



SUCCESSION PLANNING AND SUSTAINABILITY AMONG SELECTED FAMILY-OWNED PRIVATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN IFO, OGUN STATE

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the relationship between succession planning and the sustainability of selected family-owned private secondary schools, specifically in Ifo LGA of Ogun State. The target population is the family-owned private school in Ifo LGA. However, the accessible population comprises twenty (20) family-owned registered/government-approved private secondary schools in Ifo LGA, Ogun State, drawn from the five areas in the local government. The sample size of the study was one hundred management staff (100) from selected schools that are in a position to talk about succession planning. The study adopted the primary source for data collection in which a questionnaire was used to collect data and the Spearman Correlation was adopted to test the stated hypotheses. The research results revealed that there is a strong positive correlation between talent detection and business continuity with a coefficient of $r = 0.962$. Also, there is a positive correlation between talent development and growth in size with a coefficient $r = 0.746$. Based on the result of the study, it was concluded that there is a correlation between succession planning and sustainability of family-owned private secondary schools in Ifo Local Government Area of Ogun State. Thus, the study recommends that: Successors' talent detection and development increases commitment to firm goals, encourages individual development, and ensures business continuity towards high sustainability. Hence, succession planning should be encouraged among private family-owned private secondary schools to retain and develop intellectual capital better career development, and enhance on-the-job learning with a focus on increased sustainability.

KEYWORDS: Business Sustainability, Business Growth, Private School, Succession Planning, Talent detection, Talent development,

INTRODUCTION

In the face of today's business competition, business organisations either private, public, or non-governmental are increasingly making efforts to build a high-quality workforce that could sustain and maintain their competitive edge over a sustainable period; this is driven by the fact that organisations from time to time experience employees turnover either through planned or unplanned reasons (Alhaji -Ali, 2016). This turnover could be a result of forced decisions such as age retirement, health problems, or service year expiration or as a result of managerial decisions such as disciplinary measures, redeployment, termination, and retrenchment and in some other cases it could be due to unforeseen circumstances such as negative events such as death (Balqees, 2017).

Whenever workforce turnover takes place the effect would be felt in the continuance performance of the job roles, it, therefore, becomes necessary for organisations to prepare ahead of time for substitute of such roles vacancies whenever it occurs especially when it is not planned for, this preparation is done through the managerial recruitment activities known as succession planning strategy (Balqees, 2017).

Succession planning is a critical part of the management and human resource planning process that specifically focuses on ensuring the availability and sustainability of a supply of capable staff that are equipped and ready to assume critical organisational roles as they become available. Succession planning strategies, specifically focus on



developing employees' mental, social, technological, and organisational capabilities to become ultimately ready for possible replacement of staff turnover whenever it occurs (Olatunbosun & Onuoha, 2020).

Succession planning is a process that helps to ensure the stability of the organisation and tenure of personnel especially in key roles and who have gained valuable corporate knowledge. It is perhaps best understood as any effort designed to ensure the continued effective performance of an organisation, division, department, or work group by making provision for the development, replacement, and strategic application of key people over time (Froelich, McKee, & Rathge, 2011).

Dorothy (2013) explains that it is important for an organisation to acquire and sustain a workforce that is high in quality; not at one specific time but at different and at all times. This puts so much pressure on organisations to ensure that they sustain a reasonable number of high-performance employees. Succession planning has become a key concentration in organisations especially in the human resource department and also institutionally where it is part of the strategy enforced to ensure good organisational performance.

Succession planning aims to ensure that senior management has the responsibility to recognize and choose qualified and proficient applicants within the business to function as potential executives by working collaboratively with the human resource unit to determine and appraise workers based on their capability and performance. Organisations are increasingly acknowledging the critical role of succession planning before the exit of executives and few have plans in place to guide them through the process, it was leading to a decline in organisational performance (Odhiambo, Njanja & Zakayo, 2014).

