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Effect of Succession Management Practices on Business Continuity: Study of Avipreneurship SMEs in Ogun State Nigeria

By

¹Makinde O.G., ²Akpa V.O, ³Olusanya Nasiru. O.

^{1,2}Department of Business Administration, Babcock University Ilisan Remo

³Research Fellow, Department of Business Administration, Babcock University Ilisan Remo



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Abstract

A succession management practice is crucial in the current situation of tight talent markets and competitive times, developing successor is a must for all overall organisational development, particularly in a dynamic business environment, thus organisation can't afford to be without the right people who can quickly fill a key role that could become vacant. Hence, developing a successor through adoption and implementation of succession management practices is a must for overall organisational performance, business continuity and sustainability. It is therefore imperative that this study examines the effect of succession management practices measured by coaching, employees' career development, job rotation, recruitment policy, mentoring on business continuity using Avipreneurship SMEs in Ogun State Nigeria as reference. This study adopted survey research design. The target population for the study is three hundred and fifty-three (353) registered poultry small and medium scale farms and each of the farms having two respondents; that is, owner and manager making a total of 706 respondents. The 353 are registered farms with poultry association Ogun State. A total of 632 questionnaires were returned representing 89.5% response rate. Total enumeration was adopted. A structured and validated questionnaire was used for data collection. The reliability test yielded Cronbach's alpha for the constructs ranges from 0.728 to 0.954. The result revealed that coaching ($\beta = 0.265$, $t = 5.973$, $p < 0.05$), employees' career development ($\beta = .190$, $t = 4.334$, $p < 0.05$) and job rotation ($\beta = .112$, $t = 2.803$, $p < 0.05$) all have a significant positive effect on business continuity. However, recruitment policy ($\beta = .030$, $t = .738$, $p > 0.05$) and mentoring ($\beta = .027$, $t = .643$, $p > 0.05$) have positive but non-significant effect on business continuity in Avipreneurship SMEs in Ogun State, Nigeria. The results of the analysis revealed that three dimensions of SMP (employees' career development, coaching and job rotation) have positive and significant effect on business continuity of the Avipreneurship SMEs in Ogun State, Nigeria. Findings further revealed that Succession management practices have significant effect on business continuity of Avipreneurship SMEs in Ogun State, Nigeria ($\text{Adj. } R^2 = 0.308$, $F(5, 626) = 57.284$, $p < 0.05$). The study concluded that succession management practices affected business continuity of Avipreneurship SMEs in Ogun State, Nigeria. The study recommended that the management of Avipreneurship SMEs in Nigeria should create detailed succession plans that outline the process for identifying and preparing future leaders. This includes defining key roles, identifying potential successors, and providing them with the necessary training and development opportunities.

Keywords: Business Continuity, Avipreneurship, Small and Medium Enterprises, Succession Management Practices

Introduction

In the rapidly evolving landscape of the global food system, environmental challenges, and generational shifts, effective succession management stands as a critical endeavor to ensure the perpetuity and sustainability of avipreneurship SMEs (Monyei et al., 2021). This imperative process encompasses multifarious strategies like recruitment policies, coaching, career development, mentoring, and job rotation, all aimed at identifying, nurturing, and retaining potential successors for pivotal positions within the organisation (Chung & Au, 2021).

By embracing such practices, Avipreneurship SMEs can bolster their performance, driving innovation, augmenting productivity, boosting competitiveness, and curbing turnover expenses (Bertschi-Michel et al., 2021). However, the sphere of succession management encounters its share of impediments and complexities in the agricultural sector. These include the paucity of capable and motivated candidates, emotional and relational dynamics between incumbents and successors, resistance to change and adaptation, and the intricacies of legal and financial aspects



(Strike et al., 2018). Hence, it becomes imperative for Avipreneurship SMEs to adopt a proactive, strategic stance towards succession management. Thus, a comprehensive study on how the succession management practices impact business continuity, taking into account the diverse contexts of family-owned businesses, academic institutions, and corporate settings, while also considering the mediating and moderating variables that may influence these relationships is very imperative as such research would contribute valuable insights to enhance organisational sustainability and competitiveness.

