

SUCCESSION PLANNING AND ITS EFFECTS ON EMPLOYEE RETENTION

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ABSTRACT

This study was to determine the various effects of succession planning on employee retention in a car dealer company. The methodology used was a descriptive survey using 114 regular employees. The study used the Resource-Based View of the firm (RBV) as the foundation to explain succession planning and employee retention in proposing possible interventions. The conceptual framework indicated that succession planning has effects in preventing the hassle of high attrition. The variables used for the profile of the respondents were age, gender, educational attainment, and length of service. The factors tested for succession planning are aptitude, competence, interpersonal relations, and knowledge. While in terms of retention, career, employee involvement, and employee performance were examined. Based on the outcomes of the completed study, it was concluded that succession planning has effects on retention in terms of career, interpersonal relations, and knowledge. Hence, it was recommended that

management provide training in various forms and content in addition to further education to build aptitude, competence, interpersonal relations, and knowledge since these are important factors being considered for succession planning to attain a high retention rate via career, employee involvement, and employee performance.

Keywords: succession planning, employee retention, career, employee performance, intervention program

INTRODUCTION

Succession planning is a strategic process used by organizations on ensuring the balance of people when it comes to statistics and skills to prevent shortages or surpluses. As part of talent management (Armstrong & Taylor, 2014; cited in (Jarvis, 2019) it tries to meet the present and future strategic requirements of the organization (Rothwell, 2015; cited in (Jarvis, 2019). Such planning makes certain that companies have the right number of people with the appropriate skills and abilities for a steady and strong workforce. Basically, it focuses on the demand and supply concept in the context of the human resource capacity of the organization.

Career advancement plans for capable employees are guaranteed by the Human Resource Department through succession planning. With the correct assessment of the skills and interests of employees, appropriate training is given to employees. Thus, preparing employees to be suitable for specific job roles.

Through succession planning, growth opportunities for employees inside the organization itself are assured. This planning makes employees well-prepared for varied

job roles should they take up potential higher roles. With this strategy, employees feel they are useful and valuable because the organization has concerns about their career and personal development. As a result, it lessens the level of employee turnover and helps to retain a competent workforce.

Studies revealed that having a succession planning process creates significant improvements in employee job satisfaction, which in the sequence has positive effects on employee retention (Maragia, 2013). The reason for this connection is that companies that proactively do succession planning invest willingly for the sake of retaining their employees. Succession plans promote internal opportunities for growth and advancement for employees when created and communicated. Hence, employees feel that the organization is opening its door for promotion, compensation raise, modest benefits, developing skills, or gaining experiences inside the organization. This way employees will not look for and accept any offer elsewhere.

Succession planning requires examining each strategic talent pool to identify who will take part in retention actions of management such as training and other learning programs. The retention strategy is far beyond compensation and needs to be focused on what will really motivate key employees to stay with the company (Silzer & Dowell). Retention is necessary, especially for those employees whose jobs are related to the operations (Samuel and Chipunza, 2009; cited in Anis, et al, 2011) together with reducing turnover and its related costs.

Most of the time, employees stay with an organization not just because their jobs are

challenging but more so since they see opportunities to be part of the future growth of the company. The company where employees served provides them with the professional and career advancement, they need in case of such company growth. Growth and advancement are part of the key components of succession planning for the benefit of talent retention and retention of valued skills. Giving less focus on succession planning has given rise to high turnover and insufficient preparation of talent to accept higher levels of responsibility (Softic, 2019).

Grooming multiple succession candidates, although essential, creates another difficulty. When several people are prepared for a position, only one will make it. This can leave behind other candidates feeling bitter or resentful. Hence, there must be other development paths and rewards for them except if the company is ready to accept that talents may leave the organization. Many companies now are confronted with the challenge of retaining their talented employees in the global market (Mohomed,2015). Employee retention is a great challenge to every organization due to technological advancement and globalization (Bano, et al, 2022).

