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Succession Planning in Family-Owned Businesses in Nigeria

Ayodeji West
Walden University

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Walden University

College of Management and Technology

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Ayodeji West

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Walden University
2019

Abstract

Succession Planning in Family-Owned Businesses in Nigeria

by

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MBA, City University Business School, London, 1997

BSc, City University London, 1986

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Business Administration

Walden University

June 2019

Abstract

Most family-owned businesses in Nigeria fail to survive to the second generation, and even more fail to survive to the third generation. The problems with sustainability pose issues for individuals and communities but have not been adequately examined by researchers. The purpose of this multiple case study was to explore the strategies that family business owners use to implement succession planning required for business continuity. Succession planning theory was used as the conceptual framework. The participants for the study included leaders of 4 family businesses in Lagos, Nigeria, who have successfully implemented a succession planning strategy required for business continuity. The data were collected through semistructured face-to-face interviews. To enhance the credibility and trustworthiness of the interpretations, methodological triangulation of the data sources and member checking were used. The process of data analysis included word frequency analysis, coding of related phrases, identification of patterns, and generation of themes around the codes. The results of the data analysis revealed five themes: identifying successor leaders, focusing on leadership development, reinforcing knowledge transfer, enhancing longevity of service, and emphasizing mentor and mentee processes. Providing potential successors with valuable skills in the short term becomes valuable for the family business in the long-term, study results show. The findings may raise owners' awareness about how to implement succession planning. The positive social change implications of business longevity include stable employment opportunities and investments in communities.

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Dedication

I dedicate this study to my unborn children on the grounds that one day, they will be proud of their father. In addition, I dedicate this final piece of the doctoral study to my wife who stood by me all the way - very tough and trying times, but her love pulled us through. She often wanted me to come to bed at night or take a break, but I would not. It must have been strange for her being a single person in a married home. Finally, I dedicate this study to my late parents; my father who would have been 90 this year obtained his PhD the day I was born, which was also my mother's birthday.

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My thanks also go out to the faculty at Walden University for their tireless commitment to seeing me through. Dr Carol-Anne Faint, my chair, is an angel sent from God. She was more passionate about my study than I was - it seemed like that anyway. Her desire to support me is unsurpassed in all my life of education, and she will always have a special place in my heart. A shout out goes to Dr. Mike Lavelle who hand held me through perfecting my problem statement at the first residency and, later, as my second reader.

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Section 1: Foundation of the Study

The current failure of family-owned businesses (FOB) in Nigeria has necessitated the training of individuals with valuable skill sets in the short term who can become valuable for the business in long-term (Babey, Hagel, Montilla, Robins, & Harris, 2016). Babey et al. (2016) further pointed out that many in-service skilled workers from the 1980s era in Nigeria, who might be able to pass on their valuable skill sets, are leaving the industry at an alarming rate. In this context, inadequate preparation and the downplaying of succession planning have badly hit the industry and the future success of family businesses, affecting the rebound of business activities among small and medium enterprises (SME). I carried out a qualitative multiple case study to explore the potential influence of succession planning on knowledge transfer in the family-owned business in Nigeria. Chapter 1 includes the background of the problem, problem statement, purpose of the study, research question, conceptual framework, nature of the study, definition of terms, assumptions, limitations, delimitations, significance of the study, and a summary. The study may be significant for practice, future research, and positive social change. I collected and analyzed multiple forms of data to identify strategies that support succession planning and knowledge transfer.

Background of the Problem

An increasing number of founders of FOB are becoming eligible for retirement. This is particularly true for engineers, geologists, skilled laborers, and experienced executives. Such roles are difficult to fill because the demand is high and there are fewer individuals with experience in these areas (Babey et al., 2016). Alvani, Souteh, Jandaghi,

and Inaloo (2016) noted that slightly more than half of FOB do not have a signed, documented succession plan in place, and that a few companies recently started implementing a succession plan. Alvani et al. asserted that succession planning enables an organization to identify its knowledge gaps and to foster and train its employees, so they are able to express their desires about career development in a safe, active, and comfortable environment. Effective succession planning helps to identify positions that are critical to organization success and enhances the strategic effort to prepare individuals to take up new roles. Supporting the influence of succession planning on knowledge transfer, Alvani et al. stated that the main aim of a comprehensive succession plan should be to transfer the knowledge possessed by key individuals before they leave the organization due to retirement or voluntary exit.

The challenges arising from retirements call for a concerted effort to understand how to increase knowledge sharing and knowledge transfer in the construction sector (Ren, Deng, & Liang, 2018). Leaders have recognized the management of knowledge in technological organizations as crucial for the enhancement of knowledge sharing and creating innovation (Ren et al., 2018). Tangaraja, Rasdi, Smah, and Ismail (2016) argued that leaders struggle with harnessing and transferring technical knowledge of aging and retiring employees to the less experienced generation, which could result in a technical skill gap. Tangaraja et al. added that in a highly technical industry like the drilling sector, lack of knowledge transfer may result in loss of knowledge, reduced productivity, and decreased client satisfaction. The effect of productivity loss induced by a lack of

knowledge may lead to lost customers and reduced organizational success (Ren et al., 2018).

Exploring what succession planning strategies are needed by FOB leaders in Nigeria to promote knowledge transfer is necessary because of the limited research on the topic and its implications for businesses and the communities they serve. I found no research studies that addressed the influence of succession planning on knowledge transfer in FOB in Nigeria. A search of Walden University Library, ProQuest, and Google Scholar returned no results related to my research topic. This study is critical to family business growth in Nigeria because the retirement of aging workers without an adequate plan to enhance succession planning and the transfer of knowledge to younger generations has created a significant knowledge gap.

Problem Statement

Most FOB in Nigeria lack a succession planning process to sustain the business beyond 3 years following the death of the founder (Efferin & Hartono, 2015). Seventy percent of family businesses fail to survive to the second generation, while 88% fail to survive to the third generation (Mokhber, Rashid, Vakilbashi, Zamil, & Seng, 2017). The general business problem is that most family-owned business owners in Nigeria do not apply succession planning, which results in the collapse of the family business after the death of the founder. The specific business problem is that some family business owners lack strategies to implement succession planning required for business continuity.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore the strategies that family business owners use to implement succession planning required for business continuity. The target population for the study were owners of four family businesses in Lagos, Nigeria, that have successfully implemented a succession planning strategy required for business continuity. Implications for social change include employment sustainability, better standards of living, and job creation.

Nature of the Study

I used the qualitative method for the study. I considered three research methods: qualitative, mixed methods, and quantitative. However, the qualitative method was more appropriate because it allows the researcher to have an in-depth understanding of the case under investigation. As Tacq (2011) noted, qualitative researchers seek to understand participants' motives by interpreting nonnumerical data whereas quantitative researchers seek to understand their motives by examining hypotheses. A quantitative method, according to Bloomberg and Volpe (2012), is used to examine the strength of relationship between variables. Because I did not explore such relationships, I determined that the method was inappropriate. A mixed-methods approach was also not suitable because the mixed methods researcher uses both quantitative and qualitative data to draw conclusions based on the combined strengths of both sets of data; however, I was not seeking to explain the study phenomenon using numeric measures. Using a qualitative method allowed me to explore in depth participants' reasons for using certain strategies in their businesses.

To understand the strategies that family business owners use to implement succession planning required for business continuity, I used a multiple case study research design in which I explored each business as a case. I considered but opted against using an ethnography or phenomenological approach. In business studies, the ethnographic researcher explores a phenomenon through a cultural lens to explain business decisions within a unique context (Manning, 2016). Ethnography was not suitable because I did not study the culture of the participants. Phenomenology was also not suitable. Researchers conducting phenomenological studies seek to understand a phenomenon by exploring participants' lived experiences (Moustakas, 1994). I used a multiple case-study design because my interest was in exploring business strategies from the perspectives of participants. Use of this design required the obtainment and interpretation of descriptive information from four family business owners. Gabriele (2016) described multiple case studies as an interpretive and naturalistic approach to research.

Research Question

What strategies do family business owners use to implement succession planning required for business continuity?

Interview Questions

1. What are the strategies the family had used in ensuring business continuity?
2. What strategies are in place to involve the next generation in the family business?
3. How strategic is family members' involvement in the business helping in succession planning of this business?

4. What succession planning strategies are in place that will ensure smooth hand over of leadership to the next generation?
5. What additional information can you provide that might help me understand succession planning for your organization?

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study was succession planning theory. Mahler introduced succession planning theory in 1988. Succession planning entails developing internal people with the potential to fill key business leadership positions in the organization (Mahler, 1988). Rajapalase and Kiran (2017) identified major tenets of succession planning as continuous training of personnel, developing a hiring strategy, communicating organizational vision, having a visible commitment that promote succession planning management, and assessing future business changes and human resource requirements. Succession planning theory served as the conceptual framework to explore the strategies that family businesses use to implement succession planning required for business continuity.

Operational Definitions

Family: Family is a group of people related by blood, alliance, or adoption (Bozer, Levin, & Santora, 2017).

Family business succession: Family business succession is the generational hand over of management and ownership in a family firm (Ghee, Ibrahim, & Abdul-Halim, 2015).

Family-owned business (FOB): A family-owned business is a business in which the control and the majority of owners are within the family and at least two family members are involved in the management of the company (Singh & Bhar, 2016)

FOB leader: An FOB leader is an individual who is both a member of the business-owning family and the executive leader of the family firm (Woodfield, Woods, & Shepherd, 2017).

Financial planning business: A financial planning business is a practice designed to promote growth in market share, making a greater return on assets and predicting and solving foreseeable problems (Singh & Bhar, 2016)

Intrafamily succession: Intrafamily succession is the transfer of management to a family member who takes control of the family business when the incumbent decides to step down (Zhou, Hu, Yao, & Qin, 2016).

Leadership: Leadership is the practice of interactive influence that occurs when in a given context, some people accept someone as their leaders to achieve common goals (Silva, 2016)

Nepotism: Nepotism refers to the family business owner's preference for hiring family members rather than unrelated job applicants (Jaskiewicz, Uhlenbruck, Balkin, & Reay, 2013).

Nonfamily succession: Nonfamily succession is the transfer of management to an individual who is not part of the family (Zhou et al., 2016).

Primogeniture: Primogeniture refers to the right of the firstborn son to inherit most of the family assets, including the family firm (Gilding, Gregory, & Cosson, 2015).

Succession planning: Succession planning is a process for identifying and developing key leaders within an organization (Budhiraja & Pathak, 2018).

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

Assumptions

Assumptions are statements of belief and realistic expectations of the inquirer (Bray, Lanza, & Tan, 2015). I had four identified assumptions when conducting this research. The first assumption is that the information collected would lead to meaningful and continued learning; I assumed that the responses from study participants, who were leaders and managers of a family-owned estate management businesses, would be truthful. The second assumption is that the participants would be willing and available to participate in the data collection process. The third assumption is that the location for interviews would be conducive for data collection. The fourth assumption is that participants would offer truthful and comprehensive responses to the interview questions.

Limitations

Limitations are factors in the design or methodology of the study that affect the application or interpretation of the results of the study and are potential weaknesses of the study (Bray et al., 2015). A limitation of this study was the inclusion of FOB in Lagos; a study on this same population in other parts of Nigeria may have given a different finding. Other limitations included time, convenience, and the inability to take a broad view of data based on the chosen population; the study results may not apply to the general population or be generalizable to every organization of FOB.

Delimitations

Delimitations are boundaries for the scope of a study (Bray et al., 2015). Delimitations included the research question, the interview questions, the objectives, and the population that I chose for the study. The study took place in family-owned business companies, and the results are therefore applicable only to such companies. Only leaders or managers of the FOB participated in the study, delimiting its data and scope.

Significance of the Study

Contribution to Business Practice

The findings of the study may be of value to owners of family businesses in Lagos, Nigeria, because the information gained from the study could provide owners of family businesses with information on how to implement succession planning required for business continuity. The result of the study may be significant to government business practices, who may use these findings to educate owners of family businesses on how to plan for business continuity and prevent loss of family businesses that could result in poverty in the family and affect the community as well.

Implications for Social Change

The findings of this study may contribute to positive social change through the provision of information on business sustainability. Succession planning is therefore essential for the survival of the communities in which the businesses operate. Loss of the firm means loss of employment and disruptions detrimental to a community (Silva,

2016); by informing and empowering business leaders to improve their companies' future, this study promotes positive social change.

A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature

The specific business problem was that some family business owners lack strategies to implement succession planning required for business continuity. The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore the strategies that family business owners use to implement succession planning required for business continuity. The target population for the study were owners of four family businesses in Lagos, Nigeria, who have successfully implemented a succession planning strategy required for business continuity. The goal of the review is to present a multifaceted overview of the literature on the topic to facilitate answering the research question regarding succession planning. The analysis and synthesis of previous studies includes information regarding the background of succession planning, organizational leaders, the conceptual framework, and various aspects of succession strategy methodology.

I used databases such as Business Source Complete/Premier, ABI/INFORM Complete, and Emerald for the review. The key words or phrases that were searched included *succession*, *succession planning*, *succession leaders*, *succession strategies*, *mentorship*, *coaching*, and *FOB*. Three fourths (75%) of the peer-reviewed journal articles in the study were published between 2015 and 2018. Within this review, the following topics are considered: succession planning, post succession performance, leadership and succession in family business and small and medium enterprises, leadership transition, leadership development, knowledge transfer, knowledge transfer

theory, organizational change and succession planning, mentoring family member for leadership, mentor and mentee relationship, executive coaching, leadership replacement and grooming, and workplace transition or change. Table 1 provides information on the number and type of sources used in the study.

