. Moreover, they concern specific contexts such as organisational or scholarly actor's reactions to these diffusion processes. Up to now, we are not able to embrace a broader view of managerialization, i.e. how an issue is previously being thought with managerial patterns, and how this managerialized issue is diffused into broader society. What is in play here is twofold: avoiding the totalizing temptation of seeing managerialism everywhere and also exploring the protean character of managerialism, trying to catch under the heterogeneity of meanings and levels of analysis – even its contradictions – of some common patterns. In order to contribute to answer this gap, I propose to look at alternative bodies of work. Indeed, it could help us to draw general characteristics of managerialism viewed as a process.

According to Grey, « *management consists of a distinctive series of often extremely complex ways of effecting representations and conducting interventions.* » (2009:61). So managerialization provides us some ways of knowing the world, but also connected specifics manners of influencing it. This assumption gives us a key characteristic about managerialization: ways of thinking. It is also close to the concept of framing that have been extensively studied as a process. Indeed, studies on framing look at the various ways used by social actors to construct and diffuse « *action oriented sets of beliefs and meanings that inspire and legitimate the activities* » of a movement in order to achieve specific goals (Benford and Snow 2000:614). Such a frame only exists in the relationship with a specific issue or event around which framing processes take place (Entman, 2004). Due to this nearness, could framing studies provide us valuable insights to think about managerialization? For the purpose of exploring this possibility, I will now present the

framing literature. Then I will draw upon it in order to think about managerialization in a cross-pollination perspective.

When framing theory meets managerialization...

First of all, I will present the framing literature before bridging it with managerialism.

Basics of framing theory

The concept of framing is heterogeneous. It is used in several fields (management, sociology, cognitive psychology, political science, etc.) and is referring to multiple analysis methods and objects (linguistic and discourse analysis, social movements, media impact, etc.). In this section, I focus on *cognitive frames*, that is « *knowledge structure (frames as cognitive representations)* » (Dewulf et al., 2009:156) and especially cognitive issue frames, i.e. « *heuristics that people use to interpret a situation* » (Dewulf et al., 2009:167). Individuals give sense to their day-to-day reality through those frames. Rituals, conventions, speeches, etc. are all social experiments in which frames are created and shared to give direction and guide action (Creed et al., 2002a). Following Goffman, those frames are “schemata of interpretation” (1974).

Collective action frames. One of the main approaches of framing is “collective action frames” where scholars seek to identify the shared meaning negotiated collectively, mainly by social movements, in order to trigger action (Benford and Snow, 2000). Their function is to mobilize the potential of adherents and to ensure homogeneous collective actions, but also to recruit new adherents and to counteract opponents. These frames are built from diverse elements, ideas and symbols, assembled in a coherent way through a discursive process. However, this organization is not clearly visible. This is mostly composed of underlying principles taken for granted by movement adherents. The ultimate aim of the diffusion of these collective action frames is to influence other people. According to Hunt et al. (1994), there

are three categories of people in front of a frame: (1) the protagonists or proponents, which find the frame appealing; (2) the antagonists or opponents, opposed to the frame and its related actions; and (3) an audience of hesitant people which could possibly become protagonists or antagonists. What is at stake here is this audience. Several framing processes set up in order to shape values and beliefs of this audience have been identified.

Framing processes. Numerous works are dealing with framing processes. It is difficult to classify and structure all the processes identified because they differ in level, scope or goals. In order to present them, I will follow Benford and Snow's review (2000): first I will have a look at the generation and development processes in order to answer the question: where are frames coming from and how are they growing? Secondly, I will have a deeper exam of diffusion processes in order to understand how frames are getting in touch with people and are spreading into society.

In their review of framing processes and dynamics, Snow and Benford (2000) have identified a first set of processes concerning frame initiation and development: (1) discursive processes; (2) strategic processes or frame alignment processes; and (3) contested processes. First, « *[d]iscursive processes refer to the talk and conversations – the speech acts – and written communications of movement members that occur primarily in the context of, or in relation to, movement activities.* » (Benford and Snow, 2000:623) Basically, at this level, components of the frame are selected and assembled. Snow and Benford found very little research on these processes.

Secondly, many empirical works have been done regarding a second range of processes labelled as “strategic”, i.e. « *deliberative, utilitarian, and goal directed* » (Benford and Snow, 2000:624). Snow et al. (1986) have identified four basic alignment processes in these strategic attempts: frame bridging; frame amplification; frame extension; and frame transformation (see table no 1 for main characteristics).

Frame alignment processes	Main characteristics
- Frame bridging	Linking two or more structured frames around a particular issue; frames need to be reconciliable Benefits: recruitment of new members which are ideologically close to the group but not primarily concerned about the issue targeted; allows a group to get in connection with others that are not primarily concerned about the issue targeted but are “frame reconciliable” (e.g. Gerhards and Rucht, 1992; McMallion and Maines, 1999) Considered as the most prevalent framing strategy (Benford and Snow, 2000)
- Frame amplification	Highlighting values and beliefs of the frame which are found in dominant culture’s values and beliefs Benefits: reach a more justifiable and credible position when values and beliefs underlying the frame are consistent with common wisdom (e.g. Berbrier, 1998)
- Frame extension	Extending the range of issues or problems targeted in a group or social movement Benefits: recruitment of new members sensitive to new issues targeted Several empirical studies suggest that this extension is the product of a discursive process that could potentially fragilize the homogeneity and solidity of groups or social movements concerned (Benford and Snow, 2000)
- Frame transformation	Changing radically the underlying meanings of the frame in order to replace them by new ones more attractive Benefits: reach a more attractive position; move from accepted beliefs to new image of a movement or an issue (e.g. White, 1999)

