

Succession Planning Practices and Organizational Commitment in Nigerian Research Institutes

This study examines succession planning practices and organizational commitment in Nigerian research institutes. This study employed cross sectional field survey of ten (10) independent (autonomous) government owned research institutes in South-South and South-West geo-political zones of Nigeria. Data was generated using a sample of 325 out of 1739 senior, middle and top management staff of the ten research institutes. Data collection was by means of self-administered questionnaire and was analyzed using descriptive statistics, T-test, Diagnostic test and ordinary least square (OLS) regression. The study revealed that competency assessment, and training and development have a significant positive relationship with commitment while top management support, and identification and preparation were not significant but positively related to commitment in Nigerian research institutes. The study recommends among others that research institutes should encourage continuous training and development programs for potential successors based on mandates of institute.

Keywords: *Nigerian Research Institutes, Organizational Commitment, Succession Planning Practices, Training and Development, Competency Assessment.*

Introduction

The concern for succession planning practices among organisations whether public or private has been a lingering issue among human resource practitioners and authorities for years. Effective leaders and human resource managers in different fields through the centuries have developed and implemented succession plans for their organisations which paved way for the survival of the concerned firms. The need for succession planning practices is necessitated by the concern for the future. Succession planning practices create avenues for needs, talents and this includes activities designed to attract, extend and keep the best pool of staff at all levels in the interest of the organisation. With succession planning practices, employees have expectations of staying with employers for years in the hope that after a few years of distinguished service, they might graduate to the next ranks of management aided by mentoring and helping to enhance organisational commitment (Avanesh, 2011).

Therefore, the need for factors that predict organizational commitment has become more critical. One of the factors that could lead to healthy organizational climate, increased morale, motivation and productivity is organizational commitment (Beck & Wilson 2000). Employees' commitment may go a long way in determining how well organizations achieve their set goals and objectives. As a result, it will be pertinent for organizations to pay attention to the wellbeing and of their employees in order to increase their

commitment (Sangmook, 2004). Hence, it follows that a responsible organization will strive to provide enabling work environment and make sure that the organizational framework gives shape and support to its succession planning practices that will enhance employees' organizational commitment.

However, succession planning practices have not yet become a universally practised leadership and replacement activity in most organisations (Garman & Tyler 2004; Rothwell, 2010). There are many leaders today who give little or no thought to the importance of leadership succession and so they do little or nothing to prepare for it. There could be sudden need for employees to leave their positions with an organisation; the leaders will then realize that much of their work will be in vain unless there is a capable successor to immediately take over the task (Rothwell, 2010). In Nigeria, it appears that many organisations pay insufficient attention to succession planning practices (Onuoha, 2013). The inability of organisations to have well-articulated succession planning practices has resulted in disruptions and leadership transition crisis in Nigerian organisations (Dauda, 2013). Ajay and Weele (2012) asserted that lack of proper succession planning can have the direct effect of causing the collapse of organisations, it could also lead to the exit of key and talented employees and this may undermine the capacity of organisations to achieve the purpose for which they were established and therefore lead to low organizational commitment.

Most studies on succession planning practices were conducted in developed countries with few studies emerging from Africa. Few of these extant studies in Africa focused on family owned businesses and private corporate organisations (Osibanjo, Abiodun & Obamiro, 2011; Odhiambo, Njanja & Zakoyo, 2014). Furthermore, it appears that there is no documented evidence of any study of succession planning practices of research institutes in Nigeria and its possible effect on organizational commitment. This observation confirms the view of Dauda (2013) that not much (acceptable) study has been done with respect to succession planning in Nigeria, especially in the public sector. It is against this backdrop that this study intends to fill the gap by examining succession planning practices and outcome in the Nigerian research institutes.

Conceptual Literature

Organizational Commitment

In many ways, organizational commitment has been described as a "mature construct" which has been tested in many organizations (Morrow, 2011). Organizational commitment will enhance the success of an organization by making employees dedicated to the achievement of its goals (Bin, Ahmed, Shafi & Sheheen 2011). The success of any organization can be predicted by its success in raising and maintaining employees' commitment. High levels of

commitment contribute to positive attitudes and behaviours in organizations (Brown, 2003).