Table 1

Frequency of Study Sources

Sources	Within 5 years	Older than 5 years	Total
Peer-reviewed journals	80	27	106
Books	3	8	11
Total	83	35	118

Succession Planning Theory

Work by early researchers on the development of succession planning reveals varied opinions on the succession planning process. Succession planning was conceptualized over two millennia ago (Rajapalase & Kiran, 2017). About 2,000 years ago, the Roman armies relied on succession planning to replace officers killed or severely wounded in combat (Druckman, Singer, & Van Chistoryott, 1997). More recently, in the early 20th century, famed French industrialist and writer Fayol stated that certain aspects of management activities are common to all organizations. In 1916, Fayol published 14 management principles in which he claimed that management has a responsibility to ensure continued stability of tenured personnel (Rajapalase & Kiran, 2017). Fayol also argued that management has the responsibility to ensure that job security is assured;

otherwise, key positions could be taken up by an inexperienced young group (Rajapalase & Kiran, 2017). Fayol further argued that organizational strength lies within people within an organization, and when people became more skilled and prepared the organization benefits (Rajapalase & Kiran, 2017).

Many early researchers on succession planning concerned themselves primarily with senior management and chief executive officer succession (see Druckman et al., 1997). Most of these studies were limited to a particular sector and were general case studies. The earlier literature written by Whyte in 1949, Dale in 1957, and Gouldner in 1950 are a few examples, however, that readily resonate with the present (Druckman et al., 1997). Druckman et al. (1963) are credited with moving the field of succession planning forward by proposing a rationale for the importance of succession planning: first, that succession process could cause instability and, second, that succession planning is inevitable for the organization. Druckman et al. (1963) claimed that a succession process involving inside talent could lead to increased business performance.

There are different definitions of succession planning. Trepanier and Crenshaw (2013) described a succession plan as an essential business strategy that promotes effective leadership transition and continuity while maintaining productivity. Trepanier and Crenshaw (2013) emphasized the imperativeness of executives responding to the business benefits of an effective succession planning program (e.g., identifying common barriers and solutions and implementing best practices for a successful strategic succession planning program). For this study, I defined succession planning as a precise and formal effort by an organization to ensure business and leadership continuity in core

positions. Such efforts include retention and development of intellectual and capital knowledge for the future aimed at encouraging individuals to improve performance (Trepanier & Crenshaw, 2013).

The practice of succession planning traditionally is a confidential process, which makes the procedure lopsided in most organizations. A traditional approach often results in managers favoring a select group or individuals known personally to them or only close associates (Trepanier & Crenshaw, 2013). Traditional approaches negate merit and equity because of favoritism and the godfather influence (Ali & Mehreen, 2019). The attendant perception by people not selected under the traditional method can result in resentment and lack of interest and commitment to work with little or no attention paid to knowledge transfer (Ali & Mehreen, 2019). To avoid internal conflict, Trepanier and Crenshaw (2013) suggested that organizations must adopt a strategic approach and begin to prepare leaders for business continuity. Trepanier and Crenshaw (2013) examined succession plans from the perspective of organizations strategizing to avoid the consequences of an unavailable replacement for a key leader.

Alternate Theory

Systems thinking theory. Since the 1970s, leaders have employed systems thinking (ST) within organizational structures. ST has been reshaped and refined by researchers over the years as more research and data have been gathered on the theory (Breite & Kroskinen, 2014). ST as an organizational change theory provides a broad view of organizational structures and patterns and how they intertwine and interact with one another (Eshkol & Eshkol, 2017). The theory essentially portrays the organization as a

system that works as a whole and not as separate parts, highlighting the interconnectedness of the entire organization (Eshkol & Eshkol, 2017). It breaks down the vertical or silo systems within an organization and creates an internal system structure that mirrors the external system structure (Breite & Kroskinen, 2014). ST is used to promote performance improvement because it encourages and focuses on communication across departments.

When implemented, the theory of ST brings more attention to interactions than components; focuses on the long-term results rather than short term ones; and creates cooperation rather than fear, blame, and internal competition (Silverster, Harriman, Walley, & Burley, 2014). This allows more to be accomplished than would be individually. Interagency relationships are developed because of systems thinking whereas with non-systematic thinking each department has to depend on external agencies and consultants (Eshkol & Eshkol, 2017). Departments are structured to work together instead of in isolation, which can lead to collaborative and well-thought-out plans (Silverster et al., 2014). Midlevel management can better review and influence individual as well as departmental performance and can make recommendations for performance changes at the individual, department, or organizational level (Eshkol & Eshkol, 2017). Incorporating this method creates a team decision-making atmosphere that can include a very diverse range of views. The strengths of ST include the organization focusing on openness, interdependence, interconnectedness, and networking among departments, and succession planning (Kumar, Ghildayal, & Ghildayal, 2017). There is a

sense of working together as a whole instead of as one part or section. A quality system can enhance customer service and the competency of the organization.

The systems approach also allows for continuous incremental improvement, organizational learning, and feedback loops (Kumar et al., 2017). Overall, systems can assist individuals with personal and professional growth through organizational career ladders. The idea is that an employee should start in one position and strive to move to a higher position within the same organization. By having systems, the employee can network with people in the desired area to gather ideas on what skills the employee would need to learn and possibly what avenues to take to be successful (Ali & Mehreen, 2019). The focus on long-term successes is very important for sustainability through any situation. In order to make ST an integral part of the organization, managers should continuously monitor higher levels of improvement and align any feedback to the identified goals of the organization (Ali & Mehreen, 2019). These aspects of ST mirror those of succession planning as both have a goal of focusing on the long-term success and development of the organization and the employee. I used ST in this study as a framework to understand how SME think ahead and transit the first generation of leaders into the next generation of leaders through succession planning (Breite & Kroskinen, 2014; Silvester et al., 2014).

Theory of planned behavior. In 1985, Azjen proposed the theory of planned behaviour (TPB) with the aim to explain individuals' nonintentional behavior which is not supported by rational action (Carr & Sequeira, 2007). From the TPB viewpoint, the intent of the incumbent for intrafamily leadership succession rather than extrafamily

succession depends on several antecedents including the number of children, the number of family shareholders, and the incumbent's emotional attachment to the firm (Efferin & Hartono, 2015). Based on the TPB, Carr and Sequeira (2007) suggested that exposure to family business before becoming the successor of a family business influences the intergenerational succession behaviour in family firms. The exposure shapes entrepreneurial intent by affecting the attitudes toward business ownership, perceived family support, and entrepreneurial self-efficacy (Carr & Sequeira, 2007). Those attitudes also support successors with regard to potentially creating their own businesses and setting up new start-ups (Carr & Sequeira, 2007). From the TPB perspective, family businesses not only create jobs, they also impact economic growth and provide tax income for local authorities. Family businesses also have the additional benefit of acting as business incubators for future start-ups by influencing the offspring of business owners to engage in business activities (Carr & Sequeira, 2007).

Transformational leadership theory. The third theory used to ground the current study was transformational theory. Burns (1978) inferred that transformational leadership theory espouses the influence leaders can have on succession planning and knowledge sharing. Transformational leadership theory presupposes that followers commit wholly to the role of relationship within the expectations of their leaders--in this case, the leaders' role in knowledge sharing and the succession planning process (Burns, 1978). My research drew from the influence of transformational leadership on employees' knowledge sharing behavior when they are engaged in a succession-planning program. Tsai, Wang, and Yuan (2015) affirmed that transformational leadership has a

positive effect on the ability of the members to align with an organizational goal (Burns, 1978).

Imran, Iiyas, Aslam, and Rahman (2016) argued that transformational leaders could promote enduring social exchange between the organization and the employees by breaking down self-interest barriers to embracing organizational interest and, ultimately, reducing turnover intention and behavior. The implication of transformational theory is the influence leaders have on trainees during knowledge exchange while grooming them for leadership positions (Badara, Johari, & Yean, 2015). Research has shown that visible leadership commitments play a positive mediating role between transformational leadership and employee competence and job performance (Tsai et al., 2015). Supporting this argument, Qu, Janssen, and Shi (2016) added that transformational leaders enable followers to focus on goal attainment, sound ethical norms, and personal sacrifice towards goal achievement.

Qu et al. (2016) asserted that achieving individual goals through transformational leaders could leverage knowledge transfer under an efficient succession planning process. Other theories researchers have used to support the influences of knowledge transfer include lifespan development theories (Baltes, 1987), socioemotional selectivity theory (Carstensen, 1991), and the theory of psychosocial development (Qu et al., 2016). These theories provide useful lenses to explain evidential changes in individual motivation over one's lifespan. Employee's age in service derives from the lifespan development theory, socioemotional selectivity theory, and the theory of psychosocial development.

Baltes (1987) argued that personal growth is a lifelong process in which there is simultaneous growth and decline during the lifespan. The socioemotional selectivity theory propounded by Carstensen (1991) examined age-induced changes and proposed that subjective perceptions of remaining employment time have an influence on the choice of personal goals. Carstensen, Isaacowitz, and Charles (1999) argued that individuals who perceive their work duration as limited tend to prioritize social values and emotional goals and focus on immediate benefits. Conversely, a similar perception by older and retiring workers could result in increased motivation to share knowledge (Deller, Liedtke, & Maxin, 2009) and engage in mentoring behaviors to build emotionally satisfying relationships (Beehr & Bennett, 2015).

Succession Planning

Most family businesses and SME appear to struggle with leadership succession between different generations of family members. Bozer, Levin, and Santora (2017) examined why most family businesses struggled to survive after management succession and noted the linkages between the level of preparation of successors, the nature of the relationship between the family members with the business, and the performance of the firm after succession. There is a significant relationship between the preparation of the successors, which in itself is affected by the relationship between the family and the business, and the smoothness of the succession process (Bozer et al., 2017). Bozer et al. pointed out that companies should pay attention to the relevant factors that impact the effectiveness of leadership succession to ensure post succession survival.

Personal factors of both the potential successor and the incumbent have the greatest impacts on the succession process followed by the nature of intrafamily relationships (Bozer et al., 2017). Researchers contend that the leadership succession process impacts the performance of most family businesses. For example, Bozer et al. (2017) argued that there is a positive correlation between the succession process and post-succession performance and that the success of a family business after a transition is significantly impacted by how well the process went. Furthermore, Parada and Dawson (2017) explored the relationship between leadership practices and business performance of the founders and subsequent generation of leaders of family firms and noted that there was a significant association between leadership practices of the first-generation founders and the performance of family businesses.

Parada and Dawson (2017) argued that the apparent inexperience of the second generation of family leaders impacted the performance and survival of family businesses after a transition. The authors also asserted that the lack of leadership experience of the second and subsequent generations of family business leadership could be the major factor in the high failure rates of family businesses. Vadjnal and Ljubotina (2016) explained the reasons for the persistent failure of family businesses especially after a transition of leadership. However, Vadjnal and Ljubotina pointed out that despite the importance of systematic preparations of the successors, even when the process is informal, to the effectiveness of the succession process, the smoothness of the succession process does not guarantee a successful post-succession financial performance. Incumbent leaders in family businesses significantly influence the outcomes of the

transition process. Vadnjal and Ljubotina highlighted the factors that influenced transition in family businesses in various European countries. Vadnjal and Ljubotina pointed out that the goals and objectives of the incumbent entrepreneur who initiates and manages the succession process, the level of preparation of the potential successor through training, internships in businesses outside of the family, the skills and professional discipline of both the incumbent, and the successor affected the outcome of succession processes.

Leadership and Succession in Family Business

SME succession is unique for each case and no one-size-fits-all list of strategies captures the complexity and heterogeneity of SME businesses and their roads to success (Helin & Jabri, 2016). Private enterprise is a continuing process, which includes not only building and identifying, but also exiting the business (Helin & Jabri, 2016). A primary focus for exit in SME businesses is through succession, which is a development rather than a single occurrence (Helin & Jabri, 2016; Xu, Yuan, Jiang, & Chan, 2015). Helin and Jabri (2016) studied the succession in SME regarding entrepreneurial transition from one generation to the next, rather than the issue of management of transition and transfer of resources.

Leadership and Succession in Small and Medium Enterprises

Vadnjal and Ljubotina (2016) distinguished four factors relevant to the succession processes: (a) environmental (external) factors, (b) firm-level factors, (c) individual and interpersonal factors (including pre-succession, planning succession, managing succession, post-succession), and (d) multilevel factors. SME succession can relate to

both the entrepreneurial exit of a previous owner and the entry of new owners in the pursuit of entrepreneurial opportunities (Helin & Jabri, 2016). Planning and design of an SME succession procedure vary substantially depending on how the SME leaders, usually the owners, desire to continue their business after their retreat and how they choose to implement their plans (Helin & Jabri, 2016). To better comprehend the succession process, it is essential to understand how SME owners make choices about the type of transactions they intend to engage in, including intrafamily succession, out of family succession, or no succession (Helin & Jabri, 2016).

Leadership transition. As leadership in SMEs is part of the organization's culture, the cultural context of a family business and the particular behaviors of its members are essential components in developing the leadership in an SME (Efferin & Hartono, 2015). Leadership and management control systems (MCSs) in an SME are embedded in the social culture as the SME leader too is the product and not the creator of this social culture. The most prevalent cultural control is based on collective family norms and facilitates management of processes and results. MCSs in SMEs emerge from the social culture, enculturation, leader's values, worker's values, and exchanges between SME members blended with rational and logical considerations of the SME leader when dealing with the forces at work in the business environment (Efferin & Hartono, 2015). Transformation of leadership styles and MCS practices are a result of business pragmatism in combination with family business cultural influences. In family firms, as compared to SME, leadership succession is often the result of a process that starts with identifying an heir in the family well in advance. In the case of an only child, the

selection process is usually straightforward with the crown prince or princess being the natural successor of the family firm (Efferin & Hartono, 2015). In relay succession, in which trust and mutual respect are key to success, both the incumbent and successor understand the role of SEW endowment in the SME, allowing more room during the transition period to focus on financial and economic performance of the SME, since the importance to protect the family endowment is inherent (Efferin & Hartono, 2015). Similarly, when family members are sharing the same vision and significance for the family business, they act as custodians who highlight the SME's interest (Efferin & Hartono, 2015). As a result, the incumbent is more likely to single out a successor sharing that vision (Efferin & Hartono, 2015). Leadership change matters to an organization (Vivian & Hormann, 2015). The unexpected departure of a Boomer leader is a traumatic event (Vivian & Hormann, 2015) affecting staff behavior, organizational performance, and ultimately the organization's survival. Both novice and interim leaders have challenges to overcome. Novice leaders replacing experienced Boomer leaders needed greater organizational support, training, and assistance with navigating human resource processes (Vivian & Hormann, 2015).