The essence of the management strategy process is to attain the performance outcomes that permit businesses to be competitive (Zehir et al., 2011). Exceptional performance requires more and better leaders (Claudio et al., 2017). Businesses that do not prepare for succession put their companies at substantial risk for agitated transitions. The transition process works to certify that essential business operations are not obstructed by an unexpected incident that takes crucial schemes down. Organisations need to keep running despite the potential risk it face (Narcisa, 2018). Balqees (2017) suggests this is the period to determine and evaluate the efficacy and success or failure of a leader as a successor. It is necessary to define certain elements and features at such a crucial period for successful succession planning. However, (Alhaji -Ali, 2016) outlined three critical elements for succession planning, which are; talent detection, talent preparation /development, and talent replacement.

Succession planning is all about identifying and developing talents that are expected to take up the leadership role who will take over from or replace the current leaders of the organisation when they leave the post either voluntarily or otherwise (Onuoha, 2016). This therefore entails a whole process in which individuals within the organisation with great talents and skills are identified and developed with the hope of replacing a member of the management team who retires from the job or dies (Akani, 2015). This is done to prevent an administrative vacuum that may occur in the future if such steps are not taken at the right time. This is however instituted to ensure business succession and continuity. For instance, a family that has established some businesses has taken of upon itself to identify, train, and develop younger members of such a family to take over from the older ones when they are no more. This seems to explain why some children tend to choose the career part of their parents.

In this same vein, authors such as (Ogundele, Idris & Ahmed-Ogundipe 2012; Adedayo, Olanipekun & Ojo, 2016; Nejla et al. 2019) reported that succession planning is one factor responsible for the sustainability of family-owned private schools. However, Norman (2015), averred that the ability to foresee and retort to change is an attribute of sustainability for any family-owned private schools. This change can be seen economically, socially, environmentally, and politically or legally. Other forms of change include leadership, ownership, or management change. Thus, as businesses adapt to any of these changes, their sustainability potential becomes stronger (Adetunji et al., 2016). The concept of sustainability in family-owned private schools requires the necessities for the existence and perpetuation of the business for it to last.

The overall concern of this study is succession planning and sustainability in family-owned private schools. Therefore, this study tends to establish the relationship between succession planning and sustainability of family-owned private secondary schools in Ifo Local Government area of Ogun State

Statement of the Problem

One of the major challenges facing family-owned private schools was succession problems, therefore transition in terms of leadership, continuity, and sustainability of such business is sometimes an issue of concern.



A study by Olatunbosun and Onuoha (2020) revealed that only 73% of family-owned private schools reported growth and 27% of such organisations reported no growth in the last 5 years because many of the schools under the study failed to identify talent that is needed for business continuity and where some are detected the issues of grooming and development of such talent to needed capacity remain a problem and the study come up that succession planning is one of the leading factors that are responsible for rapid organisational growth and sustainability.

Some research such as (Ogundele, Idris & Ahmed-Ogundipe 2012; Adedayo, Olanipekun & Ojo, 2016; Nejla et al. 2019) have been conducted on the topic of succession planning, each expressing a variety of methodology and critical factors necessary for the achievement of a successful process. With all this research that has been conducted on succession planning, attention on family-owned private schools such as private secondary schools and also in areas such as Ogun State is found wanting. Therefore, this study is intended to examine the relationship between succession planning and the sustainability of family-owned private schools with a focus on selected private secondary schools in Ifo Local government area of Ogun State.

Objective of the Study

The main objective of the study was to assess relationship between succession planning and sustainability of family-owned private secondary schools in Ifo local government Area of Ogun state. The specific objectives of the study are;

- i. To examine the relationship between talent detection and continuity of family-owned private secondary schools in Ifo Local Government Area of Ogun State.
- ii. To investigate the relationship between talent development and growth in the size of family-owned private secondary schools in Ifo Local Government Area of Ogun State.

Research Questions

The study was guided by the following questions;

- i. Is there any significant relationship between talent detection and continuity of family-owned private secondary schools in Ifo Local Government Area of Ogun State?
- ii. Is there any significant relationship between talent development and growth in the size of family-owned private secondary schools in Ifo Local Government Area of Ogun State?