Table 1: Main characteristics of strategic framing processes (adapted from Benford and Snow, 2000; Snow et al., 1986)

Thirdly, beyond these strategies brought to achieve goals of the frame and its proponents, a large body of empirical work shows that frames are the product of contested processes. It means that the relative homogeneity of a frame is never imposed by leaders of a group or a social movement. The frame is a collective construction achieved by contestation. The contestation could occur because of counterframing attacks from frame opponents (Benford, 1987) but also because of internal disputes into the frame (Benford, 1993). Finally, this contested process is also mentioned to qualify the abductive fit that occurs between a frame and its product, i.e. collective action (e.g. Ellingson, 1995).

A second set of processes identified by Benford and Snow (2000) concerns frame diffusion. To date, few studies have explored this topic. The diffusion of a frame refers to the

dissemination of it in other movements or cultural environments, which raises a question of compatibility. Two ideal types of diffusion could be distinguished (Snow and Benford, 1999): strategic selection (an active adopter intentionally selects a frame and *imports* it into his/her own cultural environment) and strategic fitting (an active adopter will intentionally selects a frame and *adapts* it into his/her own cultural environment). In both cases the diffusion processes described imply active agents and a strategic intent. There is another kind of diffusion, more passive, through which people get into connection with frames through mass media. This kind of diffusion is more addressed in studies about the effects of framing on public opinion.

Framing effects. The diffusion of frames through mass media has an impact on the public opinion. This “framing effect” is « *the process by which people develop a particular conceptualization of an issue or reorient their thinking about an issue.* » (Chong and Druckman, 2007:104). First of all a frame only exists in relation to a specific issue or event (Entman, 2004). Once it is diffused through mass media, its influence is dependent on multiple variables: strength, relevance and repetition of a frame, but also its cultural compatibility (i.e. a frame is easier accepted if it respects general moral principles). The strongest and most pervasive the frame is, higher the framing effects are.

It also depends on the other available frames. A frame is indeed never alone, several frames are competing around a single issue (Sniderman and Theriault, 2004). However « *little is known about the dynamics of framing in competitive contexts* » (Chong and Druckman, 2007:113). It seems that individuals are sensitive to frames that are congruent to their deep values (Benford and Snow, 2000) but they also can be convinced by opposed frames if their argumentation is more consistent, i.e. by the strength of the frame (Chong and Druckman, 2007).

Drawing upon framing theory to think about managerialization as a process

If managerialization acts as a frame, the process would have the following characteristics: around any kind of issue or problem, a specific way of thinking – its causes, solutions, etc. – appears following a discursive and contested process. This is the creation of the frame. Different elements, ideas and symbols picked from managerial thoughts, are assembled in a coherent way and shape a frame. The aim is to act on the identified issue or problem to solve it. This process is not blind or made by chance. There are people for and against it. Once the frame is built, proponents seek to give it some strength in order to achieve their goals. That is to say that several kinds of strategy of frame alignment could be implemented (frame bridging, frame amplification, frame extension and/or frame transformation). Then the frame is disseminated to an audience by adopters who select, import and/or adapt the frame to their cultural environment or through mass media. In this last case, proponents would try to enhance the frame's strength, repetition and overall cultural compatibility.

In order to explore whether these propositions are valid, I propose to build two case studies. The first one will help us to answer an important question: is managerialization really readable as a framing process? That is indeed a valuable insight if we want to continue to compare the managerialization process characteristics with framing theory. The second one will help us to make this comparison. I will now detail successively these two case studies.

Thinking the unthinkable: framing the work related to suicide issue

Case overview

The choice of an extreme issue as a telltale analytical standpoint. I choose a single issue in order to underline how social groups produce frames: the “work related to suicide” issue. If suicide is studied since Durkheim's original book which shows that it is a social issue and not

only a private and isolated one (1897), work related suicide is a new social issue for most westerner countries. Initially those events were confined to few occupations, as farmers facing debts, prison guards or policemen. However, since the end of the 90s, the range of hit professions is growing (Bègue and Dejours, 2009). The novelty of this issue is an advantage for this study: thanks to its relative virginity, few people have ever thought about it. It opens the door for a frame analysis which is not contaminated by a specific historical or ideological ground. For instance this issue has not really been exposed to managerialism.

Moreover it is an extreme analytical lens. This extreme choice is relevant for my study because these events are concrete. Social actors are facing a precise problem and have to say something about it. By doing so, we avoid some difficulties linked to the polysemia of other wider issues. Furthermore, as research object, the extreme character of these events allows us to see easily frames and actors behind them. It acts as a trigger. The death of a person, especially when (s)he committed suicide, raises indeed lots of questions. There is a debate about the form's responsibility and the influence of working conditions in this act. On this kind of issue, people will produce clear discourses, easier to identify – as well as actors which produce these discourses. Finally, facing this kind of violent and irrational event, people are looking for answers and sensemaking. Discourses about these issues are highly emotional and symbolic. There are generally highly controlled before being diffused to the public opinion. It raises its interest for the study of framing strategies. Before detailing my data analysis and collection method, here is an overview of this case which takes place in France.