Individual characteristics, choices, and experiences contributed to interims making sense of the roles as either caretakers or trailblazers (Vivian & Hormann, 2015). Leadership transition, which influences organizational culture, was a sensitive time in an organization's existence (Yin et al., 2014). The executive leader, such as a Chief Executive Officer (CEO), is the party most responsible for the strategic change of an organization (Vignoli, Mariani, Guglielmi & Violante, 2018). Consequences of executive

turnover include the cost of paying off the old CEO and the expenses of conducting a search for a new CEO, and instability in the organization (Vignoli et al., 2018).

Transition can also have negative effects on the leader. The more effective the leader, the better for the development of the organization; ineffective leader takeover led to decline regardless of the other efforts in the organization (Vignoli et al., 2018). The sensemaking process for a leader's transition to a new administrative leadership role experienced inhibition by the isolation from honest conversation, the inability to process thoughts aloud for fear of misunderstandings, and the lack of reflection time (Vignoli et al., 2018). Leader burnout might have resulted from a conflict between values and the challenges of a leadership role (Vignoli et al., 2018). For instance, fulfilling a selfless mission such as feeding the poor was in direct conflict with attending a fundraising event (Vignoli et al., 2018). Education and training facilitated a smoother transition by providing a reference group for the leader to connect with during the transition (Vignoli et al., 2018). Interview sessions between incumbents and successors were a strategy for successful leadership transition (Vignoli et al., 2018). The interviews resulted in knowledge generation that, over the long-term, benefitted the organization through the succession (Vignoli et al., 2018). Planned leadership transition was the essence of succession planning. Research in different NPO sectors reported a significant lack of succession planning (Vignoli et al., 2018).

The prospect of identifying a suitable successor requires looking beyond the local market. Migration to another culture for work resulted in rejection experiences by members of the host culture (Slocum, 2015). An effective multicultural leadership

practice included allowing employees to learn about other cultures and observing lifestyles while giving the employees' time to process the experiences (Slocum, 2015). Processing may result in improved cultural awareness (Slocum, 2015). As well, training in the context of the country or region was a best practice to incorporate individualized diversity and inclusion practices in the area where the organization operated (Slocum, 2015). Cross-cultural work experiences supplied relevant perspectives to leaders in the leaders' country of origin (Slocum, 2015).

Leadership development. Intentional leadership development in an organization was a succession planning strategy for developing new leaders for leadership role (Belasen & Belasen, 2016). Understanding what leaders need to make sense of the new roles was how organizations improved the selection of leadership successors (Belasen & Belasen, 2016). Formal leadership development was necessary to convey the requirements of leadership as well as to support existing leaders with the tools necessary to feel more equipped in the positions (Belasen & Belasen, 2016). Implementation of leadership development strategies included evaluation of organizational commitment to leadership development and the assessment of resources for leadership development (Rohr, 2016).

Development of leadership identity and self-regulation as in goal orientation were integral to leadership development (Rohr, 2016). Researchers suggested individuals interested in leadership growth should proactively identify and create opportunities, owning the process of succession into leadership positions (Rohr, 2016). Mentoring was a tool for identifying future leaders and for helping others to divert careers to alternate

paths if not suitable for the new responsibilities of leadership positions (Belmonte, Seaman, & Bent, 2017). According to Rohr (2016), mentoring strategy involved formal and informal career growth opportunities; identification of potential leaders and mentors; articulation of the desired leadership traits; development of a plan including available resources and strategies with an experienced leader to champion the effort.

A mentoring experience allowed the mentor and mentee to focus on how to do things rather than solely why certain activities were necessary (Belmonte et al., 2017). In succession strategy, the focus was on whether a new leader drives strategic change or if the circumstances of the succession influence the leader to make changes (Belmonte et al., 2017). The discussion of internal and external succession and board involvement proved relevant to succession planning efforts (Klein & Salk, 2013). Exploration of the difference in the incumbent and successor's mentality in the succession process was relevant (Belmonte et al., 2017). Over the decades, the literature on leadership succession, regardless of whether the succession was internal or external, affected organizational stability and organizational stakeholders (Belmonte et al., 2017). More recently, similar effects of internal and external leadership succession were also evident in religious nonprofits such as church congregations (Belmonte et al., 2017; Rohr, 2016).

Knowledge Transfer

Knowledge transfer attitudes, knowledge transfer activities, and generational cohort work ethic considerations were relevant to the discussion of succession planning (Daghfous & Ahmad, 2015). Knowledge transfer is a context in which organizations can implement succession planning strategies. Planned leadership succession, including the

cooperation of the leader, allowed for knowledge transfer over several years and was beneficial to an NPO (Daghfous & Ahmad, 2015). Knowledge transfer theory is the conceptual framework for describing succession planning strategies of Boomer leaders in faith-based nonprofits. Knowledge management was an organizational effort to capture tacit knowledge or informal sharing and explicit knowledge or formally documented information within the context of the organization's culture and training efforts (Daghfous & Ahmad, 2015). Knowledge transfer was described by Daghfous and Ahmad (2015) as the passing of tacit business information and processes from one individual to another cultivated by proactive human resource management practices. Succession planning strategy necessitates understanding knowledge transfer practices between generational cohorts.

Knowledge transfers between two types of individuals: experts and novices. Experts are vital to organizations because experts possess specialized individual knowledge, know how to locate codified knowledge of methods and procedures, and solve problems efficiently (Daghfous & Ahmad, 2015). Experts also have extensive skills acquisition, years of experience, and exhibit high performance in a domain of expertise (Daghfous & Ahmad, 2015). Daghfous and Ahmad (2015) found individuals consider other experts by coworkers if the individuals have more than 10 years of domain experience and authoritative knowledge in an area of practice. Differences in knowledge among novices and experts are the gaps individuals work to fill when transferring knowledge (Daghfous & Ahmad, 2015). Identification of novice and expert employees is essential for determining an appropriate knowledge transfer process. Novice employees

often require more structured knowledge transfer processes compared to expert employees who may use unstructured methods including adaptation and fusion to transfer knowledge effectively (Krylova, Vera, & Crossan, 2016).

Knowledge transfer models. A challenge for managers is to develop a strategy to transfer tacit and explicit knowledge from expert employees to others in an organization. Krylova et al. (2016) conducted a narrative review of knowledge transfer literature and identified 28 different knowledge transfer models proposed by other researchers. The 28 models did not contain every common component identified, adding to the potential confusion of managers trying to develop a strategy. Krylova et al. (2016) identified three main types of transfer processes from the 28 models reviewed. Three types of knowledge transfer processes identified were linear, cyclical, and a dynamic multidirectional process. Ahmed, Rima, and Shirahada (2018) found cyclical processes most frequently. The cyclical processes were similar to the linear models with the exception of a loop back to the beginning of the model depicting an interactive and ongoing process. Synthesizing information from the 28 knowledge transfer models and three types of knowledge transfer processes studied, Kuciapski (2017) proposed a dynamic multidirectional process as a foundation for future research. The dynamic multidirectional process proposed has five components each linked to the others. The components are problem identification and communication, knowledge/research development and selection, contextual analysis of barriers, knowledge transfer activities or interventions, and knowledge utilization (Kuciapski, 2017). Ahmed et al. (2018) suggested multidirectional linkages between each component in which any component

may occur without regard to preceding another. Although untested, Kuciapski (2017) suggested the multidirectional framework model provides necessary contextual flexibility. The framework also accurately reflected the need for simultaneous actions of individual components by managers creating knowledge transfer strategies in organizations.

The concept of knowledge transfer has roots in the research of Daghfous and Ahmad (2015) on how the human mind can learn and improve in an activity. Daghfous and Ahmad (2015) expounded by applying the research to mental acuity concepts formulated in learning and training. Knowledge transfer theory incorporated tacit and explicit knowledge (Krylova, Vera, & Crossan, 2016). Definition of external knowledge included grounded (prior experience) or idealized (no prior experience) knowledge (Krylova et al., 2016). The derivation of base knowledge was from education differing from the experiential knowledge that builds on the base knowledge acquired through practice (Joe et al., 2013). The introduction of new knowledge in an organization with previous knowledge formulated tension (Krylova et al., 2016). Knowledge creation took place through a disruption of a leadership transition and manifested through the organization's response (Krylova et al., 2016). Organizational culture dictated knowledge transfer activities (Krylova et al., 2016). Intentionally managing knowledge transfer reduced the negative effects of knowledge loss (Krylova et al., 2016).

Organizational Change and Succession Planning

Organizational members tend to engage in undertaking planned change initiatives based on their perceived need to close a gap between the current state and the desired

future state (Castillo, Ferandez, & Sallan, 2018). Once the top leadership decides to proceed with change, the implementation of planned organizational change centers on all organizational leaders adopting the role of change agents influencing their followers in order to achieve a particular end state (Castello et al., 2018). The implicit assumption of this perspective is that the formulated changes are to benefit the organization and that their implementation needs to adhere to plans (Castillo et al., 2018). Whether individuals embrace proposed organizational changes depends on a cost-benefit analysis of the personal implications of the content and the process of change leading to the emergence of attitudes (Castillo et al., 2018). Employees' attitudes constitute a critical factor on the implementation of change whereas positive, negative, and ambivalent attitudes relate to notions of readiness and resistance to change (Castillo et al., 2018).

Change disrupts the normal patterns of functioning in an organization and almost immediately triggers a process of sense making in individuals (Park & Kim, 2015). Organizational members engage in gathering and interpreting information, as well as on responding to these new set of events (Park & Kim, 2015). They begin to form change-related beliefs leading to attitudinal responses as soon as they become aware of potential changes in the organization (Park & Kim, 2015). Employees' attitudes have profound implications for the totality of organizational change. Park and Kim (2015) revealed that organizational members assigned positive or negative valence to change that has negative or positive outcomes of the overall change.

Literature on organizational change relates positive attitudes towards change to an individual's readiness, openness, and commitment to organizational change. In line with

the theory of planned behavior, researchers conceptualized readiness to change as a cognitive state in which an individual enacts change-supporting behaviors based on personal beliefs, attitudes, and intentions (Oxenswardh & Fredriksson, 2016).

Oxenswarddh and Fredriksson (2016) described readiness to change as a set of assumptions and expectations, as well as impressions related to the proposed organizational change. Change may involve one or more elements of the organizational system, or it may involve a realignment of the whole system, affecting all of the key elements; strategy, work, people, and formal and informal processes and structures (Oxenswardh & Fredriksson, 2016).

Mentoring Family Member for Leadership

Two forms of mentoring that typically occur in the workplace are formal and informal. In a formal relationship, a third party, usually the employer matches the mentor and protégé. In an informal relationship, the mentor and protégé find each other. A great body of research exists for formal mentoring programs in a variety of settings (Le Comte & McClelland, 2017). Teacher preparation programs in colleges have used the mentor protégé model for years when preparing novice teachers for the classroom. Medical professionals have used mentoring when assisting inexperienced colleagues with transitioning into the field. The legal profession has used this model when new attorneys join a law firm. For the purposes of this project study, the focus was on the office workplace setting. As noted earlier when discussing terminology, the differences between a formal mentoring program and an informal program were defined. Le Comte and McClelland (2017) inferred that formal mentoring programs are highly structured and

linked to the organization's mission and goals. Approximately one-third of large American companies report they have formal mentoring programs in place (Le Comte & McClelland, 2017). Organization's employees, mentors and protégé develop relationships in the organization which are based on response to data collection from mentees (Le Comte & McClelland, 2017). The inventory includes demographic information, a short biography, career progression, and successes. Formal mentoring programs typically have prescribed goals identified by the organization. They are usually tied directly to the organization's strategic plan or mission statement (Le Comte & McClelland, 2017). Formal mentoring programs include a prescribed length of time, generally 6-12 months whereas the average informal relationship lasts 3-6 years (Le Comte & McClelland, 2017).

An additional hallmark of formal programs is that of evaluation. Mentors and protégés evaluate each other as well as the effectiveness of the program on a regular basis. Supporting the organization's leaders is relevant in developing and encouraging participation in mentoring program. In doing so, the leadership conveys the message that mentoring is important and valued. Mentoring program relates directly to perceived organization support system (Connolly, 2017). Huan, Yongyuan, Sheng, and Qinchao (2017) described POS as the relationship an employee has with the employer and the perceptions associated with the relationship. In particular, when an employee feels that the employer is committed to them, they in turn feel committed to the employer (Connolly, 2017). Finally, because many formal mentoring programs come with training for both the mentor and the protégé in a group setting there is an increased chance for

information to be shared because of the group activities (Connolly, 2017). Connolly (2017) suggested that frequently formal mentoring programs have difficulty retaining highly qualified mentors. However, they found through their study that committed protégés might attract mentors and support their retention for future protégés to access. They suggested that organizations consider protégé-mentor commitment during the evaluation process of a mentoring program. Connolly (2017) suggested that further research is needed to determine the long-term and short-term benefits associated with formal and informal mentoring. A similar determination was suggested by Connolly (2017) to investigate why mentoring works, so that organizations can provide better experiences for their employees. Connolly (2017) recommended the re-evaluation of non-traditional formal mentoring programs for in-depth understanding of group and individual mentoring programs.