The study made use of the resource-based view of the firm (RBV). This theory centers its interest on human talents as one of the organization's internal resources and capabilities. It also emphasizes the growth and development of the organization's resources to boost the organization's performance (Wang, 2014; cited in (Jarvis, 2019). The Resource-based Theory is an important concept that can explain succession planning and employee retention. According to this theory, employees who feel most useful and significant to their companies are most likely to be loyal and stay

in the company until retirement. This theory suggests that making employees important and valuable can reduce retention problems (Gerhart & Feng, 2021).

The research concept is illustrated in this paradigm:

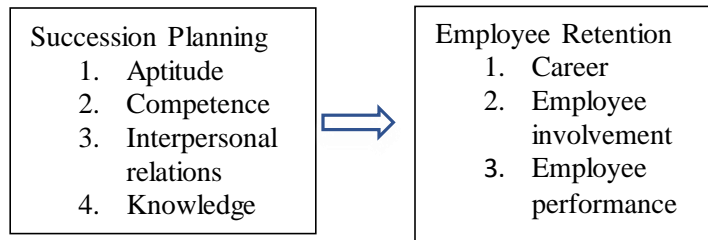


Figure 1: Conceptual Paradigm of Succession Planning and Its Effects on Employee Retention

As reflected in the research paradigm succession planning has some effects on employee retention. One of the reasons for succession planning is to prevent the inconvenience of high attrition. So, in this study, for succession planning, the variables aptitude, competence, interpersonal, and knowledge were used as suggested by the company that was used for this study. The company that was studied made use of these variables in its succession planning.

The study by Hall (1986) recommended managers enhance their personal learning and better incorporate executive learning with the strategic succession planning of the company. In Ghana, a developing country, competency has been established in measuring performance as a base for succession planning (Ahadzie, et al, 2009) and subsequent profitability (Trow,1961). Relational competency-based knowledge transfer in the research of Hatak & Roessl (2015) was found to be crucial for a successful business continuation within a family business succession. On the other hand, knowledge management and its

connection to succession planning had been found to be vital in future leadership (Durst & Wilhelm, 2012; Martins & Meyer, 2012; cited in Cook, 2015). Gandhi and Kumar (2014; cited in Cook, 2015) recognized crucial knowledge and abilities in succession planning when key employees leave the company.

Employee retention, on the other hand, had a career, employee involvement, and employee performance as its variables. The concept of succession planning was applied to nursing education and discovered that succession planning has a connection with the retention

(Phillips, 2020; Phillips (2020) of knowledgeable personnel to meet organizational needs (Carriere,2009). When grooming candidates, the challenge of talented employees is at hand (Mohomed,2015) due mainly to technological advancement and globalization (Bano, et al, 2022).

This study was undertaken to determine the various effects of succession planning on employee retention. The following sub-questions were attempted to be answered through this research:

1. What is the profile of the respondents as to the following demographics:
 - 1.1 Age
 - 1.2 Gender
 - 1.3 Educational attainment
 - 1.4 Length of service
2. What is the level of succession planning in the workforce as to:
 - 2.1 Aptitude
 - 2.2 Competence
 - 2.3 Interpersonal relations
 - 2.4 Knowledge

3. What are the effects of succession planning on employee retention:
 - 3.1 Career
 - 3.2 Employee involvement
 - 3.3 Employee performance
4. Based on the result of the study what intervention program could be proposed to retain employees via succession planning?

Succession planning has been growing in popularity in organizations today. Yet, there is still a lot of work to be performed to make certain that succession plans are useful for employee retention and help assure the future of businesses. The focus of this study was succession planning and its effects on the retention of employees in a retail environment, particularly in a car dealership. Succession planning is not quite evident in this particular industry. Thus, this study had been pursued to resolve and proposed intervention program/s on the issue of succession planning to enhance employee retention.

METHODOLOGY

The research employed a descriptive survey design. According to Serrano (2016), this type of design concerns knowing the scope of different conditions and situations among the subjects of the research. Knowing the various conditions and situations means gathering data to know the facts and then reporting essential things.