Statement of Problem

There are several diverse empirical findings and mixed consensus among scholars, with the expectation that the implementation of Succession management practices will help enhance the continuity of businesses. The notable gap in the existing literature regarding the influence of succession management practices, including recruitment policy, coaching, career development, mentoring, and job rotation, on the continuity of business operations. Equan (2021) carried out research on how to improve succession planning in property and liability insurance businesses and revealed in their findings that succession planning positively influences business continuity. Findings from the study of Olubiye et al. (2022) also revealed that succession planning had a significant effect on family business continuity. In the study of Saan et al. (2018), succession management practices have a positive effect on business continuity. Ukairo et al. (2021) findings indicated a positive impact of succession management on SME sustainability. Monyei et al. (2021) also studied the impact of succession management on long-term viability and the result showed that succession planning was positively associated with corporate sustainability. Osita et al. (2020) conducted a study on succession planning and small and medium firm sustainability (SMEs). Results indicated that mentorship has a statistically significant relationship with SMEs' continuity. While Patrick et al. (2022) highlighted the need for further investigation into the challenges faced by family-owned businesses in effectively implementing succession planning, Mack et al. (2020) called for research examining the outcomes of recruitment policies. Additionally, Lyons and Bandura (2022) suggested exploring the specific behaviours of managers in coaching roles, while Huang et al. (2022) encouraged investigating factors contributing to the employability of graduates. Furthermore, Umar et al. (2022) stressed the importance of researching the effectiveness of mentoring in promoting corporate social responsibility (CSR) practices, and Widiastutik et al. (2022) proposed exploring the mediating role of job satisfaction in the relationship between remuneration, job rotation, and employee performance. Thus, inconclusiveness of the previous studies considering the importance of succession management practices and their effect on business continuity and the gap in literature necessitated the need for this study.

The study hypothesized that succession management practices dimensions have effect on business continuity using Avipreneurship SMEs in Ogun State, Nigeria. The exploration

into the effect of succession management practices on business continuity of Avipreneurship SMEs in Ogun State, Nigeria, is of paramount importance to those at the helms of Avipreneurship SMEs. Beyond this, the study acts as a compass, guiding managers and leaders. It will help them understand how succession management practices (recruitment policy, coaching, employee's career development, mentoring, and job rotation) affects performance of SMEs in poultry farming

Literature Review

Concept of Succession Management Practices

Succession management practices in organisations exhibit several key characteristics contributing to their effectiveness. Firstly, they are proactive and forward-thinking, focusing on identifying and developing potential successors well in advance (Shaheen et al., 2023). This involves comprehensive talent assessments, performance evaluations, and personalized development plans to groom high-potential employees for future leadership roles. Secondly, successful succession management practices are inclusive and diverse, aiming to create a pipeline of capable leaders from various backgrounds and perspectives (Házi et al., 2023). Organisations recognize the importance of diversity in driving innovation, adaptability, and decision-making effectiveness. Thirdly, these practices emphasize continuous learning and development, providing training and mentoring opportunities for potential successors to enhance their skills and capabilities (Sha et al., 2023). Additionally, effective succession management practices are aligned with the strategic goals and values of the organisation, ensuring that the identified successors possess the necessary competencies and cultural fit required for future leadership roles (Yuan et al., 2023). Lastly, they involve open and transparent communication, keeping all stakeholders informed and engaged throughout the succession planning process (Xu et al., 2023). This fosters trust, reduces resistance to change, and promotes a smooth leadership transition. In conclusion, robust succession management practices, as supported by research (Shaheen et al., 2023; Házi et al., 2023; Sha et al., 2023; Yuan et al., 2023; Xu et al., 2023), are proactive, inclusive, development-oriented, aligned with organisational goals, and promote transparent communication, enabling organisations to cultivate a talented pool of future leaders and ensure long-term success.

