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Management Succession Planning And Employee Engagement On Organisational Performance In Selected Industries In The Niger Delta

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Abstract: *The growing competition for talented workers and the fact that experienced workers are about to retire has necessitated the concern for succession planning strategy for long-term health of a business. As such, this study seeks to assess management succession planning and organisational performance and employees' engagement in selected industries in the Niger Delta region. The study adopted a descriptive survey research and purposive sampling technique was used to select personnel from Nigerian Agip Oil Company and Dufil Prima Foods Plc. Using Taro Yamane formula, a total of 400 respondents were chosen to participate in the study. A self-developed instrument called Management Succession Planning and Organisational Performance Questionnaire (MSPOPQ) was used for data collection. The instrument was validated using face and content validity, and a reliability coefficient of (r=0.81). Data were analysed using descriptive statistics (frequency count and percentages). The results revealed that 124(31%) respondents strongly agreed and 118(29.5%) agreed that successful planning contributes to organisational performance. Also, 112(28%) respondents strongly agreed and 126(31%) agreed that employee engagement is enabled by succession planning. The findings however, shows a low contribution to organisational performance and employee engagement enabled by succession planning. Therefore, since management succession is a big part of improving organisational performance by keeping leadership stable, reducing the problems that come with personnel turnover, and making the organisation more stable, it should be properly prepared for to help employees stay engaged by giving them chances to progress in their careers, be committed, and motivated. It can be concluded that good succession planning is an important strategic tool for improving performance and engagement in businesses, it also consequently suggests that businesses make succession planning a regular aspect of their strategic human resource management to help the company last a long time and make its employees more productive.*

Keywords: Management succession planning, Organisational performance, Employee engagement, Leadership continuity, Human resource management

Introduction

The value and emphasis organisation places on succession planning in the new-millennium era have great influences on key assets in several industries. These key assets contribute to the growth, sustainability and performance of these organisations, regardless of the peculiarities in each of the industries. These assets can enable each to operate and perform idealistically as an organisation, thereby achieving more success. Increasing success in organisations may not only depend on individuals being assigned to the right positions, but also may rely on top performers in each position identified [1]. However, in modern times, organisations are faced with scarcity of capable and talented employees, and this has resulted to a major competition in recruiting and retaining talented employees [2]. Organisations often aim to recruit talented employees as they focus more on knowledge management, training and employee development, while moderating the excesses in competition and the market challenges [3].

Globally, succession planning over the years has received vast attention, and in recent times it is a concern for the management of human resources. It has also incorporated more awareness as an institutional strategic management component that can ensure organisational performance and growth. However, in recent era, [4], argue that top corporate firms claim that the basic reasons for engaging in succession planning practices are for organisations to rise to the challenge of maintaining a pool of future potential successors. On the basis of this perception, it is clear that strategic management effort involving succession planning are beginning to gain more relevance and importance in both private and public organisations.

The benefits of incorporating succession planning in the organisation is inexhaustible. As a strategic goal, it encompasses several benefits that provides the opportunity to develop employees, increase knowledge base of talented employees and the retention of experienced employees, while enabling the reduction of expensive cost of embarking further on external recruitment efforts, (Redman,2006). Finally, according to [4], the four basic reasons for succession planning include, employing "the right people in the right places at the right times", eradicating the effect of turnover or downsizing, advancing in diversity and multiculturalism and providing a bedrock for the initiation of career paths, training and re-training, developmental strategic plans, and individual career upgrading, [4].

Some researchers argue that organisational performance should be described as the result connected with work efforts on strategic objectives, product and customer satisfaction as well as financial growth. The development and recognition key contributors that can meet future organisational performance and operational needs as being fundamental to organisation objectives has been communicated to key employee. However, some studies have displayed the impact of succession planning, and it can improve

organisation performance through employee retention. A strategic succession planning can influence employee retention for work commitment in various manners. It can empower employees to perceive the vision and mission of the organisation. It likewise can explain to employees the organisations advancement.