Unlike formal mentoring programs, informal mentoring relationships develop on their own without assistance from a third party. The two generally find each other because they are attracted to each other and they feel a sense of similarity with each other Shanks (2017). The relationship is, therefore, driven by the needs of the two involved Shanks (2017). When mentors and protégés find each other, there is *chemistry* between them, there is a reason they were attracted to each other Shanks (2017). Informal relationships formed naturally and without time constraints develop and flourish if both parties remain involved, although the nature of the relationship may change over the months or years Shanks (2017). An informal mentoring relationship has little structure and oversight and may not have a clear and defined outcome Shanks (2017). This lack of

structure is not reflective of the commitment level of the dyad; in fact, in an informal mentoring relationship the commitment level is very high because they came together without assistance Shanks (2017). To an outside observer the meetings between a mentor and protégé appear as casual and unstructured, regardless of the fact that the participants may have established their own norms with regard to meeting Shanks (2017). As informal mentoring programs and relationships lack structure, they are extremely difficult to evaluate due to the variety of variables Shanks (2017).

Shanks (2017) indicated that the informal mentor provides more support for issues arising in the moment when compared with formal mentors. Formal mentors, in contrast, are more likely to initiate contact with the mentee, guide the mentee in achieving performance standards, and observe the mentee's teaching to offer constructive feedback at specific intervals. The authors concluded that formal and informal mentoring are complementary, and both are necessary dimensions of new teacher development. In a mixed methods study with 23 beginning teachers, Sowell (2017) discovered similar results to the study in relation to the value of informal mentoring. Novice teachers who worked with colleagues in professional learning teams benefited from collaborative mentoring networks to receive more additional resources than their formal mentors provided. While the work of Sowell (2017) supported the importance of informal mentoring for novice teachers, their studies were conducted with participants who interacted in-person.

A gap in the literature remained regarding whether informal mentoring that is offered virtually could provide effective support to novice teachers. In addition to the

difference a formal or informal mentor has on a mentor's characteristics, whether the mentor is internal or external also impacts the mentor's interactions. Internal mentors are located within a novice's school building, but external mentors are experienced teachers with similar subject expertise as the novice, but they do not work in the same building and may interact in-person and/or remotely (McIntyre & Hobson, 2016). Mentees did not perceive this same freedom with their internal mentors. Mentees, however, did perceive the external support as non-judgmental and therefore helpful in enhancing their knowledge of subject matter and pedagogy.

External mentors also helped to connect the novices to a new, and wider, network of professionals to support their practice. McIntyre and Hobson (2016) concluded that external mentors provide discourse about teaching that offers a refuge and reflexive space not available within school buildings, allowing new teachers to take risks without the pressures of hierarchical relationships in their schools. McIntyre and Hobson (2016) examined the benefits of external mentors for the professional development of beginning teachers even though their research demonstrated that external mentors could provide effective support, participants in their study interacted in-person.

The study on succession planning in FOB may help to fill a gap in research by demonstrating that external mentors who use DCTs to connect with novices in online environments could offer quality support to beginning teachers. Displaying vulnerability about their own challenges can help mentors build trust in mentoring relationship too (Kolman, Roegman, & Goodwin, 2017). Additional studies underscore the importance of trusting relationships. When mutual trust is fostered through exchanging ideas as

colleagues, and the mentee is put at ease from a fear of judgment for exposing weaknesses, the mentoring relationship fosters knowledge construction (Kolman et al, 2017). Sowell (2017) emphasized that a trusting relationship with a mentor facilitates the mentee opening his or her practice to observation and feedback and to reflecting on practice. Supportive mentors also maintain a positive tone during the mentoring process (Kolman, et al, 2017). They affirm the mentee, buffer feedback, focus on novice growth, orchestrate opportunities for the mentee to be successful, and provide reassurance (Kolman et al, 2017). In addition to expressing a positive tone directly to the mentee, effective mentors also maintain a positive perspective about their profession and their role in the profession. In a longitudinal case study of a mentor who successfully helped three beginning teachers develop discussion-based teaching, (Kolman et al, 2017) discovered the mentor had strong beliefs about effective teaching and was committed to educational reform that brought best practices to students. The mentor saw herself as an important leader and co-learner who held novice teachers accountable for implementing new and effective instructional practices.

Mentor and mentee relationship. Gisbert-Trejo, Landeta, Albizu, and Fernandez-Ferrin (2018) found out that regardless of income level, FOB requires adequate supports intellectually, interpersonally, and emotionally from supportive mentors. Gisbert-Trejo et al. (2018) further evaluated that most youth mentored by none parents were reported to be better planners, organizers, and problem-solvers. Mains and MacLean (2017) identified that to be a good mentor, you have to be supportive of youth

initiative, be an active listener, you push-just enough, have authentic interest in youth, foster self-decision making, and lead perspective.

Executive Coaching

Attempting to describe the executive coaching (EC) process can be challenging considering that executive coaching processes tend to be highly individualized. Some executive coaching sessions may involve only the coach and the executive. In other cases, the coaching process can incorporate the coached and some of her superiors and subordinates (Anthony, 2017). Still, in other situations the coached assumes the characteristics of a team (for instance: a sales team, customer service team, or a project team). However, there are some elements that are common to most EC processes and I discussed those commonalities next. Reyes and Holladay (2016) divided the coaching process into four phases: data gathering, feedback, implementation of the intervention, and evaluation of the coaching intervention.

The coaching contract should specify the costs of the services, the length of service, the duration of coaching sessions, and the rules of disclosure and confidentiality. During the first phase, it is important that the executive coach ensure that the prospective coached understands the nature of coaching and how it differs from other helping processes such as counseling and mentoring (Anthony, 2017; Reyes & Holladay, 2016). The coach and coached work together to accomplish the previously agreed-upon objectives, to modify the coaching plan if necessary, and to work on strategies for overcoming barriers that hinder change (Reyes & Holladay, 2016). Once the structured periodic coaching sessions are completed some coaches enter the final phase (evaluation)

where the coach assesses the change achieved, gathers information from the coached and others involved in the process, and provides ongoing support to ensure that the progress made is permanent (Reyes & Holladay, 2016). This alliance is where the coach begins to establish the coaching relationship with the executive in training. Cosner, Walker, Swanson, Hebert, and Whalen (2018) called this stage the alliance check. One executive coach characteristic that can continue to contribute to a strong coaching alliance is good interpersonal skills. Cosner et al. (2018) noted that executive coaches seek to change the behaviors of the coached by fostering one-on-one interactions at crucial instances in the career of executives. Self-confidence is also essential in the EC process. Cosner et al. (2018) noted that executive coaches should be confident but at the same time they should remain humble. Lee and Frisch warned that not seeking validation, credit, or even acknowledgment is a difficult part of being a coach.

Leadership Replacement and Grooming

Finding a replacement for key leaders within an organization may present challenges for the FOB or small medium enterprises (SME) because some organizations fail to address the problem surrounding the shortage of qualified leaders (Ni, Rorrer, Pounder, Young, & Korach, 2019). Kumar and Moorthy (2015) revealed the solution for retaining the skills and expertise of key leaders within an organization is the early identification and grooming of talented employees to eliminate the cost of external hire. Kumar and Moorthy (2015) reported that employees' feel empowered when they are recognized and mentored to work autonomously for future leadership positions. Therefore, recognizing and routinely identifying the best-fit candidates for internal

leadership opportunities adds value to the organization and eliminates the gap in leadership replacement. Additionally, strategically designing a framework for leadership succession planning might be instrumental in the grooming of talented employees with the leadership skill-set needed to replace outgoing leaders.

Kumar and Moorthy (2015) stated that years ago organizational leaders were the only decision-makers in the selection and grooming of a potential leader, which led to selection bias, the practice of nepotism, and deterioration in corporate morale. Cairns further stated that effective succession planning requires a thorough assessment of the potential leaders' current level of skills and competence to ensure stability in leadership and corporate performance. Designing and executing a well-developed program tailored to the grooming of executive-level leaders maybe instrumental in retaining talented employees, promoting knowledge transfer and preventing leadership shortage to maintain a competitive edge in a highly lucrative SME. Knowledge transfer is the ubiquitous sharing of knowledge acquired from leaders within the organization through mentoring, training programs, and networking to improve the efficiency of the organization (Kumar & Moorthy, 2015). Knowledge transfer also enables the exploitation of existing knowledge from leaders to promote a continuum in organizational success.

Knowledge transfer is one of the most important strategies used by SME executive-level leaders to facilitate succession planning and foster a competitive edge (Kumar & Moorthy, 2015). Knowledge transfer is not necessarily a replication of knowledge; but instead, a modification of existing knowledge to strengthening communication and skills gained from outgoing leaders to a new generation of top

executives. To prepare skilled workers for future leadership positions tacit knowledge transfer is an important tool used by leaders to maintain knowledge capital and facilitate succession planning (Donate & Sánchez de Pablo, 2015). Donate and Sánchez de Pablo (2015) claimed that knowledge transfer acquired internally could promote innovation and a higher level of performance. Therefore, knowledge transfer not only improves the productivity and profitability of organizations; but it also enhances the company's core values. Knowledge transfer according to Donate and Sánchez de Pablo (2015) is a strategy organization leader's use as a measure to maintain productivity and efficiency. Knowledge transfer is critical to facilitating succession planning, promoting organizational efficiency, making informed decisions, and supporting role modeling (Donate & Sánchez de Pablo, 2015). Donate and Sánchez de Pablo (2015) proffered that the sudden departure of key leaders within an organization could adversely affect the transfer of knowledge to potential successors. Donate and Sánchez de Pablo (2015) stated that leaders should forecast the approximate departure of key leaders to facilitate succession planning and knowledge capital.

Workplace Transition or Change

A survey utilizing 351 subordinates in two Denmark organizations took place over time and the study followed the planned realization of team regulation at two occasions (Mains & MacLean, 2017). A structural equation modeling process was used to analyze the data. The followers evaluated the change more positively when the managers were more committed. The results have implications for the leadership style leaders should adopt during periods or change. This study was the first to use longitudinal data in

addressing the explicit and implicit results of leadership style on followers' perceptions of change. According to Bozer, Levin, and Santora (2017), transition from one sector to another often includes variations in interactional values and norms. In other words, the sociolinguistic rules for interaction differ between groups. Should the move entail going to a different country, the societal norms and ethical system might vary enormously, but significant differences can occur between organizations as well.

Bozer et al. (2017) used video recordings to study the communication conventions in New Zealand where the egalitarian nature of the society makes itself heard in the communicational conventions in the workplace as well. When one joins a new group or organization, the norms for interaction of that society must be acquired to fit in. Holten and Brenner (2015) addressed the feelings of newly appointed library staff at academic institutions and the adjustment process in the workplace. In the process of organizational socialization, young recruits often have set expectations about the workplace that do not necessarily coincide with reality. A study was conducted with new appointees at academic libraries in Canada, to find out what the differences there were between the expected workplace and reality with a view to draft training and orientation activities that could address these discrepancies.

Holten and Brenner (2015) found that there were several areas that new appointees had little pre-existing information as opposed to being well informed in other areas. Aspects like work skills and the organizational customs were in need of training. Holten and Brenner (2015) aimed to discover the series of actions that might cause positive responses to change. The circumstances that led to the change and the overt

responses were the authors' focus of attention whereby they examined the explicit and implicit relationships between transformational and transactional leadership approaches and the subordinates' evaluation of how the manager instituted the change. In New Zealand, the egalitarian nature of the society requires one to keep formality to the minimum, which results in linguistically distinguishing features. Furthermore, there is a preference for using names, so even the leader is called by his name instead of "sir," as the society is uncomfortable with displays of power and therefore avoids linguistic tags that could display it. Humor and swearing are commonly used in the workplace and even during large meetings.

Swensen, Gorringer, Caviness, and Peter (2016) added the frequent use of eh during workplace conversations. Workplace talk provides an ideal learning field for the acquisition of new norms and values; it does, however, take time to fit in with the new group linguistically. Swensen et al., (2016) discussed the use of metaphorical language in a governmental section in New Zealand in a study that followed the transition of a Chinese worker. The metaphorical language pattern used during the socialization process seemed to play a pivotal role in establishing the concept of the way we do things around here. Language conventions are essential factors of what may be said or done in which situations and to whom; without sensitivity to these structures the new leader may take longer than expected to become familiar with the new team and may not be easily accepted by the team due to this. Leaders (CEOs) are still vulnerable to the need to adapt to the new organizational values and conventions upon transition to a new organization.

Transition

Section 1 of the study contains the foundation and background of the study laying out the structure of the problem. Barriers confronting family-business owners who lack strategies to implement succession planning requires for business continuity need strategies in developing internal people with the potential to fill key business leadership position in the organization. The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study is to explore the strategies that family business owners use to implement succession planning required for business continuity. The target population for the study were owners of four family businesses in Lagos, Nigeria, who have successfully implemented a succession planning strategy required for business continuity. The research question pertained to strategies that family business owners could use to implement succession planning required for business continuity. The conceptual framework for this study was succession planning theory, with major tenets as developing a hiring strategy, communication of organizational vision, visible commitment that promote succession planning management, and assessing future business changes and human resource requirements. Section 2 includes a restatement of the purpose of the results of the study along with the role of the researcher, participants, research method and design, population and sample, geographic location, data collection, analysis, and reporting plans. Section 3 includes an overview of the study, implications for change in business policies, recommendations for future research, and other concluding elements.