Organizational commitment is also one of the ultimate goals of the organizations to continue their existence (Chew & Chan 2007). The reason is that employees who have been loyal to their organizations are more compatible, have more job satisfaction and productivity and work with high degree of responsibility and a sense of loyalty. Consequently, those who work with high organizational commitment bring less cost to organizations. Organizational commitment improves performance and productivity, organizational citizenship behaviours, job satisfaction and motivation, and reduces turnover (Sheldon, 2015).

Chinomona and Dhurup (2015) defined organizational commitment as an employee's strong beliefs in the organization's goals and values, a willingness to work on behalf of the organization, and a desire to maintain membership in the organization. Bayram (2016) defined organizational commitment as the ability to continue to stay in the organization, to identify with the entire success, interest and activities of the organization, commitment of employee towards the organization and concern with success of the organization. Based on these definitions, Yousef (2015) identified three conditions that determine organizational commitment: (i) a strong belief to the organization's values and goals, and acceptance; (b) the desire for making efforts to achieve the objectives of the organization; and (c) a strong desire to continue membership in the organization.

Chinomona and Dhurup (2015) opined that commitment can be formed by three independent mechanisms: compliance, identification, and internalization. Brown (1969) categorized commitment as (1) including something of the notion of membership; (2) reflecting the current position of the individual; (3) having a special predictive potential, providing predictions concerning certain aspects of performance, motivation to work, spontaneous contribution, and other related outcome; and (4) suggesting the differential relevance of motivational factors. Weibo, Kaur and Jun (2010) indicated that commitment takes the form of an instrumental exchange and psychological attachment. Instrumental commitment refers to commitment based on rewarding, while psychological attachment is the deeper form like advancement and growth opportunity. Jones and McIntosh (2010) opined that three components are involved in organizational commitment, which are affective or emotional commitment, continuance or calculative or instrumental commitment and normative or moral commitment. They further suggested that low levels of organizational commitment may be dysfunctional to both the organization and the individual, while high levels may have positive effects that lead to higher performance, greater satisfaction and lower turnover.

Succession Planning Practices

Succession planning practices have been a subject of academic research over some decades now, beginning largely with case studies of family

businesses. Regardless of this, the term succession planning practices was coined from succession planning process identified by previous studies (Rothwell, 2010). Succession planning practice is the development and the application of succession plan charts and competency models. Succession plan chart and competency model are blueprint or a map developed to guide different tasks associated with the process of identifying, assessing, developing, and selecting potential candidates for a given key position (Rothwell, 2010). Succession planning practice means that possible successors for key positions are identified in advance. In this regard, adequate time and attention is given to assessing the required skills, behaviour and competencies needed for future key position and, most importantly, development programs including training are usually organised to develop the talent of potential successors. It goes beyond present or past-oriented description and assessment of work and employees' competencies to future work or employees' competency requirements in key positions so as to identify high-potential employees and develop them to meet future work challenges. Armstrong (2006) supported this view when he stated that succession planning practices reflect continued efforts to build talent through coaching; mentoring, giving feedback and training to improve employees' intellectual capacity so as to be able to perform the roles of the different positions from within the organisation for any departures that may occur. It is making sure that organisation follow through established procedures to replace candidates for particular key positions from the pool of employees as well as identify, assess, and develop management staff to ensure that they are capable of assuming key roles in the organisation as the need arises.

Several studies saw succession planning practices as the adherences and application of Rothwell (2010) seven point star model of succession which is not limited to providing top management support, employee identification and selection, training and development and employees' competency so as to achieve desired organisational commitment upon which this study is hinged.

Top Management Support

Top management support is crucial in any organisation if succession planning must succeed. Seniwoliba (2015) suggested that in order to implement an effective succession plan system, there is need for a lot of support from top management. This implies that effective succession planning programme is to have the full support and participation of top officers of the organisation such as Board of Directors, Executive Directors, Directors of various Sections and Units, and Senior Management Team (Seniwoliba, 2015). In the light of this, Rothwell (2010) noted that directors and management support the programme by taking active role at the centre of the process through the approval of a policy that encourages succession planning. Additionally, the board of directors' participation and support in succession plans for executive director sets the example for the organisation wide succession plan (Rothwell, 2010). The backing of the directors is also essential to ensure that the principal officers follow the lead and encourage succession

1 planning. His participation also motivates programme participants because
 2 candidates see interest in their career growth from the top (Rothwell, 2010).
 3 Furthermore, while larger organisations depend on middle management to
 4 promote the succession planning programme, smaller groups usually rely
 5 heavily on a strong executive to gather talent for the programme (Gratton &
 6 Syrett 1990).