According to the scholar, employee engagement is perceived incomplete, if there are the absence of tangible and intangible rewards are missing in the employee job. Some scholars have suggested four indicators of employee engagement, but the focus here is on employee engagement factors. These indicators include growth of an employee and integration of employee to what he can offer to the organisation and what he can get as compensation in return, [5]. [6] argued in his study on the antecedents, results and consequences of employee engagement. According to [6], the antecedents of employee work or job engagement include, job nature, organisational support, co-worker and supervisor's support, compensation and recognition, procedural justice and work ethics, and work sharing justice. The other indicators include, employee job satisfaction, organisational commitment, employee intention to quit job, organisational citizenship and work behavior.

Engaged employee often display three main behaviours which can improve or enhance organisational performance. The behaviours include employee advocacy to promote the organisation among customers and co-workers, employee strong desire and passion to remain a member of the organisation even other work opportunities are open elsewhere and employee exertion of energy for work beyond normal work time, while making more efforts and initiatives to contribute toward the progress of the business, [7].

Employee retention is regarded as an important aspect in organisations today, even in the era of globalization as well as technological advancement. Organisations strive to maintain their most treasurable or valuable talents. However, employee retention has often generated several issues of discussion in human resource management. It has always become important discourse to organisations due to increasing knowledge of its influence as a key corporate asset [8].

According to [9], in their observation posits that despite its conceived importance, just few studies have been able to clearly explore the concept. However, it is perceived that the selection and retention of key individuals should be taken as top priority to any organisation, [10].

Career development is the initiative involving programmes by human resource management that assist in developing the work-life and identify competencies needed by each employee to manage their career desires which normally is in line with organisation objective. These include organisational career planning for employees, coaching or mentoring, employee career counselling, skill or talent management as well as training programmes [11].

Theoretical framework

Agency theory which was propounded by Jensen and Meckling in 1976 provides a theoretical foundation for this study. The theory explains how organisations design governance processes to align the interests of managers (agents) with those of owners (principals). Management succession planning serves as a strategic control mechanism that reduces agency costs by ensuring leadership continuity and promoting goal alignment. Furthermore, effective succession planning enhances employee engagement by fostering trust, career certainty, and organisational commitment, which ultimately translates into improved organisational performance. Therefore, Agency Theory provides a robust explanatory framework for examining how management succession planning influences organisational performance directly and indirectly through employee engagement in selected industries in the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria. Below is a visual representation of the framework:

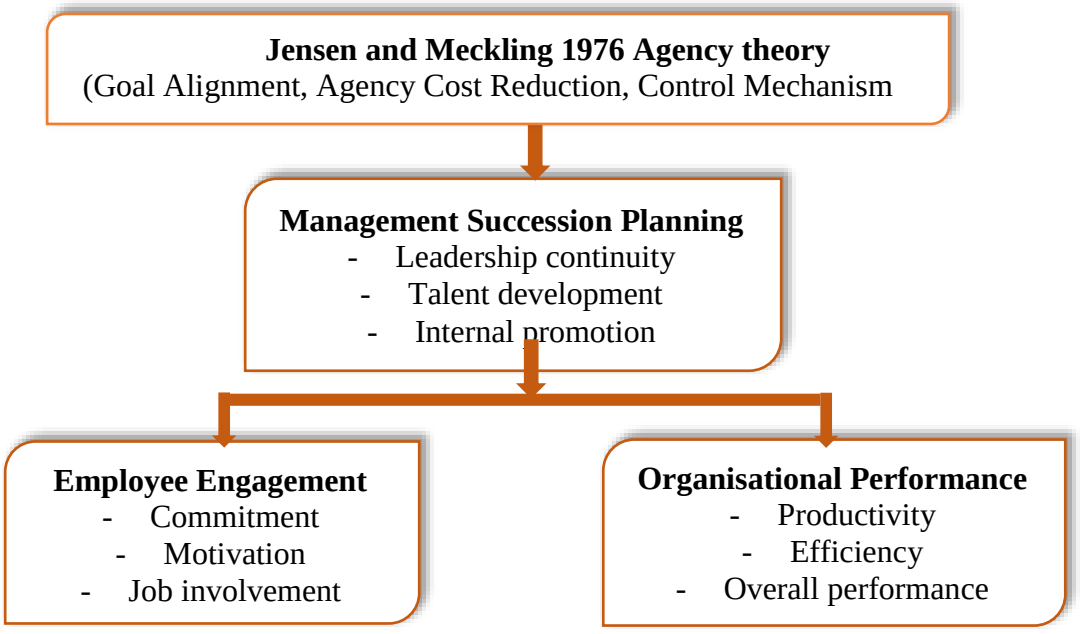

Fig 1: Theoretical framework of the study

Source: Authors' concept

Statement of the Problem

The increasing competition in the global economy couple with the rapidly changing workforce structures, work designs and demographics has created intense competition for talented and skilled employees, and as a result this has necessitated the concern for succession management system in organisations. Therefore, it is disheartening to employers that management are ill-prepared to face the future challenges yet to come. Organisations are left with the need to recruit, develop as well as retain talented number of key human resources for organisational progress in the future, some individuals born over decades ago, who are still engaged in service, and are seemingly approaching their retirement age, replacing such old employees can have huge impact on organisations, because of the scarcity of skilled and knowledgeable workforce. With the eminent problem of loss of talented employees and scarcity of skilled workers, scholars have suggested that the strategic implementation of succession planning can assist in identifying and developing capable employees, succession planning can assist toward implementing organisation's strategic plans, goal-directed training needs, employee development, as well as creating a web of talented individuals that are of being promoted and prepared for the future of the organisation. Despite the growing importance of succession planning, some organisations are reluctant and unprepared for the unexpected changes looming in future leadership, let alone the development of key employees in the lower levels. As important as succession or replacement planning for key employees is in organisation, such future planning appear to have been neglected in favor of other planning, such as emergency planning for funds, equipment and other facilities.

Research Questions

i. What does management succession planning contribute to organisational performance?

ii. How is employee engagement enabled by succession planning in selected industries?

Methodology

The study used a non-experimental research design of the descriptive survey research type. The population of this study comprises of all employees in the selected industries in the Niger Delta. The selected companies are Nigerian Agip Oil Company and Dufil Prima Foods Plc. The total number of employees in Nigerian Agip Oil Company according to the human resource department (2020) is 3000, while that of Dufil Prima Foods Plc is 286 workers Therefore, a total sample size of 400 respondents was drawn from the available population of the selected industries being chosen as 3286 using a purposive sampling technique and Taro Yamane formula was used to ascertain the sample size of 400.

Instrumentation

Management Succession Planning and Organisational Performance Questionnaire (MSPOPQ) developed by the researcher was used to ascertain the level of employee's management succession planning and organisational performance. The instrument consisted of two sections; Section A was used to elicit information on the demographic of the respondents such as Sex, Age, Marital Status, Educational Level and Years in Service while section B consisted of the construct of succession planning rating scale (organisation performance, employee engagement, employee retention, employee training and career development and employee recruitment and talent management). The instrument designed in five-point Likert Scale format of strongly agree, agree, neutral, strongly disagree, and disagree was validated through face and content validity. The internal consistency was established using Cronbach Alpha and the reliability coefficient was established at r=0.81.

Result

Research Question One: **What does management succession planning contribute to organisational performance?**

Table 1. Response on management succession planning contribution to organisational performance in selected industries in Niger Delta

S/N	Level of Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Strongly Agree	124	31
2	Agree	118	29.5