Case overview: the work related suicide genesis (2006-2008). In February 2007, several newspapers have reported three suicides committed in the same workplace since two year: the Renault' research site. Between October 20, 2006 and March 13, 2008, five suicides hit this automobile manufacturer. They are extensively reported in media. Missing persons have committed suicide in the workplace, for example by jumping from a building, or at home –

with a letter underlying work difficulties. Some trade unions of the firm have blamed bad working conditions and asked their top managers to react. In the same time, 600 to 800 employees have demonstrated in memory of their co-workers. The CEO of the company, Carlos Ghosn, has developed actions at the national level in order to help the distressed persons. 350 persons were hired, notably 95 “closeness managers”.

On July 16, 2007, 55 years old worker hang himself in the factory of another french automobile manufacturer: PSA Peugeot-Citroën. It was the 6th suicides that occur in this firm since the beginning of the year. The company has decided to realize stress audits in 3 of its plants in order to better understand and assess stress factors, and to set up a psychological helpline. The CEO of the company, Christian Streiff, rebelled against the amalgam which is made to say that work kills.

Several cases have been reported during the same period in other firms: EDF, La Poste, AREVA, Sodexo, Ed, IBM France, France Telecom, HSCB, BNP Paribas, etc. No business is immune. These events had a great echo in public opinion. Lots of reportage had been undertaken in newspapers and television. This has a great bulk of effects: french national insurance system has classified several suicides as occupational injuries; furthermore, the french Minister of Labor has told himself concerned about these event. He asked national trade unions to discuss the translation of a European agreement on workplace stress. They did it on July 2, 2008. All those events had created a special sensitivity about occupational mental health issues, especially on workplace suicide, but more generally on stress, harassment and quality of workplace life.

Data collection

I have used newspaper articles as data. Frame analyses are commonly using these data sources (Chong and Druckman, 2007). The macro level of analysis is relevant to observe the

constitution of a plurality of frames. Indeed, through mass media, lots of different kind of people and opinions are provided.

I have collected articles from four main french newspapers: Le Monde, Les Echos, Libération and Le Figaro. They cover a large range of political opinion, from left to right wing. By using the Dow Jones Factiva database, I have looked for articles published between February 1st, 2007 (first mention of work related suicide) and April 31, 2008. That last date was stopped from this point because of a good semantic saturation. I used key words (suicide; workplace suicide; work related suicide¹) and have read all the articles in a systematic way in order to select relevant articles. Some articles were excluded because they were dealing with other topics (e.g. articles on suicide bombing attacks). The frame analysis detailed below was conducted on the base of 71 newspaper articles².

Data analysis

I have conducted a classical frame analysis following Creed et al. principles for organizational research (2002a; 2002b). According to them, frame analysis « *is a technique for approaching a text by attending to its diverse idea elements with the following question: What holds these elements together?* » (Creed et al., 2002a:37). I have used their “signature matrix” based on previous works of framing scholars (e.g. Gamson and Lasch, Snow and Benford, etc.). This signature matrix, presented in table no 2, « *enables analysts to enables the analyst to (1) sort the idea elements so that connections among them can be discerned, (2) identify and distinguish among the different unifying structures or frames that hold them together, and (3) discover how diverse idea elements are deployed in integrated ways.* » (Creed et al., 2002b:482).

Signature matrix categories
1. Examples of idea elements: symbols, images, Illustrations, catchphrases, etc.
2. Problem definition
3. Problem elaboration: diagnosis, prognosis, and motivation
4. Inferred master frame(s)
5. Cultural building blocks: schemas. systems of meaning
6. Proponents
7. Opponents
8. Audience targeted
9. Frame amplification

Table no 2: signature matrix (from Creed et al., 2002b:483)

Each categories of the matrix were completed in an abductive way. It is noteworthy that newspaper articles are made of elements coming from several potential frames. My first task was to seek for adapted patterns to separate them. So I began by looking at few matrix categories – problem definitions and problem elaborations – in order to produce a first set of coherent discursive elements. These potential frames are built thanks to a first complete reading of the documents collected. Having done this, I continued the analysis by exploring the other categories for each temporary frame through a second complete reading. This operation led us to regroup some frames into one because of their proximity. At the end, I kept only three significant frames and named them according to their underlying logic. These three frames are detailed below in order to answer my research questions.

Findings

I found three frames in newspaper articles. I named them according to their main characteristics: “work related suffering”, “individual’s weakness” and “psychosocial risks management” (see table no 3).