The study employed the participation of one hundred fourteen (114) taken from the two hundred twenty-five (225) regular employees from a car dealer company as respondents using the Slovin formula computation. The computation used yielded one hundred forty-three (143) samples with a 5% margin of error and 95% confidence level

but only 114 were retrieved. The company requested not to disclose its name for anonymity. The data gathering was done through the distribution of survey instruments. Only regular employees were the respondents for this study.

The instrument applied for this study consisted of the demographic profile of the respondents; the level of succession planning in terms of aptitude, competence, interpersonal relations, and knowledge, as provided by the subject company; the perception of respondents such as career growth, employee involvement, and employee performance; and the effects of succession planning to employee retention.

A five-point Likert scale for agreeableness was applied to solicit the answers of the respondents. The interpretation of the results is as follows:

Mean	Verbal Interpretation
4.20-5.00	Strongly Agree (SA)
3.40-4.19	Agree (A)
2.60-3.39	Moderately Agree (MA)
1.80-2.59	Disagree (D)
1.00-1.79	Strongly Disagree (SD)

The results of the internal consistency of the succession planning factors showed that they met the criterion for a minimum value of 0.7 as seen in Table 1 below. The same revelations are true with the retention factors which are above the recommended threshold value of 0.7.

Factors Used	Indicators	Cronbach's Alpha Values	Internal consistency Interpretation
Succession Planning	Aptitude	.8565	Good
	Competence	.9691	Excellent
	Interpersonal Relations	.8833	Good
	Knowledge	.9355	Excellent
Retention	Career	.9377	Excellent

	Employee Involvement	.8565	Good
	Employee Performance	.8566	Good

Table 1 Cronbach’s Alpha Succession Planning and Retention

It took the researcher one (1) month to retrieve the instruments from the company, specifically in the mid of November and half of December of 2022. Prior to the distribution of the survey, the consent of management was sought. Respondents too were promised the confidentiality of their responses. Based on the statement of the problem, the statistical treatment employed consisted of frequency, percentage, and means.

RESULTS

The findings of the completed study and its implications for the body of knowledge are summarized in the tables below following the sequence of the Statement of the Problem.

Demographic Profile	Indicators	Frequency	Percentage
Age	20 years and below	5	3.47
	21-30 years old	81	56.25
	31-40 years old	50	34.72
	41-50 years old	7	4.86
	51-60 years old	1	0.69
Gender	Male	74	51.39
	Female	70	48.61
Educational Attainment	Undergraduate	6	4.17
	College Graduate	134	93.05
	Postgraduate	4	2.78
Length of Service	Less than 1 year	60	41.67
	1-5 years	70	48.61

	More than 5 years	14	9.72
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N=114

Table 2 Demographic Profile of Respondents

The researcher purposely had chosen age, gender, educational attainment, and length of service because of some literature and studies that revealed the connections of these variables to succession planning and retention.

Age

Table 2 indicated that the subject company has more employees in the 21-30 years old bracket with 56.25 percent. The age bracket of 31-40 years old employees comes next with 34.72 percent.

Often, age is subjected to discrimination in succession planning in favor of younger employees with a long-term possibility of staying in an organization. However, it poses a costly mistake to get rid of older employees and just use them to just replace willing retirees. Older employees are proven to be loyal and committed workforce and can serve as mentors, coaches, or experts. In this manner, older workers can pass important roles to ambitious younger workers (Binford, 2018). If succession planning is done right and cautiously, young employees can be trained to be the next generation of company leaders to guarantee continuity in key roles, and oversee all phases of the transition (Eby, 2018). This study revealed a good combination of the old and young employees of the company, hence equal opportunities are provided by the company without prejudice when it comes to age.

Gender

There is a slight difference in frequency between the numbers of males (51.39%) and females (48.61%) employees. When it comes to gender, the possibility of equal treatment is ensured as evidenced by an almost equal number of males and females working for the subject company.

A study of 128 companies with less than 50 employees completed by Martin (2001) discovered that females were not chosen as successors because they were “too good” for the workplace or were “doing something better”. Females were neither developed nor encouraged as managers, even if they served as mentors for the selected male heir. While there are more women than men who work in healthcare, there is a gender imbalance with more men in leadership roles. The existing systems silently endorse males soaring to leadership roles backed up by succession planning beliefs (Anderson, 2018). However, this current study proved that these days there is an equal employment opportunity for all genders.