Section 2: The Project

This section begins with a restatement of the study purpose. I then reintroduce the research method and design for the project. After that, I explain my role as the researcher. Section 2 also includes subsections on the participant selection method, ethical considerations, the data collection instrument and technique, the data analysis strategy, and reliability and validity issues.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore the strategies that family business owners use to implement succession planning required for business continuity. The target population for the study were owners of four family businesses in Lagos, Nigeria, who have successfully implemented a succession planning strategy required for business continuity. The implications for social change include employment sustainability, better standards of living, and job creation.

Role of the Researcher

The primary instrument for data collection in a qualitative research study is the researcher (Yin, 2017). The principles of data collection are (a) using multiple, not just single sources of evidence; (b) creating a case study database; (c) maintaining a chain of evidence; and (d) exercising care in using data from electronic sources of evidence, such as social media (Yin, 2017). The various sources of data collection in qualitative research are (a) interviews, (b) direct observation, (c) participant observation, (d) focus groups, (e) company document analysis, (f) archival analysis, and (g) a reflective journal.

Yin (2017) noted that readers of studies must be able to follow the determination of the findings beginning with the response to questions and ultimately ending at the discussion of the findings. Fusch and Ness (2015) suggested that eight to 15 participants are sufficient for a case-study design. As researcher, I selected participants, informed them of the study and arranged appointments for data collection, interviewed them, and arranged for them to review study findings as part of the member checking process.

The pool of successful business transfers from generation to generation in Nigeria is poor. In reviewing the literature, I found few studies (Fusch & Ness, 2015; McClaren & Vocino, 2017) to quantify this trend. Increasingly, FOB leaders are panicking about business continuity when they consider what they have built with a lot of pain and sacrifice. I identified four potential candidates who are well established in the public domain for the interview process. These four candidates are FOB leaders who are well known for having started businesses on their own and over the years have created successful sustainable family businesses. They are from the oil and gas, legal, furniture, and catering industries. I did not expand the population as saturation was attained after interviewing the four candidates.

I upheld strict adherence to ethical guidelines (McClaren & Vocino, 2017) and avoided preconceived notions during the interview process and beyond. I embraced respect and confidentiality toward the participants and complied with the ethical standards for research involving human participants directed by the Belmont Report (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services [HHS], 1979). The principles of respect, benevolence, and justice in the Belmont Report require that participants clearly

understand the intent of the research and its potential risks or benefits, and that they voluntarily consent to participate in the study.

The four FOB leaders who participated in this study benefited the research because they are considered well educated and knowledgeable of their area of expertise (see Marshall & Rossman, 2016). Bias may affect the reliability and validity of qualitative research. I had no relationship with them.

Bias distorts the truth or skews the information. Some of the tactics I used to avoid bias were (a) asking consistent questions across all interviewees, (b) keeping detailed records, (c) incorporating all data in the study, and (d) synthesizing finding from original source. Qualitative interview questions should generate detailed information from the participants (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). I used interview questions to extract and document each participant's understanding and knowledge about strategies they considered useful for succession planning. I posed one central research question in conjunction with five semistructured open-ended interview questions. This question design should enable a methodical and reiterative gathering of data, according to Marshall and Rossman (2016). Rubin and Rubin (2012) recommend the preparation of a detailed interview protocol to eliminate biased and non-ethical processes. The protocol should also form a consistency of approach such that each interview is focused and deliberate. The questions should also allow for further probing questions when necessary.

Participants

The four participants were FOB leaders who founded their businesses. As discussed, I used the Walden University Institutional Review Board's guiding principles

and research etiquette identified in the Belmont Report. I purposefully selected only those individuals who indicated or demonstrated they met the following criteria: (a) were an FOB leader, (b) who founded a business, (c) that was in the public domain and an (d) apparent success, (e) was over 40 years old, (f) had minimum business sales of \$1 million per annum, and (g) whose business was based in Lagos, Nigeria.

Yin (2017) suggested screening participants to verify eligibility from existing documentation or well-informed persons. As a C-level executive in the oil and gas industry in Nigeria, I used the Internet to make contact with prospective participants. I contacted potential candidates by telephone. In the initial contact, I introduced myself and explained the reason for the contact and why I felt the candidate was a suitable participant in the study. I also inquired if the candidate was willing to take part in a voluntary interview after which I sought an appointment with documentary evidence in the form of e-mail. Researchers can evaluate two or three cases regarding a phenomenon to assess mutual experiences among the cases (Yin, 2017).

Research Method and Design

Saunders et al. (2015) identified three research methodologies as (a) quantitative, (b) qualitative, and (c) mixed method (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2005). Quantitative methodology involves the use of a questionnaire as a tool of data collection (Yilmaz, 2013). In contrast, in qualitative studies, the researcher interviews participants to have an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon (Yilmaz, 2013). In mixed-methods research, qualitative and quantitative methodologies are combined to derive meaning in the study (Yilmaz, 2013). I employed the qualitative method for this study. The use of the

qualitative multiple case-study design aligned with my aim to explore the participants' perceptions and experiences regarding the succession planning strategies that FOB leaders should implement for business continuity. I now explain the rationale for the research method and design.

Research Method

Qualitative research provides the ability to view the phenomenon holistically (Fletcher, De Massis, & Nordqvist, 2016); therefore, it was the most suitable method to answer the research question in this study. Quantitative researchers seek to test and verify or reject a predetermined hypothesis using numerical data and statistical analysis (Van Griensven et al., 2014), and they pursue generalization, probability, and cause-effect associations through deductive reasoning (Yilmaz, 2013). In contrast, qualitative researchers pursue in-depth understanding and rich description of participants' experiences regarding a phenomenon in a real-life context (Leppäaho et al., 2015; Yin, 2017), and they analyze processes, settings, understandings, perceptions, or interpretations through inductive reasoning (Yilmaz, 2013).

Mixed-methods researchers combine elements of qualitative and quantitative methods within a single study with the aim to offer more inclusive insights (Van Griensven et al., 2014). Mixed-methods research is appropriate when a qualitative or quantitative method alone is insufficient to answer the research question and the complementary strengths of both methods are needed to provide comprehensive inferences (Sparkes, 2015). The objective of this study was not to test a hypothesis or theory, but to gain an in-depth understanding of FOB leaders' insights and experiences

regarding transferring a business to the next generation. A mixed-methods approach including quantitative data was not necessary to answer the research question.

Research Design

Research design is the rational construct for connecting research data to the research question (Yin, 2017). I selected the multiple case study design for this study further to examining four qualitative research designs, narrative inquiry, ethnography, phenomenology, and case study (Marshall & Rossman, 2016; Yin, 2017). Researchers apply case studies when they seek to understand the choices and intentions behind a strategy by exploring evidence from multiple sources in a real-world context (Marshall & Rossman, 2016; Yin, 2017). The purpose of this study was to explore each participant's real-life experiences, examine policy documents, identify themes coherent with the research literature, and investigate the phenomenon. Case study is appropriate to explore the phenomenon by comparing and contrasting target populations' experiences based on multiple sources of verification (Yin, 2017).

Phenomenology, ethnographic, and narrative designs are not suitable for this study. Phenomenological researchers address the essence of the participant's perception of the phenomenon having lived, or who are living, the experience (Robertson & Thompson, 2014). I considered the use of a phenomenological design to explore the experiences of FOB leaders from their perceptions. The phenomenological approach enables one to uncover and analyze themes that have surfaced through the practice of profoundly interviewing participants (Bradbury-Jones et al., 2014). However, a phenomenological design was not the preferred method to explore a particular and

complex phenomenon within its real-world context (Yin, 2017), which is the intent of my study. A phenomenological study would generate different reports on succession planning phenomenon and would fail to capture its complexity by using interviews as the single source of evidence. Alternatively, a multiple case study design provided the opportunity to employ multiple sources of evidence with the purpose of gaining an in-depth comprehension of the phenomenon in different individual settings (De Massis & Kotlar, 2014; Yin, 2017).

Ethnographic inquirers study the behavior of a cultural group of individuals in a natural setting (Gioia et al., 2013). According to Gioia et al. (2013), researchers use an ethnographic design when they seek to understand interactions and associations in a particular social group. Narrative researchers pursue to obtain detailed stories and conversations to explore the meaning of a small number of individuals' life experiences (Rosile et al., 2013). Narrative design allows a researcher to gather stories about events, observations, diaries, and letters as the key sources of evidence and to organize narratives in chronological order (Rosile et al., 2013). Ethnographic and narrative research designs were not appropriate because their outcomes would not align with the purpose of this study.

When the researcher focuses on an explanatory approach and seeks to understand how and why a phenomenon ensues, the case study approach is the preferred research design (Yin, 2017). The use of several sources of data, such as interviews and document review, provides a more convincing and accurate case study (Houghton et al., 2013) and is essential to substantiate findings and ensure the evidence is comprehensive (Yin,

2017). I gained understanding of underlying reasons, opinions, and motivations of the participants.

I selected a multiple case study design to generate an in-depth understanding of the succession planning phenomenon under study. To collect data, I used semistructured face-to-face interviews, including open-ended questions, and asked for any documentary policies which may have already been in place. The use of a multiple case study, investigating differing contexts and perspectives, may expose detailed reasoning and examples to demonstrate successful business practice (De Massis & Kotlar, 2014; Leppäaho et al., 2015). A multiple case study enables the researcher to examine within and across the distinct settings, while the replication logic and the quest for common patterns generate more accurate and generalizable results compared to single studies (De Massis & Kotlar, 2014; Leppäaho et al., 2015). Additionally, multiple cases generate more vigorous conclusions because the assertions support wide-ranging empirical evidence (De Massis & Kotlar, 2014).

A multiple case study is a suitable design when participants are representatives of a homogeneous group (Yin, 2017); however, the sampling of a multiple case study is more complex and challenging (De Massis & Kotlar, 2014). The cases in the sample should be chosen for theoretical purposes because they permit the prediction of comparable results or conflicting results for predictable reasons or because they permit the exclusion of alternate clarifications (De Massis & Kotlar, 2014; Yin, 2017).

Especially in the field of family business inquiry, researchers often employ polar type sampling; for example, extreme cases along the studied dimensions with the aim to

allow the observation of conflicting patterns more easily (De Massis & Kotlar, 2014).

Unlike quantitative researchers, qualitative inquirers analyze their data throughout their study (Morse, Lowery, & Steury, 2014). In qualitative research, the notion of data saturation determines the extent and amount of data collection and the sample size (Fusch & Ness, 2015).

Data saturation. Data saturation refers to the instant in which additional data collection yields little or no alteration in the recorded themes or codes (Fusch & Ness, 2015). Reaching data saturation had a significant impact on the quality and content validity of the research study (Fusch & Ness, 2015). It concerns the depth and breadth of the data rather than the numbers and the researcher should choose the sample size that provides the best opportunity to reach data saturation (Fusch & Ness, 2015). Yin (2017) suggested that within a clear conceptual framework, a population sample size of two or three cases may be sufficient to explore a phenomenon. I have chosen four.

While data saturation may occur when analyzing the data attained from the interviews (Morse et al., 2014), the probability of reaching data saturation increases when exploring secondary sources such as documentary analysis (Onwuegbuzie & Byers, 2014). Richardson, Davey, and Swint (2013) indicated that researchers use numerous strategies to achieve data saturation. I achieved data saturation when no new information, theme, or data emerged during the data collection process (Fusch & Ness 2015). A different strategy for obtaining data saturation may involve the member-checking technique, where each participant receives an abridgment of their interview and is requested to endorse the accuracy of the synthesis (Richardson et al., 2013). By

analyzing, synthesizing, and verifying any new information gathered during the member-checking process, the researcher engages in an iterative process of data collection and member checking until no novel data appear (Morse et al., 2014; Richardson et al., 2013).

Population and Sampling

Roy, Zvonkovic, Goldberg, Sharp and LaRossa (2015) posited that the population and the methodology for sampling are crucial to the reliability and validity of the research study. Sampling captures either a random or purposive group within a particular cohort that may provide evidence of behavior, that is typical of the larger group. The population itself is determined by considering the business problem and identifying those who may best provide appropriate answers to the research questions. These two processes help to ensure validity and reliability in research. Robinson (2014) suggested the following four steps for sampling: defining the sample universe, formulating the sampling strategy, indicating the sample size, and sample sourcing.

The focus of the study was to explore succession planning strategies FOB leaders may apply for the transition of leadership to the next generation. Criteria affecting selection were (a) FOB Leader (b) founded the business, (c) in the public domain, (d) apparent success, (e) over 40 years old, (f) minimum sales of \$1m per annum, and (g) businesses based in Lagos, Nigeria. This application rendered the sample universe homogeneous regarding geographical (Lagos, Nigeria), physical with minimum 40-year-old FOB leader, minimum sales of \$1 million per annum, and characteristic with FOB who founded the business is in the public domain and have apparent success. A study population exhibiting a prominent level of homogeneity enables an amplified depth of

study and allows the researcher to utilize a smaller sample when compared to a more heterogeneous population (Jaskiewicz & Gibb Dyer, 2017; Robinson, 2014; Roy et al., 2015).

Sampling Strategy

The sampling strategy for the selection of the participants may be intentional or random (Robinson, 2014). While random selection of the sample is characteristic for quantitative surveys, qualitative case study research typically involves purposive sampling (Yin, 2017). As my study design determines that the selection of participants is a finite population, then intentional sampling rather than random sampling was appropriate. Purposeful sampling methods aim to select a sample of participants who can provide inclusive information and in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under study and helps answering the research question (Yilmaz, 2013). I used my personal judgment to select suitable participants based on the study criteria (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). Cases in the sample should be chosen for theoretical purposes because they permit the prediction of comparable results or conflicting results for predictable reasons, or because they permit the exclusion of alternate clarifications (De Massis & Kotlar, 2014; Yin, 2017). I used a purposeful sample of four participants who are (a) FOB Leader (b) founded the business, (c) in the public domain, (d) apparent success, (e) over 40 years old, (f) minimum sales of \$1 million per annum, and (g) businesses based in Lagos, Nigeria.