Frames	Work related suffering	Individual's weakness	Psychosocial risks management
Examples of idea elements	« Suicides are the end of a process of disintegration of the social framework that shapes the occupational world. A work organization may not be reducible to a division and an allocation of tasks, cold and rational, assessable at all times. » (Christophe Dejours, Le Monde July 22, 2007)	« I am against the amalgam which is made to say that “work kills” I think it makes no sense. It is a lack of humility before a fact that nobody understands. The challenge is to identify people who are weak, who are in difficulty, a very difficult task to which we are not prepared » (HRM, Les Echos July 12, 2007)	The CEO of Renault, Carlos Ghosn, wants his managers to take seriously the suicides of three employees. “They must be analysed seriously and into detail in order to reach concrete actions” » (Le Figaro, March 3, 2007)
Problem definition	Committing suicide into the workplace is a message. It indicates working conditions and work pressure coming from new managerial ways of organizing which dissolve collective links between workers.	A suicide is a complex individual act which is inexplicable. It is an individual choice, mostly committed by weak persons. It is impossible to identify occupational causes.	Work related suicides are not new but are complex phenomenon. It could be linked to working conditions through psychosocial risks but it is not automatic.
Problem elaboration	Causes: new managerial modes which produce immoderate engagement of employees due to higher pressure and the disappearance of links between employee that decrease informal regulation and brother/sisterhood Solutions: renovate space of speech to express one's difficulties and be heard and to discuss about work discrepancies and solve them	Causes: individual weakness and private difficulties in a difficult global economical context Solutions: detect weak people and give them medical and psychological support; provide psychological helplines for employees; alert managers and remove their guilt feeling; support coworkers	Causes: work eventually exposes employees to psychosocial hazards (high workload, lack of autonomy, verbal or physical abuse, harassment, etc.); acknowledgement of a complex set of occupational and personal (even private) factors Solutions: managing psychosocial risks in a collective and multidisciplinary way (risk assessment, definition and implementation of adequate policy)
Inferred master frame(s)	Primacy of humankind in front of economics; democratic principles (judging responsables)	Economic rationality	Occupational risks management (psychosocial risks); faith into science and official advices
Cultural building blocks	Work provokes pain; suicide has social causes; occupational health is underestimated; dead persons are victims	Suicide has individual and psychological causes; private life and its difficulties is always at stake	Work has a central place into health construction process; suicides could be, or not, extreme consequences of complex causes including bad working conditions
Proponents	Some trade unions and occupational physicians	Employer's trade union, top managers of firms hit by a suicide	Top management, official health and safety agencies, consultants
Opponents	People supporting new managerial modes of organization (suspected to create unbearable inconsistencies and huge workload upon isolated employees)	People who criticize new modes of management and who denounce that work could trigger suicides	?
Audience targeted	Public opinion, occupational physicians, trade unions	Public opinion	Public opinion, CEO, Executive committee, human resource managers, managers, health and safety executives, trade unions, occupational physicians, etc.
Frame amplification	Injustice frame: dead people are victims of the global economic system and especially of new managerial ways of organizing in order to increase performance	Pragmatic position: some persons are weak and must be detected and follow a medical treatment; moreover, we must calm down and respect family and coworkers's pain	Neutrality and federate all actors: no one is responsible, everybody should contribute to avoid further tragedies; managerial treatment: work carry risks that we must assess and reduce through actions

Table n°3: framing the workplace suicides issue

The first frame identified is the “work related suffering” one. It sustain the idea that a workplace suicide is showing working conditions. It is a message send by the dead person. « *Experts are unanimous: to commit suicide on one’s workplace is not an insignificant choice and is of special significance* »³ (a journalist, Le Monde, February 2, 2007). There is no automatic melting between suicide and work but a strong interrogation around work influence. As an expert puts it: « *Suicides are the end of a process of disintegration of the social framework that shapes the occupational world. A work organization may not be reducible to a division and an allocation of tasks, cold and rational, assessable at all times.* » (Christophe Dejours, Le Monde July 22, 2007). The disappearance of collective dimension of work is seen as the result of work relations individualization and the development of competition between employees (changes set up in order to increase productivity). Solutions proposed are recreating social links and legal constaints upon firms so that they increase efforts toward better working conditions.

The second frame identified, “individual’s weakness”, is the reversal of the first one. Indeed, suicides are thought as complex individual acts of weak persons. It is a victim blaming frame. The underlying idea is that bad working conditions do not kill. Even if these conditions have an influence, it is too difficult to categorically establish it. Moreover, these persons are generally facing strong private difficulties (divorce, death of a close, etc.). As a top manager puts it: « *the link between suicide and working conditions in the nuclear power plant can not be categorically established. Every suicide is a personnal choice. [Our firm] is not able to tell what elements can trigger such a gesture.* » (Libération, March 6, 2007). If the major cause is individual weakness, the solution is to detect those employees thanks to physicians and psychological helplines. Apart from this measure, there is no real solution inside the workplace. Indeed, « *If we had global economic conditions more favorable, I also think that it would derease the work pressure. [...] If employees commit suicide, it is mostly the fault of*

“*global economic conditions*” » (Laurence Parisot, President of employer’s trade union, Le Monde, March 22, 2008).

Whereas these two frames are built against each other, the last frame identified called “psychosocial risks management” is more consensual. Working conditions could have an influence on mental health through psychosocial risks. Workplace suicide could be one of the extreme consequences of these risks – scientific studies sustain this proposition – or be totally extraneous. No one is shown as responsible: « *Everyone has a responsibility: it is neither to deny nor to exploit the link with the work* » (ANACT, 2007). Solutions aim to avoid new dramas. They are always presented as the fruit of a collective multidisciplinary reflection, notably with trade unions: (1) just after such an event, support coworkers and prevent contagion effects (psychological helpline and strong internal communication); (2) in a preventive way, achieving a collective approach of psychosocial risks through risk assessment and policy definition and implementation; (3) in a continuous way, follow warning indicators. Proponents are generally top managers as human resource managers, consultants and health and safety experts (for France: INRS and ANACT, similar to UK’s HSE or US’s NIOSH). It is difficult to identify opponents because all previous actors are integrated in this frame into the multidisciplinary move. The frame amplification strategy used here is neutrality and the will to engage all actors around a common goal: avoid further tragedies. Skirting the issue of responsibility and basing its claim on scientific studies and official agencies, this frame aims to bring together those who wish to act. This is a pragmatic position: the work entails risks that must be removed or reduced collectively in a consensual manner.