Educational Attainment

The company settles on hiring more college graduates as part of its workforce as seen in the number (93.05 %). There were very small percentages of employees in the undergraduate and postgraduate categories.

Based on (The Importance of Education in Retaining Employees, 2016), younger people in the organization are likely to be more interested in gaining new skills and advancing their career growth than their older counterparts. They expect to move up the corporate ladder as fast as feasible and want to be responsive so they can climb at a moment's notice. It makes sense to include education in succession planning as well as in retention strategy. Most employees now adopt the idea of lifelong learning, and they look at educational opportunities and

supplementary training as essential to financial reward in the workplace. Amanquah (2021) in her study of family-owned companies recommended that business leaders must encourage children to get a higher education and specialized business training.

Length of Service

In terms of length of service, more employees are in the 1-5 years of stay in the company at 48.61%, followed by less than 1 year at 41.67 %.

Part of successful succession planning is the retention of top-performing employees. Most of the time, the main objective of selection criteria for choosing successors is pertinent to their job experience (Philips, 2019; Wilkes, et al, 2015). Employees that served the organization for a long period of time and are doing quality jobs are equally important with new talents in organizational success. Employees who had long experience internally are said to provide higher investment returns together with their deep understanding of the company culture (Chavez, 2011). Participants of this study are less tenured employees which means that the subject company is not able to retain much those employees who had served for some length of time.

Succession Planning Factors	Indicators	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
Aptitude	I am equipped with soft and hard skills to be promoted.	4.26	Strongly agree
	I have the leadership potential to excel in my job	4.25	Strongly agree.

	I am willing to work enthusiastically towards the company's goals.	4.24	Strongly agree.
Competence	I can go beyond my immediate responsibilities for the good of the company.	4.31	Strongly agree
	I can handle every technical challenge skillfully thoroughly and effectively.	4.10	Agree
Interpersonal Relations	I am well-informed about company policies.	4.12	Agree
	I receive on-time information needed to do my jobs.	4.19	Agree
	I can share their work problems with my supervisors.	4.04	Agree
	I have opportunities to socialize with co-employees.	4.17	Agree
	I have a good relationship with others	4.26	Strongly Agree
Knowledge	I normally apply my expertise to save the company a substantial amount of money	4.03	Agree
	I used technical knowledge to generate numerous improvements in processes, procedures, and operations	4.13	Agree

	I can perform additional tasks required should I move to a higher position	4.03	Agree
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N=114

Table 2 Level of Succession Planning

Aptitude

Table 2 proved that aptitude is an important variable to be considered in succession planning with all items receiving means of 4.24 up to 4.26 and with a verbal interpretation of “Strongly Agree”.

The main purpose of selection criteria for selecting successors is related to their job experience, professional skills, leadership style, and competencies (Wilkes, et al, 2015). In developing succession plans, to be effective, the focus should be on the attributes, aptitude, and behavior of candidates. It is interesting to note that cognitive aptitude is predictive of job performance throughout every job level, starting from entry-level up to C-suite. This study mentioned concurred with the results of this completed study on succession planning.

Competence

The competency factors of succession planning received a split result of strongly agreeing with 4.31 points in the item about going beyond immediate responsibility for the sake of the organization. While the item on technical challenge got a 4.10 score, meaning “Agree”.

The competency-based model was proposed and tested for developing project managers in Ghana. It was regarded as the only viable way for validating and creating managerial best practices in measuring performance which can be used as the basis for succession planning (Ahadzie, et al,

2009). In a study of family-owned firms, the availability and competence of a family member as a successor were considered the main factors influencing succession planning and subsequent profitability (Psikologi, et al, 2019; Amanquah, 2021). Another study concluded that relational competency-based knowledge transfer is crucial for a successful business continuation within an intrafamily succession (Hatak & Roessl, 2015). The study by (Hall 1986; Amanquah, 2021) concluded with recommendations of enhancing personal learning for managers and better incorporating executive learning with the strategic succession planning of the company. All the above studies agreed with the findings of this study and accepted that competency is vital to succession planning.