Concept of Business Continuity

The concept of business continuity has been widely discussed and defined in various academic works. According to Kosieradzka et al. (2022), business continuity refers to the strategic and proactive approach that organisations adopt to ensure their essential functions and critical operations can continue during and after disruptive events. Rahmatiah et al. (2019) emphasize the importance of identifying and managing risks to respond effectively to adverse situations and protect an organisation's reputation and market position. Filipović et al. (2018) highlight the significance of creating plans and protocols to enable swift recovery from disruptions, ensuring the sustainability of operations in the face of uncertainties. Moreover, Brás et al. (2023) and Singh and Jain (2022)

emphasize the need for integrating resilience into an organisation's culture and practices to enhance its ability to adapt to evolving challenges. This involves continuous improvement through regular testing, updating, and training to ensure the relevance and effectiveness of the strategies (Chatzistelios et al., 2022).

In exploring the characteristics of business continuity, Chen et al. (2021) stress the importance of a comprehensive understanding of an organisation's core processes, dependencies, and vulnerabilities, enabling the identification of critical assets that need protection. They also highlight the significance of predefined roles and responsibilities within a well-developed business continuity plan (Kato & Charoenrat, 2018), ensuring that everyone within the organisation knows their tasks during a crisis. Effective communication channels are crucial for disseminating information rapidly and accurately to all stakeholders (Pinto et al., 2022), while flexibility is essential, as a single approach may not be suitable for all types of disruptions (Niemimaa et al., 2019). Continuous evaluation and assessment of the plan are vital to ensure it remains relevant and aligned with the changing business landscape and potential risks (Margherita & Heikkilä, 2021).

Empirical Review

According to Awanis and Bidayatul (2016), the significance of succession management to business continuity has been emphasized by business consultants and by academia. The result of Kowo et al. (2021) revealed that HR succession planning significantly assists SMEs to increase business continuity and Worker's education significantly assists SMEs to increase business survival. In the same vein, Onoriode and Okoh (2019) aver a positive and significance relationship between managerial succession planning strategy and the continuity of an organisation's performance and its survival. Further analysis revealed that positive and significance relationship exists between managerial succession planning strategy and the growth of an organisation. Olubiyi et al. (2022) findings corroborated Awogbemi, et al. (2022), which submitted that succession planning significantly affects business continuity. In line with this argument, Onwuka et al. (2015) found that mentoring (an approach to succession planning) has positive relationship with business continuity; and posits that mentoring gives opportunities to develop competent, capable and productive employees that grow organisations.

Orianzi and Bagshaw (2021) established that there is a significant positive relationship between management succession and the corporate survival of multinational oil and gas producing companies in Nigeria. In a similar study, Geib and Boenigk (2022) found that only 12.3% of responding nonprofit organisations in Germany practice tripartite shared leadership in succession management. Geib and Boenigk's (2022) findings differ from those of Orianzi and Bagshaw (2021) because the former focused on the corporate survival effect of management succession; the latter examined the relationship between succession management and nonprofit organisations. Despite this dissimilarity, the underlining

relevance of succession management for business continuity can be deduced. In addition, the findings of Oyewole (2018) are in consonance with studies of Bienose et al. (2021); Motwani, (2016); Osho and Afolabi, (2018). Onyeukwu and Jekelle's (2019) study produced results showing that mentoring and human capital developments have a significant influence on the sustainability of small family-owned businesses.

Saan, Enu-Kwesi and Remy (2018) in their study reported that majority of owners/founders (94.1%) perceived business planning as an important skill, while the ability to develop a business strategy has a positive impact on succession and leads to continuity. Further analysis revealed that owners/founders with high level of formal education tend to have positive perception of the importance of succession planning and business continuity as compared to those with lower levels of formal education. In the same vein, Monyei et al. (2021) in their study on the impact of succession management on the long-term viability of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Lagos, Nigeria revealed that succession planning was associated with corporate sustainability among SMEs in Lagos State, Nigeria. These findings were also similar to previous research (Dumbu, 2018; Nejadirani et al., 2012).