Is managerialization thinkable as a framing process? Having said this, I can now go back to my research question: is managerialization really readable as a framing process? To answer

this question, I will consider successively whether this frame is infused with (1) managerial markers and (2) managerial logic.

First of all, we must wonder if this frame presents markers of managerial categories (i.e. performance imperatives, the will to control, instrumental rationality, managerial buzzwords, etc.). Conversely to the others, this frame is full of managerial markers. For example, “policy” or “plan of action”, “inquiries”, “assessment” or “survey” are repeated several times; “management” itself is profusely used, as well as “recruitment”, “human resource management”, “observatory”, “concrete measures”, “sustainable devices”, setting up “new actions” or “new measures”, “deep reflection”, “meetings”, etc. This is not surprising because of the status of proponents – people who are interviewed into newspapers: mainly top managers and consultants. However, this is not only words. Indeed, a real effect is to frame the problem causes and solutions into managerial terms. For example, causes found by organisms in charge of inquiries are linked to specific managerial tasks and not to overall news modes of management (as in the frame named “work related suffering”) or to individual weakness (as in the second frame). Results of two different surveys show it well: « *The firm Technologia, author of the report, said that the situations of tension are “strongly linked to the lack of recognition”. This was partly due to “a lack of support in difficult situations”, but also “to limited promotion prospects”.* » (Le Monde, October 21, 2007); « *This study demonstrates that numerous stressors resulting primarily from the work organization. Among the main causes of anxiety, the 3,200 employees surveyed by Stimulus highlight “the rigid procedures and closely monitored”, “lack of time”, “the need to constantly adapt” or “lack of recognition” of their work.* » (Les Echos, march 18, 2008). Accordingly, solutions are found in managerial adjustments: recruitments, HRM developments, etc. But I don’t find here the managerial adjustments called for in other frames. For example: « *At Renault, “a team’s support plan” has been established. 350 new hires have been promised in order to*

divide the workload, 311 were carried out to date. Social workers were recruited, a specific HRM was dedicated at the Technocentre in June 2007, and a “stress observatory” introduced. [...] The workday opening hours have also been restricted to avoid overruns » (Les Echos, march 13, 2008); « EDF's top management has announced several measures: creation of a quality of work life observatory, setting up a hotline for employees, and simplify administrative procedures to lighten the workload. » (Les Echos, march 18, 2008). However, the intensive attendance of managerial words is not sufficient in order to prove the managerialist nature of the frame. I have now to find whether this frame is infused with a real managerial logic of control over work related suicides.

This managerial logic could be resumed as:

a fundamentally ideological discourse [...] that directs individual decision-making and socially embedded practices towards an overriding prioritization of instrumentally orientated action, combined with an almost heroic valorization of individual entrepreneurialism, both of which are presented as a universalistic panacea in the face of the uncertainties of everyday life. Moreover, it is one that frequently evokes the language and symbolism of an idealized version of management practice – particularly the values of quantification, strategic planning and the marketing function – combined with a justificatory appeal to the efficiencies of the free market economy. (Hancock, 2009:7).

This general logic is found in the frame. Indeed, in these explicit quotes, we could see a will to take control over the issue thanks to classical managerial style: « *The group will begin today a survey on work related stress with 3,000 employees [...]. The survey will close on December 20 and its findings will be made at the end of the first quarter of 2008 to determine a “plan of action”.* » (Les Echos, November 19, 2007); « *In addition, PSA has appealed to the specialized consulting firm Stimulus, which is leading a study whose findings will be*

delivered at the end of the first quarter. Focusing on a representative sample of 10% of the three sites in Mulhouse, Sochaux and Velizy (30,000 employees in 130,000 in France), it aims to identify stressors, to evaluate their level, to identify categories of employees most at risk, then, to determine areas of reflection and action. » (Le Figaro, April 7, 2008). In those two quotes, the approach is the same: (1) a quantification thanks to risk assessment upon a representative sample of employees, generally entrusted to expert consulting firms; then (2) definition and implementation of an adequate policy in order to master stress factors; (3) the overall approach requires a strict strategic planning.

However, this frame is not completely managerial. Indeed, I do not find performance imperatives in newspaper articles. Furthermore, I do not find references to the market economy. This is most likely due to the issue: an internal issue (limited to organizational context that exclude competition references) infused with a high tragical burden (performance references could be quite odd there).

To conclude, several pieces of evidence show us that this frame is a managerial one. Managerial markers and logic are deeply underlying top managers and consultant discourses about workplace suicides. However, this frame seems to be still in his elaboration stage. Remind us that work related suicides is a new issue, infused tragically and that discourses were produced under media pressure. The incomplete character of managerialization is probably mostly due to this specific context. Now that I have established that managerialization could be seen as a framing process, I am able to go further and try to identify this process characteristics. This is the aim of a second case study.

The France Telecom affair: a multiframe processual analysis

Case overview

A single firm in the middle of the storm (2009-2010). After the first mass media wave about work related suicides, newspapers have calmed down on this topic. But in summer 2009, several articles have reported a new case: 18 suicides and 10 aborted attempts in a single firm, a 26,65% State owned firm, France Telecom, a leading telecommunications operators worldwide. During almost one year, I have witnessed the constitution of an “affair”, the France Telecom affair, which has a superior degree of importance due to its consequences.