3	Neutral	20	5
4	Strongly Disagree	62	15.5
5	Disagree	76	19
	Total	**400**	**100**

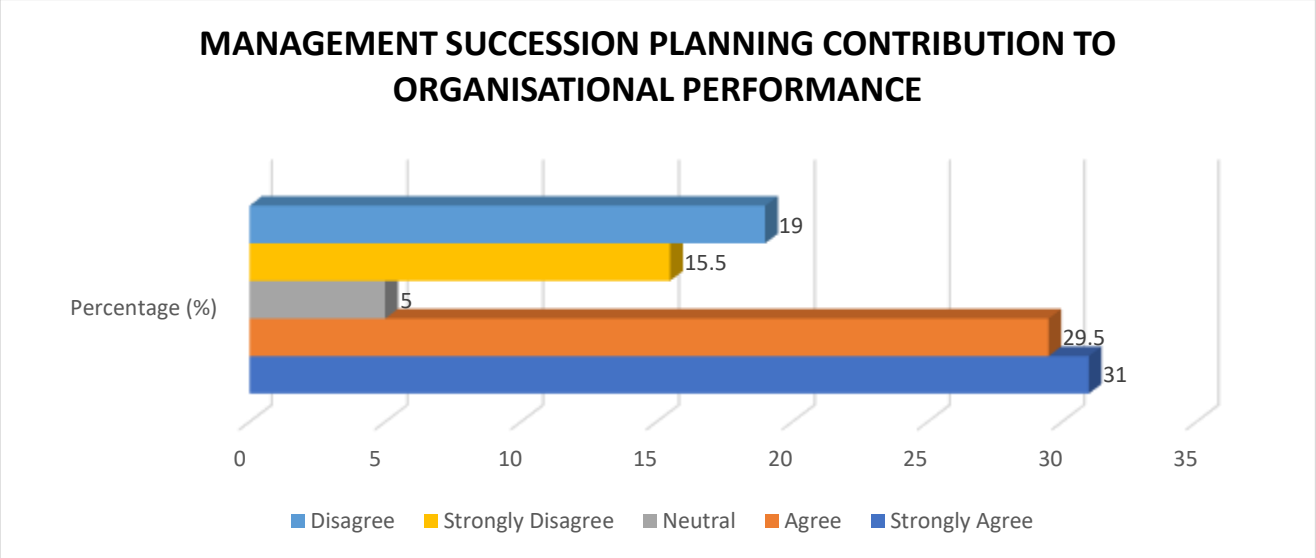

Fig 2: ***Management Succession Planning Contribution to Organisational Performance***

The result in table 1 and fig 1 which was to elicit information on the contribution of management succession planning and to organisational performance in selected industries in Niger Delta region revealed that 124(31%) strongly agree that succession planning contribute to organisational performance, 118(29.5%) agree to the stated research questions. But 62(15.5%) respondents strongly disagree, while 76(19%) disagree that succession planning contribute organisational performance. However, 20(5%) respondents were neutral to the stated research questions. The research showed that a greater number of respondents agreed that succession planning contribute to organisational performance. Therefore, the research accepts that succession planning contributes to organisational performance.

Research Question Two: **How is employee engagement enabled by succession planning in selected industries?**

Table 2. Response of employee engagement enabled by succession planning in selected industries in Niger Delta region

S/N	Level of Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Strongly Agree	112	28
2	Agree	126	31.5
3	Neutral	18	4.5