Methodology

This study employed a survey research design to examine; the effect of succession management practices on firms' growth of Avipreneurship SMEs in Ogun State. The survey research design involved the administration of questionnaire to avipreneurship SME owners and managers in Ogun State Nigeria. The choice of this research design is justified by its effectiveness in empirically investigating the effect of the variables of interest (Kitchot et al., 2021). The target population for the study is three hundred and fifty-three (353) registered poultry small and medium scale farms and each of the farms having two respondents; that is, owner and manager registered with PANOG spread across the six agricultural zones in Ogun State. These agricultural zones are Remo, Ijebu, Egba, Owode/Mowe, Ota/Ifo, and Yewa zones. This study conducted a census of the entire target population of 353 registered Poultry farms with PANOG thus no sampling was done. The justification for using census method was that when the population of a study is small (less than 500), as such there is no need to draw a sample from the population because it was too small to study (Mugo, Kahuthia, & Kinyua, 2019), hence no sampling frame. Data used for this study was primary data and predominantly collected through surveys. Primary data was used help in collecting a piece of first-hand information from the registered poultry small and medium-scale farmers in Ogun State, Nigeria guaranteeing that the data acquired is very relevant to the study. The inferential analysis for this study on succession management practices and business continuity of Avipreneurship SMEs involved the use of multiple regression analysis to test the effect between the predictor variables and the dependent variables. The hypothesis was tested using multiple regression analysis, which allows for the examination of the simultaneous effects

of multiple independent variables on a single dependent variable.

Model Specification

The variables for this study were operationalized with the use of different statistical denotations and values.

$$Y = f(XZ)$$

Where: Y = Dependent Variable (Firms' Growth), X = Independent Variable (Succession Management Practices)

Where: Y = Business Continuity (BC)

$$X = (x_1, x_2, x_3, x_4, x_5)$$

Where: x_1 = Recruitment Policy (RP), x_2 = Coaching (CG), x_3 = Employee's Career Development (ED), x_4 = Mentoring (MG), x_5 = Job Rotation (JR)

Equation to test the hypothesis formulated is thus:

$$BC = f(RP, CG, ED, MG, JR)$$

$$BC = \beta_0 + \beta_1 RP_i + \beta_2 CG_i + \beta_3 ED_i + \beta_4 MG_i + \beta_5 JR_i + e_i \dots\dots$$

Regression equation

Where: α_0 = the constant of the equation, $\beta_1 - \beta_5$ = the coefficient of variables in the equations

e_i = Error term.

A priori Expectation

In establishing the formulated hypothesis, the expectation is that succession management practices positively affect business continuity. Using the basic statistical denotation, the a-priori expectation for the stated models is given as follows:

S/N	Models	Expected Results
H ₀	BC = $\alpha_0 + \beta_1 x_1 + \beta_2 x_2 + \beta_3 x_3 + \beta_4 x_4 + \beta_5 x_5 + \mu_i$	If $\alpha_0, \beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3, \beta_4, \beta_5 = p \leq 0.05$, Positive, H ₀ should be rejected

Table 1: Summary of Analysis showing effect of Succession Management Practices on Business Continuity of Avipreneurship SMEs in Ogun State, Nigeria

Table 1. Regression Statistics, ANOVA								
N	Model	B	T	Sig.	ANOVA (Sig.)	R	Adjusted R ²	F (5, 626)
632	(Constant)	10.018	10.021	.000	0.001 ^b	0.560 ^a	0.308	57.284
	Recruitment Policy	.030	.738	.461				
	Coaching	.265	5.973	.000				
	Employees' Career Development	.190	4.334	.000				
	Mentoring	.027	.643	.520				
	Job Rotation	.112	2.803	.005				
a. Dependent Variable: Business Continuity								
b. Predictors: (Constant), Job Rotation, Mentoring, Recruitment Policy, Coaching, Employees' Career Development								

Source: Researcher's Field Survey, 2025

Interpretation

Table 1 shows the analysis results for the effect of SMP dimensions on business continuity on the Avipreneurship SMEs in Ogun State, Nigeria. The result revealed that coaching ($\beta = 0.265, t = 5.973, p < 0.05$), employees' career

Source: Researcher's work 2025.