Between January 2008 and December 2009, 32 suicides have been counted. I report eight more since January 2010. Just after the beginning of this affair, a press conference has been organized by the Minister of Labour and the former CEO of the company, Didier Lombard, on September 15, 2009. D. Lombard has also been heard by french senators on September 29 and has met the Minister of Economics on October 1st. During this period, both left and right wing parties took a stand on this issue. The left wing, the opposition party, claimed for the resignation of the CEO meanwhile the right wing party and the government supported him.

Under pressure, the CEO announced several measures: the recruitment of 10% occupational physicians more, the recruitment of 100 “closeness human resources managers” and a huge inquiry about the uneasiness of employees. The inquiry was undertaken by Technologia, a consulting firm chosen by trade unions. 80 088 questionnaires have been answered by the 102 000 employees of the firm. The CEO also decided to temporarily stop a reorganization program called “time to move”. The firm was engaged in a vast restructuration on the french soil: since 2005, 22 000 persons have left the firm and 40 sites have been closed. These changes had created a pressure on employees who had to move to another workplace and, sometime, their job and occupation inside the company. The “time to move” program, key action of this reorganization, was the target of several critics from trade unions or analysts in newspapers' columns. On October 5, the executive manager Pierre-Louis Wenes, considered

by trade unions as the responsible of the reorganization, decided to leave the group. He was replaced by Stéphane Richard who became the new CEO six months later.

Concerning legal implications, the french national insurance system has classified several suicides as occupational injuries. The french labour inspectorate administration (Inspection du Travail) made a report mentioning that some management practices had produced harassment situations and endangerment of employees. Finally, for the first time in this situation, the french court has decided to file a lawsuit for “unvoluntary homicide” against France Telecom on March 15, 2010.

This second case is hugest than the first one: in the number of deceased, the political and legal implication and the internal reorganization of the top management board. It allows us the possibility to look at the workplace suicides issue from another point of view – a case study of the frame built by a single firm. It could be very helpfull to look at this case in order to highlight the progressive birth and development of the framing strategies used in order to preserve the firm reputation.

Data collection and analysis

I have collected articles from same french newspapers as for the first analysis. I have looked for articles published between July 1st, 2009 (first mention of workplace suicides in France Telecom) to march 31, 2010. The frame analysis detailed below was conducted on the base of 105 newspaper articles.

The aim of this second case study is to identify if patterns of managerialization are better understood with frame’s development and diffusion theory. To do so, I have identified (1) whether or not a managerial frame also appear in this case study and (2) to what extant this frame is thinkable in framing theory categories. I first have proceeded to a frame analysis just as I did in the first case study. I found a managerial frame which has the same characteristics

as the one identified above. Then I have questioned this frame with framing process characteristics that I identified in literature: initiation through (1) a discursive and (2) a contested process during which elements are picked up and assembled in a coherent way; (3) development through oriented and voluntary strategies of frame alignment; (4) diffusion of the frame through mass media and adopters who select and adapt it to their own cultural environment. I have highlighted managerial frame's elements for each of these factors. This led us to conclude about the relevance of this comparison.

Findings

First of all, in this second case study, I found a managerial frame similar to the previous one. We can consider it as a managerial frame used to lead people to think about workplace suicides in – and to act according to – a managerial way. This managerial frame does not exist on its own. It is the result of a process, or at least of several sub-processes mixture. As my findings show, this process could be studied as follow.

Frame initiation. Once the work related suicide issue appear, managerialization begins. If we want to try to identify its birth thanks to frame theory, we must find piece of evidence of a discursive process. Framing scholars found that discursive processes come from two sub-processes: (1) frame articulation and (2) frame amplification.

(1) I found three main ways to highlight analyse the frame articulation process. First of all, some elements appear and are duplicate over time. For example, the denunciation of an instrumentalization of workplace suicides by successive Executive Managers. The first attempt in made by Mr. Wenes in September, 2009, at the beginning of the affair: « *“Some have made dead people talk”, accused number 2 in order to relativize the suicides.* » (Libération, septembre 29, 2009). Then, this claim is consolidated by his successor Mr. Richard in February, 2010: « *I am shocked by how some instrumentalize the suicides to*

conduct a trial against the company. We recognized the depth of the malaise, we are definitely not in denial. The suicides continue, but take this "indicator" to try to prolong the controversy, it's indecent. » (Le Monde, February 26, 2010). Secondly, some elements appear but evolve over time. It is the case of the solutions to the suicide issue undertaken by France Telecom. The former impossibility to stop reorganizations progressively moved to partial internal modifications. Indeed, in September, 2009: « *No way to stop the reorganization needed to adapt to our environment.* » (A HR Manager, Libération, September 11, 2009). Through time, under political and internal trade unions pressure, the CEO decided to stop a part of the reorganization: « *the directorship [...] will extend the freeze of the mobility process until the end of the year.* » (Le Figaro, October 6, 2009). This measure will be followed by others which are strongly repeated over time: recruitment of occupational physicians and HR managers (September, 2009, to February, 2010), a stress agreement negotiation undertaken with trade unions (September, 2009, to February, 2010), etc. As we saw in the previous case study, these elements are a strong characteristic of the managerial frame. Thirdly, some elements appear but are not kept. There is a progressive selection or refinement. For example, I found statements which claim a relativization of the importance of the workplace suicide. This relativization is based on statistics and occurs only between September and October, 2009. This fleeting claim is that there are fewer suicides in the company than in general population: « *If we look statistics with a cool head, there are no more suicides in France Telecom than in the general population.* » (Le Figaro, octobre 3, 2009).