Research Hypotheses

In line with the study objectives, the following null hypotheses were proposed

Hypothesis One

There is no significant relationship between talent detection and continuity of family-owned private secondary schools in Ifo Local Government Area of Ogun State

Hypothesis Two

There is no significant relationship between talent development and growth in size of family-owned private secondary schools in Ifo Local Government Area of Ogun state.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Succession Planning

Succession Planning is the process of preparing to fill vacancies that might come up in organisation. It provides framework for addition of new staff. It also includes selection of right person for promotion on right job. It enhances the ability of existing staff and prepares them for future need of the organisation. It provides individual growth to the employee and encourages the personal development of employees which enables them to stay more in the organisation. Effective succession planning is useful to organisations in many ways such as planning about retention rate, employee compensation management, employee career development, etc. A succession plan guides provide an organisation with all factors that are necessary to analyse the continuity of business and future growth of employees in the organisation. It is a series of many short plans and is usually designed to fulfill an organisational mission with a high-quality skilled workforce to achieve maximum productivity of the organisation. Succession planning is an important part of the human resource plan of an organisation. An effective succession plan is an integral part of a



human resource plan, at the first stage it takes stock, that is identifies several people required at the initial level to align the objective of the organisation with the overall strategy of the organisation.

Charles (2016) describes succession planning as the process of recognizing the vital need for intellectual endowment and leadership all through the business over time and equipping individuals for current and forthcoming duties needed by the company. Succession planning consists of an extensive range of activities that require planning for vital transitions in leadership within businesses. Initially, the phrase succession planning indicated the advancement of leadership progression at the highest levels, like the Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

Rothwell (2010) describes succession planning as a detailed and structured approach to developing a pool of leadership and expertise to ensure that existing and future leadership needs are addressed in such a way that stability is ensured. Succession planning is a deliberate decision by a company to promote and enable continuous growth of employees. It also involves ensuring that crucial positions maintain some level of continuity, thereby allowing an organisation to achieve its business goals while at the same time building capacity to tackle potential problems that affect business continuity.

Charles (2016) suggests that succession planning has been conducted in the corporate world because of the understanding that certain positions are the life blood of companies and that they are too necessary to remain vacant.

Sustainability

Sustainability as a concept denotes the maintaining or ensuring the existence of something is unabated. It thus allow an organisation to compare its existence as against the period of formation, which considers the extent to which an organisation's (e.g., Family-owned private schools) life span can be elongated while achieving its purpose (Ogundele, Idris & Ahmed-Ogundipe, 2012). A business is sustainable if it continues to exist despite the odds (market threats and internal change), and also when leaders can develop strategies to increase market share, talent, stakeholders' benefits, and lower operational cost and workforce turnover (Banker, Mashruwala & Tripathy, 2014). Nkam, Sena and Ndamsa (2017) states that sustainability represents how resilient a business is over a duration of time, and upon its existence or survival by absorbing disturbance as long as it is economically, socially and environmentally healthy. Within the context of this work, it will not be out of place to measure sustainability in terms of economic and social outcomes. On one hand, economic sustainability connotes the overall growth, development, profitability, and return on investment of the organisation (Khan, 2014), while social sustainability depicts the overall interactions between the student, institution, and the environment in all academic exercises (empowerment, accessibility, participation, sharing, cultural identity, and institutional stability) (Beate & Erich, 2005; Adedayo, Olanipekun & Ojo, 2016).

Thus, sustainability in terms of family-owned businesses as explained by Ogundele, Idris, and Ahmed-Ogundipe (2012), is the degree to which its existence can be elongated while accomplishing its purpose, which can be affected by proper succession planning (Ogundele, Idris & Ahmed-Ogundipe, 2012), ability to foresee and react to adjustments, running the business as a separate being, which requires separating individual accounts and assets from business accounts; ensuring there is a structure good enough that is independent of the proprietor to continue with the running of the business; developing, improving the human capability and furnishing the successor with the core running of the firm or business (Nnabuiife & Okoli, 2017).

Nnabuiife and Okoli, (2017), further positioned that business sustainability encompasses different business strategies. **Continuity of Family-Owned Business:** In this digital age, when discussing business continuity, the first things that come to mind are technology and related processes. However, it is important to note that the critical elements of human resources (HR) and processes have equal weight. The challenge of succession planning is not limited only to technology teams, but it is a business concern (Banker, Mashruwala & Tripathy, 2014).