Sample Size

Early decision on sample size is important for qualitative studies. The sample had an impact on the study therefore planning was required. Had data saturation not been reached after interviewing the first 4 participants, I would have introduced 2 further participants that meet the criteria. I did not require this intervention as data saturation was attained. However, with the further probe questions, I obtained data saturation with the original four. I opted for multiple case study design because the outcome of more than two cases provided better analytical data than the results of a single case study. Two or more case studies should provide replication when the researcher foresees comparable results from each case (De Massis & Kotlar, 2014; Yin, 2017)

Sample Sourcing

The sourcing phase of the sampling process requires practical, organizational, and ethical skills (Robinson, 2014). The researcher needs to inform all potential participants about the purpose of the study, what participation comprises, its voluntary and anonymous character, and any information that helps the interviewees to arrive at a cognizant, consensual decision to participate (Robinson, 2014). I conveyed the voluntary nature of participation and the right to withdraw at any point in the process. Upon the agreement of the selected participants, I mutually agreed location, date and time for the voluntary interview using the suggestion of from Mikèné et al. (2013) to meet at a comfortable, quiet, and private location that avoids interruption and guarantees discretion.

Ethical Research

Qualitative researchers have the commitment to pursue knowledge and adhere to the truth, as well as to maintain an immaculate sensitivity to the ethical issues surrounding human interactions and to uphold the highest ethical standards (Hammersley, 2015; Marshall & Rossman, 2016; Yin, 2017). Prior to contacting the potential participants, I obtained the approval of Walden University's Institutional Review Board (#03-19-19-0743252). To carry out the role as the principal data collection instrument, I gathered information in a trustworthy manner respecting and being confidentiality toward the participants. I also complied with the ethical standards and protocols for research involving human participants as directed by the Belmont Report, HHS, (1979). Core principles of respect, benevolence, and justice in the Belmont Report require that participants clearly understand the intent of the research and its potential risks or benefits, and that they voluntarily consent to participate in the study (Belmont Report, HHS, 1979).

The participants received information regarding the process in the research, the expected duration of the interviews. I also informed the participants about audio recording on an electronic dictation device which was stored in a safe, for my further synthesizing. There was no refusal to recording the interviews, though I also took notes. I sought and got future appointments for assessment and validation of their input. I adhered with all ethical considerations regarding data including identity protection by labeling, password protection of data and kept the information in a safe place. The data are to be destroyed after 5 years.

Data Collection Instruments

Data collection is the process of gathering and measuring information on variables of interest, in an established systematic fashion that enables one to answer stated research questions, test hypotheses, and evaluate outcomes (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). Data collection in qualitative research can happen with many sources including interviews, direct communications with individuals or groups, observations, document reviews, company website, or fieldwork (Marshall & Rossman, 2016; Yin, 2017). In qualitative studies, the researcher functions as an active instrument in the data collection process (Marshall & Rossman, 2016; Mikèné et al., 2013). As the researcher in this study, I was the primary instrument for data collection.

There are three types of interview methods, namely, structured, unstructured and semi-structured. The key feature of a structured interview is that there are many questions but short answers and therefore restricts human expression. An unstructured interview tends to be a conversational and tends to lose direction and focus. A semistructured interview however, has few questions and some conversation around the topic thus allowing the interviewer to have an in-depth knowledge of the case (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). I carried out semistructured face-to-face interviews.

I used a standard interview protocol (see Appendix B) with all the participants thus enhancing consistency (Yin, 2017; Marshall & Rossman, 2016). Standardization reduced bias and enhanced trustworthiness. Nevertheless, the unstructured nature of the interview process still gave opportunities for insights, digressions and other personal reflections of the interviewees (McIntosh & Morse, 2015). Bias is the tendency which

prevents unprejudiced consideration of the data. A biased study loses validity in relation to the degree of the bias.

Triangulation and member checking are two key approaches to evaluating reliability and validity of qualitative research. Triangulation refers to the use of multiple data sources, such as semistructured interviews and document review aids, in qualitative research to develop a comprehensive understanding of phenomena (Patton, 1999). It confirms validity or the truth through the convergence of information from different sources. Member checking is the process of obtaining systematic feedback from the participants and having them review and assess their data to ensure that the researcher's presentation does not constitute a misrepresentation (Patton, 1999). I applied both approaches in my work.

Data Collection Technique

Data collection techniques for this study was semistructured interviews and any available documentation. Multiple data sources enable data triangulation and corroboration thus proving credibility (Houghton et al., 2013). Interviews are the most common source for data collection in a case study because it regards the understanding of human subjects (Yin, 2017). Using interviews as a source of data collection enables the researcher to carefully prepare questions that directly target the research problem (Yin, 2017). Organizing data is an essential part of a qualitative research study in which data obtained from interviews are categorized into codes and grouped in themes (Onwuegbuzie & Byers, 2014). However, I have protected the interview data and

transcribed the interviews and have kept back up files of the audio recordings and transcriptions.

Data collection involved semistructured interviews and document review. Furthermore, a researcher does not allow the advantages or disadvantages to influence the judgment in deploying the techniques (Onwuegbuzie & Byers, 2014). Rather, the possible result of using such techniques, the outcome should influence the researcher's decision. Semistructured interviews would be advantageous to the result of the study because: (a) the actual thoughts of the SME leaders constituted data, (b) potential to have robust study in terms of volume of research, (c) the certainty that a live person is voluntarily providing knowledge through answering interview questions, and (d) an interviewer can capture an interviewee's nonverbal cues during interview sessions.

The disadvantages of using semistructured interviews in this research study would include (a) possibility of meeting with a participant at a time he or she might not be in the right mood for an interview, (b) possible inclusion of content that could have no relationship to the topic of the result of the study, (c) possibility of collecting more verbiage or less verbiage than might be appropriate for the study, and (d) possibility of misconstruing meanings, especially in situations where the interviewee does not pay attention to use of specific words (Radley & Chamberlain, 2012).

Data Organization Technique

Microsoft Excel, analog notebook, digital notebook, and flash drive serve researchers well for storing temporary and permanent information (Onwuegbuzie & Byers, 2014). The nature of the information a researcher wants to capture determined the

device and method of documentation and storage (Street & Ward, 2012). I used Microsoft Excel as a tool for listing names of prospects. When the individuals became participants, a new file of the same format was created as the new list. By so doing, every piece of information was accessible on demand (Onwuegbuzie & Byers, 2014).

The logs Microsoft Excel may serve in creating included folders for reflections on all aspects of Robinson's (2014) study. In the same manner, Rowley (2012) deployed digital and analog systems in organizing data. I have kept all the data collected in a safe place for a period of 5 years, after which I will shred the interview notes and transcripts and destroy the flash drive used for storing any data during the data collection process. The drive is pass worded and I am the only one who has access to it. Analog folders and journals are used to take notes during the semistructured interview, observation, and archival document review. Data would be in the appropriate storage formats, temporary or permanent. Catalogs and labels help in the effective organization of data before, during, and after participant interviews (Mulhall, 2003). Properly organized storage systems render research smooth (Mulhall, 2003). Conversely, not knowing the right place to enter or file data can lead to confusion and unnecessary delay (Mulhall, 2003). A researcher should guard against malware attack as that could destroy raw and final data. Research failure occurred if hostile or intrusive computer viruses such as worms, Trojan horses, ransomware, spyware, adware, and scareware intrude and frustrate data organization (Houghton, Casey, Shaw, & Murphy, 2013). Consequently, investigators should conduct a quality assessment of every research in the process (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). Furthermore, saving all data for 5 years ensure quick reference when a

need arises while the process is ongoing. After that, all forms of data undergo shredding, deletion, smashing, or otherwise elimination to ensure the protection of participant privacy.

Data Analysis

The five stages of data analysis in qualitative research are data collection, coding of the data into groupings, creating themes and synthesizing, and drawing conclusions (Basurto & Speer, 2012; Lawrence & Tar, 2013; Yin, 2017). I organized the participants' responses into codes and themes established on the frequency of words and phrases. The objective of preparing, organizing, analyzing, and reporting results in qualitative data is to discover the meaning of the responses and answer to the research question (Basurto & Speer, 2012; Lawrence & Tar, 2013). Researchers use data analysis to understand participants' points of view, develop themes, and perception of the phenomenon (Ginsberg & Sinacore, 2013). The data collection technique included an open-ended interview questioning process to address the central research question, was developed in the prospectus. Data analysis is "the process of making sense out of data" (Yazan, 2015) by categorizing the data into themes based on coding, abridging the codes, and comprehending and representing the data by means of narratives and visuals. Data analysis involves connecting the findings to the literature with the purpose to validate the results (Ajagbe, Sholanke, Isiauwe, & Oke, 2015). I validated the results with previous literature after the interview process.

The interpretive analysis consists of deconstruction stage of data analysis. The deconstruction stage occurs after interview transcription, so the data is ready for analysis

(Callary, Rathwell, & Young, 2015). I used NVivo to organize the data and manually analyse the data using Yin 5 data analysis methods (Yin, 2018). Deconstruction is similar to content analysis, as it involves the breaking down of data into several parts to understand what is included in it (Hale, Pathipati, Zan, & Jethwani, 2014). This process requires the researcher to read, reread the interview transcripts, and reduce the data into categories or codes that can describe the content of the transcribed data (Hale et al., 2014). After deconstruction, the researcher would endeavour to make sense of, and understand the coded data, a process known as interpretation (Dasgupta, 2015). This process enables the researcher to make comparisons of the categories and codes across all transcripts (Yin, 2018). At this stage, Yin (2018) noted that one or two general ideas and notions usually emerges as the main idea, and the rest would appear in the form of subthemes that contribute further to the main theme.

Reliability and Validity

Reliability

Reliability refers to the quality of research findings. Reliability in a qualitative case study is a form of assurance of the dependability of the results through the research instrument from internal and external validity (De Massis & Kotlar, 2014; Noble & Smith, 2015). Dependability refers to how consistent the findings can be after repeating the same inquiry under a similar context (De Massis & Kotlar, 2014). Researchers can achieve dependability through member checking, transcript review, and expert review of the interview scripts and protocols to confirm and validate their perspectives concerning the phenomenon (Jasper, Vaismoradi, Bondas, & Turunen, 2014). Noble and Smith

(2015) noted that researchers could establish dependability through providing an audit trail of the methods and procedures for the study, including (a) purpose of the study, (b) procedure for selecting participants, and (c) process for data collection, coding, and analysis. I established an audit trail to track the research process. I also ensured member checking, and expert review of the interview scripts and protocols.

Qualitative research reliability involves the consistency of processes, procedures, and approaches throughout a study (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008). The objective is to be sure that if a later researcher follows the same procedures as described by an earlier researcher and conducts the same study over again, the later investigator will arrive at the same findings and conclusions. The ability to trace through the data acquisition process demonstrates tremendous transparency and therefore dependability. Fusch and Ness (2015) suggested that further triangulation supports dependability and data saturation. By keeping to the same questions and request for additional material, it means that my data will be consistent and dependable. It will also inform me as the researcher when data saturation is reached.

Validity

Qualitative Validity means the researcher examines the accuracy of results and ensures truthfulness during the study process (Neuman, 2011). Yin (2017) identified (a) construct validity, (b) internal validity, and (c) external validity. I applied construct validity as described by Saunders and Rojon (2014), Tanggaard (2014), and Zohrabi (2013) by using multiple sources of data (in-depth semistructured interviews, direct observation, as well as the analysis of my reflective journal entries and field notes). Both

internal and external validity were applied during data analysis process, as well as the use of succession planning as (a) continuous training of personnel, (b) developing a hiring strategy, (c) communication of organizational vision, (d) visible commitment that promote succession planning management, (e) and assessing future business changes, and human resource requirements (Rajapalase & Kiran, 2017) as a foundation to assess the application of the study as described in chapter two. An understanding of my biases also helped me to achieve validity of this study. Even with all my values, beliefs, and worldviews, the data collection, analysis, and interpretation were conducted in a way that was neutral and unbiased as described by Kardish et al. (2015), Klehr (2012), and Smith and Noble (2014)

Construct validity. This is the development of sufficient operational set of measures to confirm a researcher's conceived notion. Construct validity refers to the degree to which inferences can legitimately be made from the operationalization in your study to the theoretical constructs on which that operationalization was based. Like external validity, construct validity is related to generalizing. But, where external validity involves generalizing from the study context to other people, places or times, construct validity involves generalizing from your program or measures to the concept of your program or measures (Klehr, 2012; Smith & Noble, 2014; Yin, 2017).

Internal validity. This validity is related to explanatory case studies when an investigator is trying to explain how and why event X led to event Y (Yin, 2017). Credibility refers to ensuring that the findings from the study are believable from the perspective of the participants in the research (Roulston & Shelton, 2015). Researchers

ensure the credibility of their research findings when they represent an accurate interpretation of human experiences to which people can relate (Houghton, Casey, Shaw, & Murphy, 2013; Noble & Smith, 2015). To ensure credibility, I interviewed the participants adhering to the interview protocol and spent adequate time in the interview process to gain a sound understanding of the case and meanings to the research question. I used member checking to ensure reliability and validity of data; after conducting the interview and transcribing the audio recording, I interpreted the transcription and shared the interpretation with the participants to obtain feedback that validated the data.

External validity. The test of external validity is the attempt to evaluate the generalization of the study beyond the mandate of the study (Yin, 2017). Some of the human errors that could cause source of data issues are: (a) Using environment that is noisy during data collection, (b) Collection of data during office hours and inside the office environment, (c) Lack of case study protocol, (d) Overfamiliarity with interviewee, (e) Not explaining the purpose of the study to the interviewee, and (f) Not getting consent for audio recording and use of single evidence.