(2) The frame amplification is mainly achieved through repetition of selected elements. I mentioned above the repetition of solutions as recruitment, etc. Between October, 2009, and February, 2010, more than 10 articles have promoted and reminded extensively all the measures implemented by France Telecom. This creates a mediatic saturation.

Frame development through contested process. Framing scholars found frame evolution is the result of a contested process. It is triggered by (1) internal disputes into the frame, (2) counterframing attacks from frame opponents and (3) an abductive fit between a frame and the collective actions it produces.

(1) First of all, the contested process is visible through internal disputes. Indeed, several newspaper articles relate that frame proponents, i.e. government and ministers, are debating with France Telecom's CEO. For example, the Minister of Economics had convened France Telecom CEO on October 1st, 2009, in order to ask him « *explanations* » and « *to know how he will give back reliance to employees and take problems by the horns* » (Les Echos, October 1st, 2009). Furthermore, the Minister of Labor has also convened the CEO because he was « *strongly preoccupied* » (Le Figaro, September 13, 2009). They met three times in the beginning of September. These interventions have contributed to push France Telecom's executive committee to move to a more managerial frame.

(2) The contested process is also visible through defensive claims which face counterframing attacks. I mentioned above some statements of frame proponents which aim to denounce or relativize blames made against France Telecom, but these elements are not really strongly part of the frame. Other counterframing attacks have more influence. For example, several articles relay opponent's statements blaming the CEO's attitude. Some left wing party representatives underline the communicative clumsiness of D. Lombard (e.g. Les Echos, September 30, 2009). Indeed, he talks about suicide as a "fashion" on September 15 and apologizes about it the day after. This had a strong influence on the decision to follow a media plan made in the beginning of October. These attacks have resulted in a strongest homogeneity in the firm's communication but also on the frame structure.

(3) Finally, the contested process is fed back by an abductive fit with actions undertaken. A good example of this sub-process is the before-mentioned change that occurred after some

communicative clumsiness of France Telecom's CEO. Indeed, these speech acts have produced strong reactions inside public opinion and gave opponents an opportunity to advance their own statements. The major consequence was a "fit", a more adjusted and relevant way of communicate in newspaper and other media.

This study of the consteted process leads us to highlight the role of frame proponents and opponents. Through the development of their statements over time, we can identify several good examples of this process and its role in the dynamic of managerialisation.

Frame development through strategic intent. I now turn on another role of frame proponents. Indeed, beyond their statements, they can act directly on the framing process in order to enhance its efficiency. These attempts are four "frame-alignment strategies".

(1) Frame bridging strategy means the creation of a link between two or more structured and compatible frames around a particular issue. Here, the managerial frame is mainly built thanks to this strategy. Indeed, I found that the infancy managerial frame of workplace suicides was progressively fueled with another managerial frame: stress management intervention. A key indicator of this process is the shift of words and approach to solve the work related suicides issue. This shift happens in 4 moves. First of all, in the begining of October, the managerial frame begins to appear clearly thanks to elements such as « *new social contract* », « *measure* », « *action plan* » or « *stage balance* » (e.g. Les Echos, October 1st, 2009; Le Figaro, October 2, 2009). Secondly, in the same time, the CEO is convened by the Minister of Labor and Economics. New words appear alongside "suicides" to express the issue: « *psychosocial risk* », « *malaise* », etc. The CEO and his team change also their words in order to talk to the press: « *I focus exclusively on human. If employees are happy, the entire organization will win in the end. The new France Telecom should be humanly performance if we want to continue to be economically efficient.* » (Le Figaro, October 17, 2009). But the approach begins to change too. Beside several emergency measures, the CEO

announces a large survey: « *We send these days a questionnaire to all employees where they can point out what is wrong. Everyone will be able to express themselves.* » (Le Figaro, October 17, 2009). Third step, the preliminary findings of this survey are given on October. This main event is announced as follows: « *The specialized firm in workplace hazards must now submit its initial findings on stress at France Telecom.* » (Les Echos, December 14, 2009). The issue moved from work related suicides to work related stress. This is confirmed in a last move in february 2010: « *A major announcement in the negotiations on stress: two agreements, one on work-life balance, the other on mobility will be submitted for signatures to trade unions between february 19 and march 5. These negotiations began in September after the wave of suicides of employees and should lead to a new “social contract” in the company.* » (Les Echos, February 10, 2010). The suicide issue is now totally integrated in a more general issue: work related stress. Although, this stress issue is also framed in a managerial way. Indeed, stress management interventions are part of a stable frame used to manage mental health issues related to work. Several managerial frameworks have been studied but they all follow the same logic: intervention preparation, stress assessment, actions plan, and efficiency assessment. As Harvey et al. (2006:13) put it: « *These frameworks are largely similar to the change management models frequently referenced in the literature on organizational change; but here they have been adapted to the cause of stress intervention.* » (for its main characteristics, see for example Brun et al., 2008; Cox et al., 2000; Cooper and Cartwright, 1994; Harvey et al., 2006). We can say that this second mature managerial frame is mobilised to structure the first one. This is a typical frame bridging strategy.