Interpersonal Relations

All interpersonal relations items “Agree” that for succession planning to be successful, employees relate well to people from varied backgrounds and in different situations. They must show understanding, courtesy, tact, empathy, concern, and politeness. The points are almost identical from 4.04 to 4.19 except for the item on good relationships with others with a 4.26 mean

These days, employees wanted to establish good communication with everyone. Often when employees feel disconnected, they leave the company. Technology has proven to have promoted interpersonal connections and improved the retention of valuable, rare, and talented employees (Sinha, 2012) with technology. In addition, in a study of educators as respondents, encouraging relationships between the principals and their supervisors and/or other school district administrators were mentioned by leaders in each school district as a consideration for principal retention. Said supportive relationships were

described as the accessibility and visibility of school district administrators, feelings of care and protection, and an assessment process that established growth (Rogers et al., 2019).

Knowledge

Knowledge another variable in succession planning garnered 4.04 to 4.13 scores interpreted as “Agree”. Respondents acknowledged that technical knowledge had provided improvements in terms of processes, procedures, and operations.

(Durst & Wilhelm, 2012; Martins & Meyer, 2012; cited in Cook, 2015) in their studies emphasized knowledge management and its connection to succession planning as a significant variable in forecasting future leadership needs. Gandhi and Kumar (2014; cited in Cook, 2015) recognized succession planning as a vital strategic approach to guaranteeing that crucial knowledge and abilities are when key employees leave the company. Both authors claimed that a commitment to leadership development programs that are far beyond development activities and intervention is the real focus of successful succession plans. They further advised that to produce intended results, companies should take charge of organizational cultural mores among employees, encourage employees to engage in development paths, and promote learning within the organization.

Employee retention, on the other hand, had a career, employee involvement, and employee performance as its variables.

Retention Factors	Indicators	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
Career	1. I know I am better in reference to my personal	4.22	Strongly agree

	growth and development. as I stay in the company.		
	2. I participate in the development programs the company offers to motivate me to stay.	4.12	Agree
	3. The company offers career monitoring which made me decide to remain in my job.	3.99	Agree.
	4. I will remain in the company and achieve the position I wanted.	4.10	Agree
Employee Involvement	1. I can go beyond my immediate responsibilities without ever feeling obliged to.	4.31	Strongly agree
	2. I can handle every technical challenge skillfully, thoroughly and effectively	4.10	Agree
	3. I am committed to my work, my colleagues, and the company's ongoing developments	4.10	Agree
Employee Performance	1. My promotion is based on performance.	3.99	Agree.
	2. I am willing to serve and stay with the company longer because I know I have	4.11	Agree

	a better chance of promotion		
	3. I am being rewarded by the company based on my good performance	4.02	Agree

N=114

Table 3 Effects of Succession Planning on Employee Retention

Succession Planning Effects on Career

Respondents “Agree” that succession planning affects career, which can make an employee decide to be retained in the company. Points for career items started from 3.99 up to 4.10; while “Strongly Agree” with a 4.22 score about staying in the company due to personal growth and development. The studies mentioned here also agree with the results of this study. Ali and Mehreen (2018) indicated that career attitude is negatively related to employees’ desire to quit the firm. Another research showed that overall career attitudes were negatively related to performance with indications of withdrawal, tardiness, absenteeism, and turnover (Harrison, Newman, and Roth, 2006). In this study, it was confirmed that employees considered greatly career as an important variable to stay in the company.

Succession Planning Effects on Employee Involvement

In terms of employee involvement, the study garnered scores of 4.10 up to 4.31 interpreted as “Agree” and “Strongly Agree” on the items mentioned.

The concept of succession planning was applied in nursing education due to the nursing faculty shortage (Phillips, 2020). In the study, it was discovered that succession planning appeared to be related to retention.