As I concluded my proposal, I understood that the concepts of the data being credible, the ability to confirm it and the potential to transfer it are the hallmarks of a valid qualitative study. This breeds the truth for the researcher, the participant and the users of the work (Klehr, 2012; Smith & Noble, 2014; Yilmaz, 2013). I therefore employed a standard interview protocol of prepared questions for all participants. I asked questions in the same order across interviewees. I also managed my personal opinions

and biases that could have potentially influenced study results by adhering to the research design and methodology as stated.

Transition and Summary

In Section 2, I restated the purpose of the research study and discussed my role as the researcher. I presented a description of the research method and design, outlining the reasoning for the selection of a qualitative multiple case study to explore. I discussed the population and sampling, ethical considerations, data collection instruments and analysis, and reliability and validity of the data from the study. In Section 3, I present the analysis, findings, and interpretation of the data from the study. I also discuss the application of the research to professional practice, the implications for social change, recommendation for action, suggestions for social change, reflections and concluding statements.

Section 3: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change

Section 3 contains the findings from this study on succession planning in FOB in Nigeria. Specifically, this section includes an overview of the research, the study results, the application of the study to professional practice, and the implications of the study for social change. Furthermore, this section includes recommendations for action based on my research findings, suggestions for further research, my reflections on the doctoral process, and a conclusion.

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore the strategies that family business owners use to implement succession planning required for business continuity. I interviewed owners of four family businesses in Lagos, Nigeria, who have successfully implemented a succession planning strategy required for business continuity. Each of the participants received and completed a consent form conveying the purpose of the research, the voluntary and confidential nature of participation, and their rights to participate and or withdraw. The participants then responded to five open-ended semistructured interview questions, which were based on the interview protocol (see Appendix B). I transcribed and shared responses with each participant to validate. I also used NVivo 11 software to facilitate data analysis and accuracy in the coding and separation of data into themes. The five themes that emerged from the analyzed data were (a) identification of successor leaders, (b) focus on leadership development, (c) knowledge transfer, (d) longevity of service, and (e) mentor and mentee processes.

Presentation of the Findings

The central research question for this study was, what strategies do family business owners use to implement succession planning required for business continuity? The target population for the study were owners of four family businesses in Lagos, Nigeria, who have successfully implemented a succession planning strategy required for business continuity. All the participants had over 10 years of experience. (See Table 2 for general and demographic information about participants.) To enhance confidentiality and privacy, I used the codes SP1, SP2, SP3, and SP4 to identify the participants in the study. The duration of each interview was approximately 35 minutes and an additional 15 minutes for member checking and validation. Coding the collected data using NVivo was suitable for identifying and organizing the data (Weber, Geneste, & Connell, 2015).

The results of the data analysis revealed the following themes: (a) identification of successor leaders, (b) focus on leadership development, (c) knowledge transfer, (d) longevity of service, and (e) mentor and mentee processes. The conceptual framework for exploring the overarching research question of this qualitative multiple case study was succession planning theory (Weber et al., 2015). The findings from analyses of the interview data, available documents, and physical artifacts are aligned with the conceptual framework and the literature review.

Table 2

General and Demographic Information on the Family Business Leaders

Parameters	Participant			
	#1	#2	#3	#4
Leader code	SP1	SP2	SP3	SP4
Nationality	Nigeria	Nigeria	Nigeria	Nigeria
Age	57	56	58	66
Highest education	Masters	Higher diploma	Masters	Bachelor
Years as business owner	30 years	26 years	24 years	38 years

Theme 1: Identifying Successor Leaders

The first theme that emerged from the analyzed data was identifying successor leaders. All the family-owned business leaders in the study agreed on the importance of having in place succession planning for business continuity. The four family-owned business leaders (representing 100% of the participants) inferred that by identifying potential top performing employees or family members was a priority towards succession planning. SP1 mentioned that “for a business to outlive the founder, a leader must be willing to identify potential leaders having the interest of the business, passion, and training who should be able to succeed the founder of the business.” SP1 also stated that three potential successor leaders were identified which were monitored on daily basis to ensure the continuity of the business vision and mission is transferred to the right successors.

SP2 mentioned that “what I did was to identify 2 successor leaders who were given leadership responsibilities as well as decision making power prior to handing over to one of the identified successors.” SP3 stated, “I identified from my children, the one

with a successor ability, with the interest of the business and spent more time in the business. I have to start delegating responsibilities to imbibe leadership responsibility required to succeed the family business.” SP4 stated, “four of my employees were watched closely to identify two with leadership capacity in terms of discipline, and ability to take decisions required for business continuity.” SP4 also stated that

during the ninth year of the family business, the need to commence plan on who would succeed the business became a necessity. I had to keep watch on four employees including my son to identify a successor leader. Few criteria used were (a) punctuality to work, (b) decision making ability, (c) ability to lead others, and (d) negotiation skills. I further reduced the successor leaders to two, after identifying the successors of the business. This process was effective in making the final decision on who succeed me on the business without being biased or late in making such a decision.

Theme 1 aligns with Koskiniemi, Vakkala, and Pietilainen’s (2019) suggestion that planning for succession commence through identification of potential successors with the right education, exposure, and experience related to the business. The identity of successor leaders should not be gender based, but rather be based on leadership qualities such as decision-making, discipline, and focus on the goals and objectives of the business (Kapasi, Sang, & Sitko, 2016). Findings from Theme 1 also align with the conceptual framework, succession planning theory. Rajapalase and Kiran (2017) identified visible commitment that promotes succession planning management as one of the major tenets necessary to achieve succession planning required for business continuity in family-

owned business. Findings for this theme extend the body of knowledge on strategies used for succession planning in FOB in Nigeria.

Theme 2: Focus on Leadership Development

The second theme that emerged from the analyzed data was focus on leadership development. Three of the four family-owned business leaders in the study agreed on the importance of developing leadership for succession planning. The three family-owned business leaders (representing 75% of the participants) mentioned that by focusing on leadership development, employees or family members would better be developed to acquire the requisite skills required for succession planning.

SP2 mentioned that

Out of the several developments required are marketing skills, leadership skills, finance skills, negotiation skills, legal skills, communication skills, and management skills. I focused on the leadership development as top priority for my potential successor; the reason for my choice in the area of leadership development is not far-fetched. With development on leadership, the successor began to gain confidence and skills in all area of the business and has been active in responsibility roles. Eventually, the successor became a visionary member of staff who no longer needs to spend time on daily activities, rather strategic thinking, which is among the traits I had when I founded the business.

SP3 similarly mentioned that “after identifying a potential successor to the family business, I began to develop the would-be successor on leadership. It was a focused development that achieved its aim.” Last, SP4 stated, “I developed all identified

successors on leadership. Leadership is a skill that one could acquire by learning the traits.” Focusing on leadership development is an effective way of producing leaders for continuity and sustainability.

The second theme aligned with previous literature discussed in the literature review. Belasen and Belasen (2016) inferred that intentional leadership development in an organization involved a succession planning strategy for developing new leaders for leadership role. Leadership development is the process through which leadership knowledge, skills, and abilities are created (Coach & Citrin, 2018). Turner, Baker, Schroeder, Johnson, and Chung (2018) inferred that leadership development at the collective level involves one’s capacity to collaboratively work with others and focus on shared network and meaning. Leadership development which involves mindset focus entails (a) personal development, (b) relational development, and (c) contextual development (Maheshwari & Yadau, 2018). Leadership development needs to be collaborative while incorporating both leadership education and development characteristics Turner et al., 2018). These development programs need to be mindset focused, incorporating critical thinking, problem-solving, and sense-making training (Coach & Citrin, 2018). Also, the knowledge, skills and abilities gained from such leadership development interventions should allow participants to be able to practice their skills as a method of reinforcing their learning (Coach & Citrin, 2018; Maheshwari & Yadau, 2018; Swensen, Goringe, Caviness, & Peters, 2016). Findings extend the body of knowledge on the strategies used for succession planning in family-owned business in Nigeria.

Theme 3: Knowledge Transfer

The third theme that emerged from the analyzed data was knowledge transfer. All the family-owned business leaders agreed on the importance of transferring knowledge from the foundational leader to the successor for succession planning. The four family-owned business leaders (representing 100% of the participants) mentioned that by transferring knowledge to employees or family members required for the successor gaining skills required for succession planning.

SP1 mentioned that

“Knowledge transfer is like a ritual which takes place in the process of time between a current leader and would-be successor. We essentially undergo several planned and unplanned trainings in virtually all the leadership processes as required for an intending successor. In my case, I had my daughter learn under my watch for a period of five years before handing over some of the family business to her. By knowledge transfer, I could monitor her on daily basis and make corrections where necessary before finally exiting the leadership of the family business.

SP2 mentioned that

“during the leadership development, a large part is dedicated to knowledge transfer which happens not in the class room but through a process of time, by observation, asking questions, and making suggestions for upgrading, particularly with technology.” SP3 stated “knowledge transfer is the strategy I adopted in planning for succession planning. I took my successor through a five-year period

of apprenticeship; were I could teach, train, and instruct my successor on how the family business could be preserve for future generations” SP4 said “I used knowledge transfer strategy in planning for my successor; through daily watching and correcting, I have been able to instruct and correct my successor to take over the business successfully”.

The third theme aligned with previous literatures as used in the literation review. Ahmed, Rima, and Shirahada (2018) identified three types of knowledge transfer processes as linear, cyclical, and a dynamic multidirectional process. Transfer knowledge process refers to the quality and quantity of information to be transferred; they define the content of knowledge (Milagres & Burcharth, 2019). Knowledge transfer refers to the nature of knowledge and the pattern of communication through which it occurs (Luca & Rubio, 2019). The organizational structure of the firm plays a key role for the effectiveness and efficiency of the knowledge transfer process (Luca & Rubio, 2019). The themes extend the body of knowledge on strategy used for succession planning in family-owned business in Nigeria.

Theme 4: Longevity of Service

The fourth theme that emerged from the analyzed data was longevity of service. All the family-owned business leaders agreed on the importance of longevity of service of the successor of the family business for succession planning. The four family-owned business leaders (representing 100% of the participants) mentioned that by serving long in the business, the employees or family members would have gained the skills required for succession planning.

SP1 mentioned that

“At the point I started to conceive the decision of who succeed me in the family business, one consideration was the longevity of service of the employees who had been loyal and long serving in the organization. Though longevity of service is not a criteria of leadership position for junior employees, it is significant when it comes to commitment and dedication. Therefore, longevity was a parameter I considered in making the decision regarding my successor.”

SP2 mentioned that

“the long serving employee who also had undergone leadership training required for succession was finally made the successor.” SP3 stated “another strategy I adopted was to look inward to evaluate all employees based on longevity of service. Longevity of service with other factors contributed to the selection of the successor” SP4 said “I selected the most senior son who also had spent more time on the business than any other sibling to become my successor”. Apart from the fact that my son was heir apparent to the business, the decision to make him successor would have been difficult if not that he was also one of the longest serving employees of the family business”

The fourth theme aligned with previous literatures (Levin, Thaichon, & Quach, 2016). Taneja, Pryor, and Hayek (2016) inferred that retaining your workforce for multiple years comes with a number of advantages, including (a) the longer an employee stays with your company, the more they develop complex understanding of the niche, market, products, and services (b) having experienced employees who can easily

complete complex tasks means better customer service and product quality, and (c) there is significant savings when you retain your employees, as you don't have to do as much recruiting, hiring, and training. Levin et al. (2016) identified reasons why employee maintain longevity at work as provision of metrics for success, recognizing employees for specific accomplishments, offering employees growth options, encouraging a balance in work and life, and maintaining employee well-being for business growth. Using semistructured interview and document review, the themes extend the body of knowledge on strategy used for succession planning in family-owned business in Nigeria.

Theme 5: Mentor and Mentee Process

The fifth theme that emerged from the analyzed data was mentor and mentee process. All the family-owned business leaders agreed on the importance of mentoring the successor who is the mentee in taking over the family business for succession planning. The four family-owned business leaders (representing 100% of the participants) mentioned that by mentoring the mentee, the employees or family members would have gained the skills required for succession planning.

SP1 mentioned that

“I as the founder of the business, serving as the mentor, identified potential staff including my children for a mentee program that lasted for seven years. During the mentoring program, I exposed the four selected mentees to the day-to-day running of the business, the customers of the business, the marketing aspect, and the government rules and regulations. Within a space of two years, I began to see

the mentee taking up responsibilities which would not have been possible without the mentoring program.

SP2 mentioned that

“the mentoring program was necessary in identifying potential leaders. In my case, I made it mandatory for all staff to be under a mentoring program; carrying out assignment for the organization, using their initiatives. Fifty percent of the staff that started the mentoring program, dropped out after one month for inability to stick with time management. I was able to select who became my successor using the mentoring program.”

SP3 stated “I adopted the mentor to mentee program where I set periodic targets for the would-be successors of the business. I opened a line of business for each mentor to grow and develop within five months, using their initiatives. This was a clear selection process for who became the successor without becoming biased over my family members or employees” SP4 said “Using the mentoring to mentee program, I discovered that employees could learn faster by observing the leaders on a daily basis. After the program, I could see replication on decision making and firmness in decision making on the successor”

The fifth theme aligned with previous literatures (Mains & MacLean, 2017).