Growth in size of business: Organizational growth has been continuously a significant question in the corporate world over decades. Many studies (Kenneth, 2019; Ogundele, Idris & Ahmed-Ogundipe, 2012; Rothwell, 2010) have been conducted to find factors that contribute to organizational growth. In the modern world, it becomes an indispensable question that every organization must address. Organizational growth is defined in terms of financial productivity, increase in number of employees, retention of existing skilled employees, etc.



Theoretical Framework

This paper was anchored on Scharmer's theory U (2007). Otto Scharmer (2007) came up with a succession model which is referred to as Scharmer's Theory U Model. Scharmer argues that the top management team should embrace and act in order to implement succession planning. In the first instance, this model views succession planning as beginning from the immediate future and supports a concept of a U process of five movements that can make change possible. These movements are; Co-initiating, Co-sensing, Pre-sensing, co-creating, and co-evolving.

The first movement is co-initiating. In the words of Scharmer, at this stage, the organisation establishes a common purpose with all stakeholders about a future event. Co-sensing is the second movement stage in which an organisation sees the need at hand collectively across boundaries. Also, at this stage, new ideas and innovation occur through collective input. The third stage is Pre-sensing, whereby the leadership of the organisation begins to see the future they envisage in terms of succession planning. This futuristic plan establishes a foundation for change, thereby spurring an organisation to an expected end. Further, at this stage, it is observed that the leadership lets go of unresolved past issues and forges ahead to a more realistic future.

The fourth stage in this model is co-creating. Scharmer (2007) argues that at this stage, the leadership of the organisation explores the future and prototypes what the future might look like. He goes further to suggest that leadership should make succession planning a long-term concept rather than working on organisational immediate requirements. Kartz (2006) argues further that there is a need to assess a company's strategy and policy that highlight the required qualifications of the successor to have a sustainable and dynamic succession plan in place. The Scharmer's fifth movement in Theory U is co-evolving which can help an organisation to embrace change and implement succession planning strategies in the context of an emerging future (Scharmer, 2007). This theory is significant to this current study as it enables organization management to consider future changes likely to occur in the organization and put up strategies such as succession plans to overcome such threats thereby enhancing business growth and continuity.

Research Methods

The study adopts the quantitative research method because it allow for generalizing the findings to the study population, specifically, the study uses the descriptive survey research design, and a questionnaire was used to obtain information from respondents, in line with the research objectives of the study.

The target population for the study is the entire family-owned private secondary school in Ifo Local Government Area of Ogun State which according to the zonal education office in Ifo LGA there are 88 recorded private secondary schools. Therefore, the sample size of 20 schools was determined using the Krejcan and Morgan (1970) sample size table. The selected schools were registered/government-approved schools within Ifo Local Government Area in Ogun State (Source: awards.prestigenigeria.com/2019/). The schools were chosen based on their standards and proven records over the years. The target population comprises 5 (managerial) employees such as school proprietor/proprietress, principal, head teacher, school administrative officer, and supervisor from each of the 20 selected private secondary schools regardless of gender, age, marital status, qualification, and work experience. The total sample of the study was one hundred (100) managerial staff of the selected schools. The research instrument applied in the study was an adapted questionnaire from Olatunbosun and Onuoha (2020). The instrument contained 20 items. 5 questions on each of the variables adopted for this study. The validity and reliability of the research instrument were also carried out. To check the accuracy and consistency of the instrument a Cronbach alpha test was conducted and calculated. The Cronbach alpha value of 0.81 was arrived at, indicating the suitability of the questionnaire. Further face validity was carried out on the research instrument by the supervisors.

Hence, one hundred (100) selected family-owned private school managerial employees were used as the sample size. The data analysis techniques used for the study are descriptive statistical measures which include tables, frequencies, and simple percentages, and the hypotheses were tested using the Spearman Rank Order Correlation Coefficient. This technique was adopted due to the need to establish a linear relationship between the predictor and criterion variables with the aid of the questionnaire items and the ordinal nature of the responses required. Also, the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) was used in analyzing the research data. The formula is stated thus;



$$\rho = 1 - \frac{6 \sum d_i^2}{n(n^2 - 1)}$$

Where;

d = Difference between the two ranks of each observation

n = Number of observations.