Data Analysis, Results and Discussion of Findings

The data presentation, analysis, interpretation of results, and the discussion of findings to examine the effect of succession management practice on business continuity of Avipreneurship SMEs in Ogun State, Nigeria focused on the descriptive statistics analysis of the study variables, hypotheses testing, and summary of the hypothesis findings. The results of the analysis are presented using tables together with the interpretations. The data collected were analysed using Statistical Package for Social Scientist (SPSS) software version 27.0 at 5% significance level.

A total number of 706 copies of questionnaire were administered to owners and managers of registered poultry farms in Ogun State. A total of six hundred and thirty-two (632) which represented approximately 89.5% of the total copies of the questionnaire administered were returned and found usable for the analysis.

Hypotheses Testing

H₀: Succession management practices have no significant effect on business continuity.

In the hypothesis, the independent variable is the succession management practice with components (recruitment policy, coaching, employee's career development, mentoring, and job rotation), while the dependent variable was business continuity. Data for succession management practice components were generated by adding together scores of responses from all the items under each component to generate independent scores for each component. Data was generated by adding together the responses of all items under the variable to create an index of business continuity.

development ($\beta = .190, t = 4.334, p < 0.05$) and job rotation ($\beta = .112, t = 2.803, p < 0.05$) all have a significant positive effect on business continuity. However, recruitment policy ($\beta = .030, t = .738, p > 0.05$) and mentoring ($\beta = .027, t = .643, p > 0.05$) have positive but non-significant effect on business

continuity in Avipreneurship SMEs in Ogun State, Nigeria. The results of the analysis revealed that three dimensions of SMP (employees' career development, coaching and job rotation) have positive and significant effect on business continuity of the Avipreneurship SMEs in Ogun State, Nigeria. This suggested that employees' career development, coaching and job rotation were important predictors of business continuity of the selected Avipreneurship SMEs in Ogun State, Nigeria.

The correlation value (R-value) which is 0.560; showed that SMP dimensions have a strong and positive relationship with business continuity. The *Adj. R²* ($R^2 = 0.308$) implies that 30.8% of the variance in business continuity of the Avipreneurship SMEs in Ogun State, Nigeria was attributable to the SMP (employees' career development, coaching and job rotation) while the 69.2% changes that occurs is accounted for by other variables not captured in the model. SMP being the independent variable determines 56.0% of the business continuity of the Avipreneurship SMEs in Ogun State, Nigeria.

The predictive and prescriptive multiple regression models are thus expressed:

$$BC = 10.018 + .030RP + 0.256CD + .190ED + 0.027MG + 0.112JR + U_i \text{-----Eqn i (Predictive Model)}$$

$$BC = 10.018 + 0.256CD + .190ED + 0.112JR + U_i \text{----Eqn i (Prescriptive Model)}$$

Where:

BC = Business Continuity RP = Recruitment Policy CD = Coaching ED = Employee's Career Development MG = Mentoring JR = Job Rotation

The regression model revealed that if SMP dimensions were held constant at zero, business continuity of the Avipreneurship SMEs in Ogun State, Nigeria was 10.018 indicating that in the absence of SMP, business continuity of the Avipreneurship SMEs in Ogun State, Nigeria was 10.018, indicating a positive business continuity response. Furthermore, the predictive model revealed that three dimensions of the SMP (employee's career development, coaching and job rotation) have significant positive effect on the business continuity while mentoring and recruitment policy both have positive but non-significant effect on business continuity. These variables were not prescribed for the farmers. From the prescriptive model, a unit change in employee's career development, coaching and job rotation would increase firm growth by 0.190, 0.265 and 0.112 units respectively. The results suggest that job rotation, employee's career development and coaching are significant predictors of business continuity among Avipreneurship SMEs in Ogun State, Nigeria. Thus, farmers in this region should hold these dimensions of SMP in their operations to ensure overall business continuity.