Phillips (2020) in her study defined succession planning as a proactive strategy to identify, educate and mentor future leaders to establish leadership continuity inside an organization. Still, in the healthcare profession, succession planning was considered. Mainly the reason considered is the nursing shortage and the demand for retaining knowledgeable personnel to meet organizational needs (Carriere, 2009). These studies proved that for succession planning to be successful, employees must be well involved in taking steps for leadership continuity.

Succession Planning Effects on Employee Performance

Lastly, employee performance as a variable for employee retention is also affected by succession planning. The items scored from 3.99 to 4.11 were interpreted as Agree to the idea just mentioned. In quantitative research by Abdullah, et al (2021) using respondents from Malaysian private universities, it was discovered that there was a relationship between succession planning practices and employee retention. Rothwell (2010) posited that when employees are positive about their performance appraisal, they most likely will get involved in development activities to improve their individual performance and it leads to employee retention. Studies consulted for this study disclosed when employees are positive about their performance, they will without doubt remain in service to the company.

DISCUSSION

Since the completed research made use of only one case, that is the car dealer company, therefore the generalization is only applicable to this organization. Hence, here is

the summary of findings in reference to the sub-problems:

1. Majority of the respondents are in the age bracket of 21-30; an almost equal combination of males and females; most are college graduates; and in service to the company for 1-5 years.
2. The level of succession planning in the workforce consisted of
 - 2.1 Respondents “Strongly Agree” that Aptitude is greatly used in the company for succession planning.
 - 2.2 Respondents “Strongly Agree” that competence in terms of “going beyond responsibilities” and interpersonal relations with “good relations with others” are significantly used in the company for succession planning. All other items “Agree” as to being applied by the company for said kind of plan.
 - 2.3 Respondents just “Agree” that knowledge is being used as a factor for succession planning.
3. In terms of the effects of succession planning on retention:
 - 3.1 Respondents “Strongly Agree” that “being better in reference to personal growth and development I stay in the company” is a major effect of succession planning to retention in terms of CAREER. While other items are minor effects based on the respondents’ answer of “Agree”.
 - 3.2 Respondents “Strongly Agree” that “going beyond my immediate responsibilities without ever feeling obliged to” is a major effect of succession planning to retention in terms of EMPLOYEE INVOLVEMENT. While other items are minor effects based on the respondents’ answer of “Agree”.

3.3 Respondents just ‘Agree’ on all items of EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE, hence considered as succession planning giving minor effects to retention.

Therefore, it can be concluded in accordance with the outcomes of the present study that:

1. Most respondents are millennials, an equal mix of males and females, college graduates, and quite new to serving the company.
2. Aptitude is regarded as an important factor in succession planning. Competence, interpersonal relations, and knowledge played are only second in significance.
3. Succession planning has major effects on career and employee involvement.

Based on the results of the study, the researcher recommends the following to make better the company’s succession planning and be assured that the retention rate will be higher:

1. The company through its management may take advantage of technology to provide opportunities to learn via online and/or modular approaches. In this way, employees can be equipped with both soft and hard skills on their way to promotion. The involvement of employees in this ongoing development exercise may motivate them to stay longer with the company.
2. Competence can be enhanced by making use of tenured employees as mentors to young people who are ambitious to be part of higher

management. Or the company may create a mastermind group composed of diversified employees in terms of age, tenure, gender, and education so that they can tutor each other in building not only their competence but also their interpersonal skills.

3. Management may offer interpersonal improvement training like diversity, human relations, team relations, coaching skills, problem analysis, and conflict resolution either in-house or out of the company. These types of training may help improve the interpersonal skills of those in the lineup of the succession plan.
4. Executives of the company may invest in the knowledge capability building of their employees through training such as strategic thinking, leadership, change management, and career planning; and further education programs such as a master and a doctorate in preparation for a higher position as part of the retention strategy.
5. Further research about:
 - 5.1 effects of succession planning on the retention of employees using a wider scope of car dealing segment; the retail industry and/or other types of industry
 - 5.2 relationship between succession planning and retention strategy for a specific industry
 - 5.3 mediating effects of demographic variables such as age, gender, educational attainment, and length of service in the relationship between succession planning and retention strategy for a specific industry

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