DATA ANALYSIS

Bivariate Data Analysis

This section examines the relationship between the dimensions of succession planning and sustainability which constitutes the objective of the study. Two null hypotheses were formulated and tested in this section using the Spearman Rank Order Correlation Coefficient statistical technique at a 95% confidence interval. The decision rule is set at a critical region of $p > 0.05$ for acceptance of the null hypothesis and $p < 0.05$ for rejection of the null hypothesis. Although one hundred (100) copies of the questionnaire were administered, ninety-seven responses were retrieved but only ninety-five (95) were well completed and used for the analyses as shown below:

Correlation Analysis of Hypothesis One				
			Talent Detection	Continuity
spearman's rho	Talent detection	Correlation coefficient	1.000	.962**
		Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
		N	95	95
	Continuity	Correlation coefficient	.962**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
		N	95	95
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).				

Ho1: There is no significant relationship between talent detection and continuity in family-owned private secondary schools. The table above reveals that there is a moderately significant relationship between successor detection and business continuity (where $\rho = .962$ and $p = 0.000$) and based on the decision rule of $p < 0.05$ for null rejection. Hence, there is a significant relationship between successor talent detection and the continuity of family-owned private secondary schools.

Correlation Analysis of Hypothesis Two				
			Talent Development	Growth in size
Spearman's rho	Talent development	Correlation coefficient	1.000	.746**
		Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
		N	95	95
	Growth in size	Correlation coefficient	.746**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
		N	95	95
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).				

Ho2: There is no significant relationship between talent development and growth in size in family-owned private secondary schools in Ifo Local Government Area of Ogun State. The table above reveals that there is a significant relationship between talent development and growth in the size of family-owned private secondary schools in Ifo Local Government Area of Ogun State (where $\rho = .746$ and $p = 0.000$) and based on the decision rule of $p < 0.05$ for null rejection. Hence, there is a significant relationship between successor talent development and sustainability in Ifo Local Government Area of Ogun State.



DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Test of hypothesis one revealed a significant positive nexus between talent detection and development of successor and sustainability in family-owned private secondary schools Ifo Local Government Area of Ogun State. This is in synchronisation with the observation of various scholars that selecting talented potential leaders to take over leadership reinforces articulate learned behaviours needed to take the institution to greater heights (Buang, Ganefri & Sidek, 2013). Also, that successor selection facilitates better understanding of the kind of business that the family is involve in and the nature of the environment within which this business operates. Consequently, this study reaffirms extant position on the positive relationship between successor detection and sustainability. Test of hypothesis two revealed a significant positive link between successor talent development and sustainability in family-owned private secondary schools. This finding corroborates with extant studies revealing that preparing potential organisational leaders tends to prepare the organisation for a continuum irrespective of what transitional events take place within the organisation. Also, it aligns with the outcome of the study of Garg and Van Weele (2012). As such this study gives further empirical credence to the existence of a relationship between successor preparation and sustainability.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study concluded that succession planning is not only the process of leadership development. It is also a leading factor for organisational continuity. An effective succession plan is the key to detecting the right persons with the right talent for the right job. An effective succession plan not only identifies key areas of the organisation but it also identifies key positions in the organisation. An effective plan becomes necessary for organisational growth by putting the right person in a key position and also by retaining them for a long time.

Conclusively, sound succession planning can enhance sustainability. In essence, family-owned private secondary schools stand a better chance at optimizing their sustainability level if they prioritize succession planning such as successor detection, successor development, and preparation and allocate ample time to studies.

From the research analysis and conclusions above, the following recommendations were made to enhance the sustainability of family-owned private schools:

- i. Successor selection increases commitment to firm goals, school management should continually encourages individual talent development through effective succession planning programme such as delegation, role playing which will in turn facilitates business continuity towards high sustainability.
- ii. Successor detection should be done through objective on-the-job learning with focus on increased sustainability. Therefore, successor preparation should be institutionalized.

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