The *F*-statistics ($df = 5, 631$) = 57.284 at $p < 0.05$) indicated that the overall model is significant for predicting the effect of SMP on business continuity. This implies that the regression model is a good fit for predicting the effect of SMP on

business continuity. The results further showed that employee's career development and coaching have the most effect on business continuity among Avipreneurship SMEs in Ogun State, Nigeria.

Discussion

The finding revealed that SMP as used in this research have significant effect on business continuity of Avipreneurship SMEs in Nigeria (*Adj. R²* = 0.308, $F(5, 631) = 57.284$, $p < 0.05$). Notably, succession management practices (SMP), specifically coaching, employee career development, and job rotation, significantly enhance business continuity in agricultural SMEs in Ogun State, Nigeria. Recruitment policy and mentoring had a positive but non-significant impact. The model explained 30.8% of the variation in business continuity, highlighting the importance of structured career development and training. In other words, the business continuity of Avipreneurship SMEs in Nigeria is significantly impacted by embracing SMP and sub variables used in this research. In support of this study finding was Kaur et al., (2022), who struck a positive significance of succession management with business continuity. In consonance also is Kowo et al. (2021) who revealed that succession planning significantly assists SMEs to increase business continuity. In the same vein, Onoriode and Okoh (2019) showed positive and significance relationship between managerial succession planning strategy and the continuity of an organisation's performance and its survival. Also, consistent with this study are that of Olubiyi et al. (2022); Namdar et al., (2021) whose findings revealed that succession planning significantly affects business continuity. In line with this argument, Kosieradzka et al. (2022) found that mentoring (an approach to succession planning) has positive relationship with business continuity; and posits that mentoring gives opportunities to develop competent, capable and productive employees that grow organisations. Orianzi and Bagshaw (2021) established that there is a significant positive relationship between management succession and the corporate survival of multinational oil and gas producing companies in Nigeria. Similarly, Geib and Boenigk (2022) found that only 12.3% of responding nonprofit organisations in Germany practice tripartite shared leadership in succession management. Geib and Boenigk's (2022) findings differ from those of Orianzi and Bagshaw (2021) because the former focused on the corporate survival effect of management succession; the latter examined the relationship between succession management and nonprofit organisations

In addition, the findings of Brás et al. (2023) are in consonance with related studies (Bienose et al. 2021; Yuan et al., 2023). Onyeukwu and Jekelle's (2019) study produced results showing that mentoring and human capital developments have a significant influence on the sustainability of small family-owned businesses. Saan et al. (2018) in their business strategy has a positive impact on succession and leads to continuity. In the same vein, Monyei et al. (2021) in their study on the impact of succession management on the long-term viability of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Lagos, Nigeria revealed that

succession planning was associated with corporate sustainability among SMEs in Lagos State, Nigeria. These findings were also similar to previous research (Singh & Jain, 2022; Chatzistelios et al., 2022).

The findings of this study align with the Resource-Based View (RBV) theory, which emphasizes the role of internal resources in driving business performance. In Avipreneurship SMEs, succession management practices serve as critical resources that enhance business continuity. By implementing structured career development, coaching, and job rotation, these businesses strengthen leadership stability and workforce capabilities. This, in turn, fosters resilience, ensuring smooth transitions and sustained productivity (Battisti et al., 2022). The ability to leverage skilled employees and specialized knowledge enables SMEs to navigate challenges and maintain efficiency. Succession planning not only prepares future leaders but also enhances operational stability, making businesses more adaptable to industry demands. Ultimately, the structured use of internal resources contributes to long-term sustainability, reinforcing the significance of effective succession management in strengthening organisational performance and growth.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The study concluded that succession management practices dimensions have significant effect on business continuity of Avipreneurship SMEs in Ogun State, Nigeria. It is, therefore, recommended that the management of Avipreneurship SMEs in Ogun State, Nigeria should create detailed succession plans that outline the process for identifying and preparing future leaders. This includes defining key roles, identifying potential successors, and providing them with the necessary training and development opportunities.

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