4	Strongly Disagree	84	21
5	Disagree	60	15
	Total	**400**	**100**

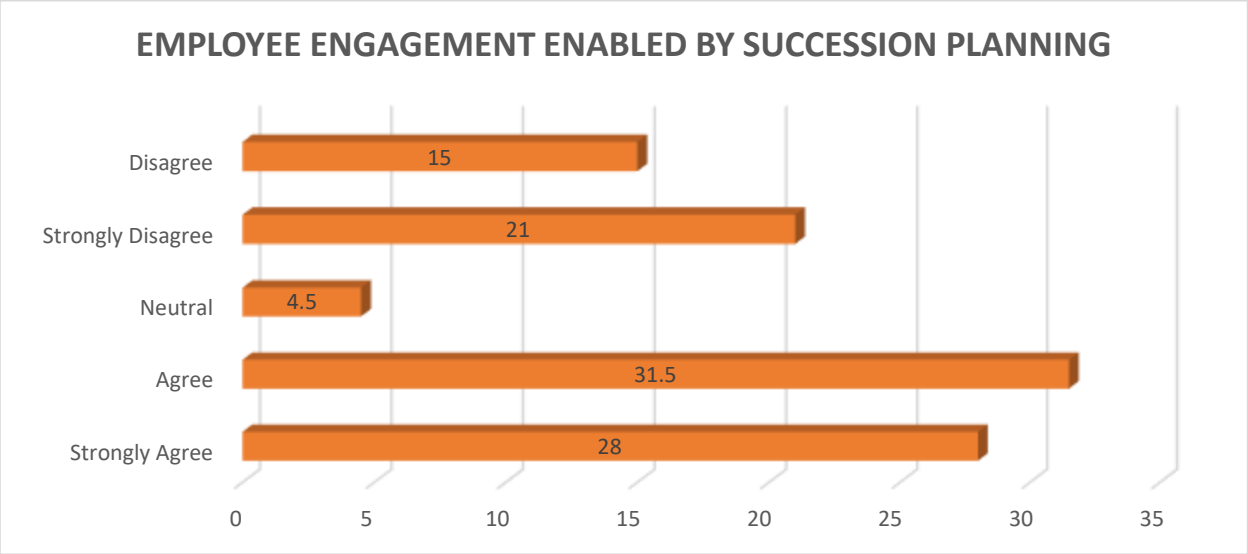

Fig 3: ***Employee Engagement Enabled by Succession Planning***

The result in Table 2 and fig 2 which was to elicit information on employee engagement enabled by succession planning in selected industries in Niger Delta region indicates that 112(28%) respondents strongly agree that employee engagement is enabled by succession planning, whereas 126(31.5%) agree to the stated research questions. But 84(21%) strongly disagree to the stated research questions, and 60(15%) disagree that employee engagement is enabled by succession planning. However, 18(4.5%) respondents were neutral to the stated research questions. Since a greater number of respondents agree to the stated research questions, the study accepts that employee engagement is enabled by succession planning.

Discussion

According to the study research question one, what does management succession planning accomplish to help the performance of an organisation? The study demonstrated that management succession planning enhances organisational performance. Succession planning is a method that helps companies do their best work now and in the future. This also shows that as companies work on management succession planning to make sure their future performance is safe, they also look ahead to making sure their future performance is safe. They see succession planning as an important step for the present and the future. The finding aligns with the study by [12], which indicated that to prepare for the organisation's future performance, management implements strategic succession planning to cultivate successors among employees. Furthermore, the results revealed that 124 respondents (31%) strongly agreed that succession planning enhances organisational performance, while 118 respondents (29.5%) expressed further agreement. The results showed that 62 (15.5%) of the people who answered strongly disagreed and 76 (19%) disagreed that succession planning helped the firm do better. The results also suggest that 20 (5%) of the people who answered were ambivalent toward the research topics.

Based on the second research question, which asks, "How does succession planning help employees get involved?" The research demonstrated that succession planning improves employee engagement. The study's results indicated that employees exhibit increased engagement and commitment to their job responsibilities when management implements succession planning sessions or forums that facilitate the placement or promotion of key competent persons to top positions within the firm.

Conclusions

This study demonstrated that management succession planning is an essential strategy that substantially enhances organisational performance and employee engagement in specific industries within the Niger Delta. The results showed that businesses that plan

for leadership continuity are better able to keep productivity high, reduce the problems that come with personnel turnover, and keep the stability of the organisation. Succession planning was also proven to increase employee engagement by giving them a sense of direction in their careers, motivating them, and making them more committed to the firm. When employees see that there are clear ways for them to progress and move up in leadership, they are more likely to be dedicated, loyal, and proactive in their work, which makes the organisation as a whole more effective. Based on these results, the study suggests that firms make succession planning a key part of their strategic and human resource management plans. Management should intentionally identify and cultivate high-potential individuals through organized training, mentoring, and career development initiatives to guarantee leadership preparedness and continuity. Organisations could also combine succession planning with employee engagement tactics by making sure that promotion processes are fair and open, and by clearly expressing how employees can move up in their careers. It is also a good idea to regularly assess and connect succession plans with the goals of the organisation and the demands of the workforce. This will boost employee confidence, lower turnover intentions, and encourage long-term organisational performance.

Implications of the study

The results of this study are significant for managers, human resource professionals, and policymakers in organisations. The report underscores the importance for management to regard succession planning as a strategic investment instead of only a reactive measure to vacancies. If an organisation doesn't plan for leadership continuity, it could see a drop in performance, a loss of institutional knowledge, and a drop in staff morale.

For people who work in human resources, the report shows how important succession planning is for keeping employees engaged and keeping them on the job. Human resource departments should make clear and open succession plans that connect employee growth with the goals of the firm. From a policy perspective, the study offers empirical information that can inform organisational policies aimed at sustainable workforce development and leadership readiness, especially in sectors experiencing talent shortages and an aging workforce.

Suggestion for Further Studies

1. Subsequent research may utilize an experimental or longitudinal methodology to investigate the enduring effects of succession planning on organisational performance.
2. Additional research should investigate the correlation between succession planning and staff retention in various sectors outside the Niger Delta region.
3. Research may examine the moderating influence of organisational culture or leadership style on the link between succession planning and employee engagement.
4. Future academics can investigate succession planning techniques inside public sector enterprises for comparative study.
5. Further research may concentrate on the impact of technology instruments and digital talent management systems on efficient succession planning.

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