(2) Frame amplification strategy means to highlight values and beliefs of the frame which are found in dominant culture's values and beliefs. In my case study, this is achieved through the use of crisis communication patterns. Indeed, in an exemplary interview named « *We will emerge from the crisis together.* » (Le Figaro, October 17, 2009), the CEO of France

Telecom is trying to diffuse several important values when he talks about a new suicide: respect, humility and dignity (« *I am appalled. Extremely sorry. [...] This news struck me as a new blow. All my thoughts are with the family we try to help as we always do in these very painful situations.* »), personal responsibility and engagement but also humanity or family-like values (« *Despite the crisis we are facing, [employees] work, the company is running. But this visceral attachment also produces some expectations from the company, which becomes like a big family where everything takes an emotional turn.* »). He calls also for solidarity and a more peaceful mood (« *Trade unions also have a real commitment to the company. They must be responsible in the negotiations. They achieve their mission.* ») and he signals its official support (« *[the] Labor Minister is supporting us* »). These quotes are representative of this frame strategy which aims to recruit new proponents and to legitimize its approach.

(3) Frame extension means the extension of the range of issues or problems targeted in a frame. In this case study, I didn't find piece of evidence of this process. This is probably due to the short period studied. Indeed, the frame is relatively new and had not the time to really evolve in order to target other topics. It could also be the influence of the crisis communication plan in which frame proponents appear coherent between themselves in order to preserve the firm's reputation. Discrepancies between proponents would have given a poorest image of a firm stricken by workplace suicides.

(4) Frame transformation means changing radically the underlying meanings of the frame in order to replace them by new ones more attractive. In this case study, this process could be considered as the first which appear and contribute strongly to create the managerial one. Indeed, my findings indicate that a frame transformation occurred from an original frame which is mainly based on the "individual weakness" (see first case study). However, this frame is fastly left for the managerial one. Pieces of evidence of this transformation are found

in the evolution of France Telecom CEO's discourses. In the end of september, 2009, he mentioned several times that suicides would come from individual weakness (« *I did not want to enter in a system where communication could dampen the moral of people who are weak by nature* » Libération, september 25, 2009; « *a free helpline will be set up for the weakest employess* » Les Echos, septembre 25, 2009). He also compared the repeated suicides as a fashion (« *the reason why I communicate today is that we have to stop this suicide fashion* » Libération, september 25, 2009). As I mentioned above (see contested process), the CEO was strongly criticized for his attitude and convened by Ministers. Since he has changed his communication strategy in the beginning of October, 2009, he also has changed the underlying frame used to think about, and to act upon, work related suicides.

Frame diffusion. The last framing process characteristic is its diffusion through mass media and the role of active adopters. The managerial frame studied here is largely diffused through mass media communication (105 articles in four newspapers in 9 months). This communication is firstly pulled by articles which reveal workplace suicides on July and august, 2009, or by a press conference organized on September 15, 2009, by the french Minister of Labor. Then, frame proponents engage themselves in voluntary communicative actions. In the beginning of October, under a political and social pressure, France Telecom creates a crisis-cell thanks to a specialised consulting firm (which is Euro RSCG & Co). This crisis-cell produces a "media plan" which is implemented in the following days by the CEO both on press and radio broadcasts (Les Echos, October 15, 2009).

As my findings show, the managerial frame named "psychosocial risks management" is present in this second case study. It appears through a strategy of frame transformation motivated by a contested process. The CEO and its Executive Managers left their first approach for a relevant one, infused by managerial characteristics. Then, discursive and contested processes are both combined to give the frame its general aspect. It is also enriched

thanks to a major strategic process: a successful frame bridging achieved with the stress management frame. Thanks to a frame amplification strategy armed by the constitution of a media plan, proponents profusely intervene in mass media in order to diffuse their message: the work related suicide issue is under control by our managerial approach. My findings show that the managerialization process could be studied as the result of mixed sub-processes that take place simultaneously and influence each other.

Conclusions

I have realised two case studies which show that managerialization acts as a framing process on the work related suicide issue and that this real process of managerialization has comparative framing process characteristics. Diverse elements, ideas and symbols picked from managerial thought, are assembled in a coherent way and shape a frame named “psychosocial risks management”. The aim of this frame is to act upon work related suicides in order to solve it. Proponents of this frame seek to give it some strength in order to achieve their goals. To do so, they implement several strategies of frame alignment. These strategies are however mostly emergent and dependant on discursive and contested processes. Indeed, internal debates, counterframing attacks from opponents and other criteria play a key role in the shaping of managerialization. Throughout these melting sub-processes, the frame is disseminated to an audience by proponents – mainly through mass media – and some adopters could also play a role in this diffusion. Given the strong similarities of these characteristics, I can infer they are relevant for the managerialization of all kind of issue.

My study is not free from limitations. As I have mentioned, managerialism is quite consensual and taken for granted in our time. It could be interesting to pursue new media based analysis around several issues across the 20th century. Some limits also come from the analysed data. Indeed, I have only focused on newspaper articles which provide a single (or

just a few) view of the world, sometimes fragmented and confusing. I don't know how deep this managerialization of work related suicide is anchored in other areas of our society, e.g. in public opinion. Other case studies, based on multiple levels of analysis and data sources could help us to refine our findings. Furthermore, it will decrease the selection bias we face inevitably in newspaper (journalists or experts are generally selected – we don't get everybody's opinion). As a conclusion, I call for new studies in order to confirm or prolongate this first attempt to establish the key patterns of the managerialist dynamic.

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¹ All the data collection and analysis was initially conducted in french.

² 15 articles coming from Le Figaro, 25 articles coming from Le Monde, 16 articles coming from Les Echos, and 15 articles coming from Libération.

³ Quotes from newspapers' articles are translated from french by the author.