Mentoring is generally a one-to-one interrelation that normally occurs between a senior, more experienced person (the mentor), and a junior less skilled one (the mentee) to help the mentee to effectively and rapidly adapt to the business environment through advice

and guidance so that mentees acquire organizational socialization, career advancement and professional and personal growth (Reitmaier & Schultze, 2017; Ting, Feng, & Qui, 2017). Mentors provide different functions due to mentoring: career functions, sponsorship, exposure-visibility, and coaching (Gisbert-Trejo, Landeta, Albizu, & Fernandez-Ferrin, 2019). Three key stakeholders benefit from mentoring which are (a) the mentees develop their knowledge and skills, develop networks and build confidence, all of which contribute to their career development, (b) the mentors benefit from the satisfaction of passing on their knowledge and expertise, and (c) the organization benefits from the impact on commitment and engagement that takes place between the mentor and the mentee (Gisbert-Trejo et al., 2019). Using semistructured interview and document review, the themes extend the body of knowledge on strategy used for succession planning in family-owned business in Nigeria.

Alignment to the Conceptual Framework

The development of succession planning as presented by early contributors, sheds light on varied opinions on the succession planning process. There are different definitions of succession planning. Trepanier and Crenshaw (2013) described a succession plan as an essential business strategy that promotes effective leadership transition and continuity while maintaining productivity. Trepanier and Crenshaw (2013) emphasized the imperativeness of the executives to respond to the business benefits of an effective succession planning program: identify common barriers and solutions and implement best practices for a successful strategic succession planning program. For this current study, I defined succession planning as a precise and formal effort by an

organization to ensure business and leadership continuity in the core positions. Such efforts include (a) retention and development of intellectual, and (b) capital knowledge for the future aimed at encouraging individuals to improve performance (Trepanier & Crenshaw, 2013).

The practice of succession planning traditionally is a confidential process, which makes the procedure lopsided in most organizations. A traditional approach often results in managers favoring a select group or individuals known personally or only close associates (Trepanier & Crenshaw, 2013). Traditional approaches negate merit and equity because of favoritism, and the godfather influence. The attendant perception by people not selected under the traditional method results in resentment and lack of interest and commitment to work with little or no attention paid to knowledge transfer. To avoid internal conflict, the authors suggested that organizations must adopt a strategic approach and begin to prepare leaders for business continuity. Trepanier and Crenshaw (2013) examined succession plan from the perspective of organizations strategizing to avoid the consequences of an unavailable replacement for a key leader. Analysis of the data from Theme 1 underscores the relevance of identifying successor leaders and prepare leaders for business continuity as indicated in the conceptual framework. Rajapalase and Kiran (2017) identified visible commitment that promote succession planning management as one of the major tenets towards achieving succession planning required for business continuity in family-owned business. The result of Theme 3 aligns with the conceptual framework in relation to retention and development of intellectuals in the succession planning process. Knowledge transfer process refers to the quality and quantity of

information to be transferred; they define the content of knowledge (Milagres & Burcharth, 2019)

Applications to Professional Practice

The business implications of succession planning for family-owned business are numerous. I conducted this study to explore the strategies that family business owners use to implement succession planning required for business continuity. The leader interviews, documents reviewed, and extant literature provided insight into some of the strategies in use. The study findings will provide business leaders, managers, and professionals with some information enabling them to gain a better understanding of what and how succession planning strategies can help business continuity. The applications to professional practice include: providing insight into how to sustain family business; identifying successor leaders, focusing on leadership development, knowledge transfer, focusing on long service employees for leadership role, and engaging successors in mentor and mentee program.

First, the findings from this study will afford business leaders insight into how to plan for family business continuity prior to the death of the founder. The results showed that identifying successor leaders helps in fostering the appropriate personnel as successor. Saaksjarui, Hellen, and Balabanis' (2016) stated that the positive attributes of a brand image significantly influence Generation Y customer's perception of the products and the organization. Koskiniemi et al (2019) suggested that planning for succession commences through identification of potential successors with the right education, exposure, and experience of the business.

Second, in planning for succession, owners of family businesses might consider exploiting these strategies to optimize other spin-off benefits like trust building, a sense of co-ownership and collaboration, and employee loyalty to the family business. The findings showed that focusing on leadership development is a strategy use in developing the appropriate skill required for taking over the management of the family business for continuity to future generation. Belasen and Belasen (2016) inferred that intentional leadership development in an organization was a succession planning strategy for developing new leaders for leadership role.

Another contribution of this research to professional practice relates to knowledge transfer. The results revealed that knowledge is transferred from one superior personnel to next-superior personnel for, efficient service delivery, empowered employees and an audacious commitment to quality leadership service by successor for family business continuity. Ahmed et al. (2018) identified three types of knowledge transfer processes as linear, cyclical, and a dynamic multidirectional process. The cost of implementing the findings of this study may be minimal compared to the benefits of preserving the legacy of a family-owned business to future generations. Organizations with a large pool of satisfied and loyal customers tend to have a long-term competitive advantage over their competition and are more likely to sustain their profitability over a more extended period (Costanza & Finkelstein, 2015). Through applying the strategies identified in this study, of brand image evaluation, enhanced customer engagement strategy, and enhanced service delivery credibility, business leaders may improve the business performance and long-term sustainability of their organization. Bozer et al.

(2017) identified that why most family businesses struggled to survive after management succession are (a) linkages between the level of preparation of successors, (b) the nature of the relationship between the family members with the business, and (c) the performance of the firm after succession execution.

Implications for Social Change

The challenges confronting family businesses after management succession are (a) linkages between the level of preparation of successors, (b) the nature of the relationship between the family members with the business, and (c) the performance of the firm after succession execution (Bozer et al. (2017). The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore the strategies that family business owners use to implement succession planning required for business continuity. Understanding the strategy used by FOB for business continuity is important. Preserving family businesses could help individual, communities, and communities to grow business and improve standard of living, increase employment, have access to better living, and ensure career growth for the employees of the family business. Apart from job security for employees, which is a direct result of the profitability of businesses, improvement in profitability also creates employment opportunities for more people, and in turn, an enhanced standard of living (Mokhber et al., 2017). Profitable businesses can contribute to building the communities and society in a variety of ways because profitable enterprises are more willing to participate in social responsibilities such as donating to local schools and charities, and serving in community organizations (Costanza & Finkelstein, 2015). Successful businesses also pay various tax remittances to the local, state and federal

governments, which could enable government entities to improve public infrastructure for the benefit of the larger community (Costanza & Finkelstein, 2015).

Recommendations for Action

The subject of succession planning in family-owned business is crucial because of its several implications for businesses, employees, and communities (Chuah, Marimuthu, Kandampully, & Bilgihan, 2017). I have three recommendations for action. The first recommendation is that family-owned business leaders periodically evaluate, through continuous interaction and engagement with employees, how their organization's systems and procedures are organized towards succession planning program. The study findings indicated that family business leaders who identify potential successor leaders and focus on leadership development achieve satisfaction in their succession plans, and increased company rate of surviving future generation.

Second, family business leaders should devise clear strategies to consistently interact with employees to transfer knowledge, build trust and win their loyalty for longevity of service. The study findings showed that business leaders using robust strategies to continuously engage employee and inform them of knowledge transfer, and mentorship have more satisfied employees who are willing and available to succeed the business because they are better at understanding, managing and anticipating the needs of the business. My third recommendation is for family business leaders to develop an entrepreneurial mindset in designing their succession planning strategies for the dynamic process of succession. To disseminate the findings of this study, I will share the results of the study with the participants. I will also share the results with the Lagos State Chambers

of Commerce, churches in Nigeria, and other chambers of commerce in Nigeria, for their members. I also intend to disseminate this research study in small business training seminars in Lagos state and FCT, Nigeria. Finally, I plan to publish the study to achieve a broader reach in sharing the findings with business leaders across industries and other parts of the world.

Recommendations for Further Research

I used a qualitative multiple case study to explore the strategies that family business owners use to implement succession planning required for business continuity. The limitations of this study are: (a) the geographical location, (b) the number of participants, and (c) the research design. The location for this study, which is Lagos state of Nigeria, does not represent the entire perspective and insights into the strategies for implementing succession planning required for business continuity. I propose three recommendations for future research. The first recommendation is for future researchers to cover a more expansive geographical location. A more extensive geographical area would enable current study findings to be generalized to other geographical areas. In the study conducted by Leckie, Nyadzayo, and Johnson (2016), the researchers underscored the need to study a more extensive geographical area and noted that succession planning in FOB has broad application across various sectors that cannot be defined by any single geographical location.

Second, researchers interested in advancing this study could consider increasing the number of participants to accommodate views from a broader spectrum of people than the four family business leaders selected for this study. Leckie et al. (2016) noted

that the quality of the data in a study is enhanced when the researcher explores a case extensively. Finally, to improve the generalizability of the findings and enable family-owned business leaders to determine the impact of any of the strategies on succession planning can examine the influence strategies identified from this study on business continuity.

Third, there was a major outpouring of emotions by the four participants on the fact that they were close or in the process of giving up the 'baby' they had created. Emotion were varied and in a couple of cases 'covered up'. I believe there could be some further research into the sentimental side of succession planning. This will give great insights into the spiritual or emotional side of succession planning.

Reflections

My experience from the doctoral journey has been very instructive and enlightening. The Walden University Doctor of Business Administration (DBA) process provided the required platform for introspection on my personality, which enabled me to connect my worldview to my passions and my choice of a research topic. I explored the strategies that family business owners use to implement succession planning required for business continuity. I have come to appreciate the entire research process and respect the commitment to excellence in the research procedure. I also gained experience and knowledge on how to conduct research ethically, and to overcome my personal bias by relying on the perspectives of the participants for the study. Despite the seeming challenges, my learnings from the entire process including the interview and member checking sessions provided an appreciation on the relevance of crafting sound business

strategies for long term sustainability. Customer trends are dynamic, and business leaders need to evolve effective engagement strategies to optimize the inherent opportunities.

To put it into perspective a DBA with a leadership trajectory has influenced my study to a great extent. Succession planning depicts leadership. I believe that the strength of a leader is his ability to disciple the next leader. Therefore, business success should be measured by the success of the successor. The legacy of the founder will only then be preserved by the quality of leadership he has mentored to take over. I recommend that when a leader gets into position, such should identify their replacement and begin mentoring.

Conclusion

Bozer et al. (2017) identified the challenges confronting most family businesses after management succession as (a) linkages between the level of preparation of successors, (b) the nature of the relationship between the family members with the business, and (c) the performance of the firm after succession execution. However, no previous researchers seem to have focused on the strategies FOB used for succession planning for business continuity. Data collected from family-owned business leaders' reveals succession planning strategies such as identifying successor leaders, focusing on leadership development, knowledge transfer, longevity of service, and mentor and mentee processes. The findings of this study also underscore the results of prior research by Rajapalase and Kiran (2017) who identified major tenets of succession planning as continuous training of personnel, developing a hiring strategy, communication of

organizational vision, visible commitment that promotes succession planning management, and assessing future business changes and human resource requirements

The results of the study are essential because they relate to the broad concepts of succession planning, which is relevant for business continuity. Effective succession strategy may lead to sustainable family enterprises, regarding; sustained profitability, increased loyalty and long-term employees, improved firm reputation and enhanced sustainability (Rajapalase & Kiran, 2017). However, family business leaders should also realize that succession planning strategies are not sacrosanct; they are dynamic tools shaped by a combination of an organization's internal processes, employees and employers changing behavior and the macroeconomic environment where the business operates.

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Appendix A: Letter of Invitation

Dear Sir/Madam,

I invite you to take part in a research study that relates to Succession Planning in Family-owned Businesses in Nigeria. I am Ayodeji West, a doctoral student at Walden University. In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of a Doctor of Business Administration degree, I am conducting a research study on “*Succession Planning in Family-owned Businesses in Nigeria*”. I am inviting four family businesses in Lagos, Nigeria that have successfully implemented a succession planning strategy required for business continuity. I am asking for your participation in this study. I will conduct one-on-one interview that may take up 30-60 minutes of your time, on a date and time that is convenient for you. The interview process will also include a follow up meeting to share the initial study findings, and seek your opinion about the data collection process, interpretation, and findings. If you decide to participate in my study, or have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me via telephone or e-mail. I will send you an informed consent form that you can either reply by email with the words ‘I consent’ or you can append your signature on the physical copy of the informed consent form. The informed consent form provides a brief overview of the study and outlines your rights as a participant. Your participation in this study is voluntary. If you decide to join the study now, you can still change your mind later. You may withdraw at any time from the study. Any information you provide will be confidential. I will not use your personal information for any purposes outside of this research. This invitation is to elicit

your interest to participate in the research. Please confirm if you would like to be a part of this study.

I look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

Ayodeji West

Walden University

Appendix B: Interview Protocol

Participant Code: _____ Date of Interview: _____

Interview Mode: Face-to-face _____ Telephone _____

Guidance notes:

- Explain the purpose of the study to the participant.
- Retrieve signed informed consent forms
- Write the label assigned to the participant on top of the interview sheet to ensure confidentiality.
- Audio record the interview and assign same label to identify the data.
- Watch for non-verbal queues
- Ask follow-up probing questions to get more in-depth information
- Wrap up interview thanking participant

Research Question

What strategies do family business owners use to implement succession planning required for business continuity?

Interview Questions

1. What are the strategies the family had used in ensuring business continuity?
2. What strategies are in place to involve the next generation in the family business?
3. How strategic is family members' involvement in the business helping in succession planning of this business?
4. What succession planning strategies are in place that will ensure smooth hand over of leadership to the next generation?

5. What additional information can you provide that might help me understand succession planning for your organization?

Schedule follow-up member checking interview

Participant Code: _____ Date of Interview: _____

Interview Mode: Face-to-face _____ Telephone _____

Guidance notes:

- Share copy of succinct synthesis for each question in the interview
- Bring in probing questions related to other related information found
- Walk through each question, read the interpretation and ask:
 - Did I miss anything? Or,
 - What would you like me to add?