7 A major component of top management participation and support is the
 8 interest of the management team (Gratton & Syrett 1990). In fact, this criterion
 9 is so important that Shah, Sterrett, Chesser and Wilmore (2001) asserted that
 10 for maximum success, strong commitment from senior management is
 11 necessary. Buy-in from managers and supervisors are essential to create a
 12 feeling of shared ownership of the process before it is implemented (Spoor,
 13 1993). Nowack (1994) suggested that an open discussion with management
 14 through group meetings or structured interviews also allows the institution to
 15 learn the required skill competencies for management positions. Furthermore,
 16 when succession planning is open and the plan shared with management, it
 17 builds credibility for the process (Getty, 1993).

18 19 Identification and Preparation

20 A systematic succession planning programme begins by identifying key
 21 positions. By key positions we mean those positions at the pinnacle of the
 22 organisation's chain of command and other areas which serve strategically vital
 23 leverage points for work processes. Since decision making usually takes place
 24 at the top of organisations while implementation flows downward, assessment
 25 and identification of key positions and competencies (behaviour and trait)
 26 required at the positions are critical and warrants attention (Greer & Virick
 27 2008). This is so because vacancy in any key position, for whatever reason,
 28 will cause a gap between an organisational requirement and the human talent
 29 needed to meet that requirement which may hinder organisations' ability to
 30 meet or exceed customers' expectations, confront competition successfully, or
 31 other efforts of crucial long-term strategic and operational significance
 32 (Hughes & Rog 2008). According to Rothwell (2010) and Armstrong (2011),
 33 key positions can easily be identified through organisation chart developed
 34 through effective job and task analysis and description. Groves (2007)
 35 observed that assessment of key positions will help to determine the specific
 36 job competencies/skills required for management positions. Thus,
 37 identification of key positions and on the work requirements in key positions
 38 are pre-requisites for predicting work or competency requirements for those
 39 positions.

40 41 Competency Assessment

42 Studies showed that organisation must first of all, know both the present
 43 competency of future potentials and competency requirements for future
 44 position before the future potentials can be effectively groomed or developed
 45 to replace the present incumbents of key positions when the position is vacant
 46 in the future (Krauss, 2007). Rothwell (2010) specifically defined employees'

competency as an underlying characteristic of an employee that could be a motive, trait, skill, aspect of one's self-image, social role, or a body of knowledge which he or she uses. It is the cluster of related knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviour that affects a major part of one's job (a role or responsibility) (Grigoryev, 2006). The 'clusters' of competencies include both behaviours and technics. The behaviour includes goal and action management, directing subordinates, human resource management, team work, communication, leadership and decision-making which are sometimes known as 'soft skills' (Rothwell, 2010). The technical competency defines what people have to know and be able to do (knowledge and skills) to carry out their roles effectively (Rothwell, 2010). In this regards, it is obvious that performance appraisal underscores an indispensable tool for promoting effective succession planning practices given its role in assessing present competencies of employees which provide a focal point for the consideration of those individuals that would occupy future key positions. There are many approaches to performance appraisal, and much has been written on the subject. But in the context of succession planning, performance appraisals are effective when they are based as closely as possible, on the work that employees do and competencies demonstrated.

Training and Development

In addition to fluidity and flexibility regarding lists of high potential employees, another hallmark of exemplary succession planning practices is that organisation must find some ways to systematically close the developmental gap between what possibly, successors can already do (now) and what they must do to qualify for advancement and succeed in future work requirements and performance. Development of future potentials focuses on developing the skills and abilities of a leader rather than setting out a series of general steps to follow which are not always helpful because they fail to transfer to the complex realities of the workplace (Barker, 1997). Training and development are the formal activities undertaken by an organization to help employees acquire the skills and experience needed to perform current or future jobs (Noe, 2007). It is an organised activity aimed at imparting information or instructions to get better the staff performance or attain a required level of skill or knowledge needed to achieve organisational goals and objectives (Saed & Asgher 2012). It is exposing selected individuals for future positions, learning opportunity, in order to balance their technical, social and conceptual knowledge and skills acquired through a blend of education and experience. Training and development is expected to have a positive impact on organizational commitment. This is supported by Rowden and Conine (2005) that employees who perceive their training being beneficial will be more satisfied and willing to stay with the organization than those who get no training or get an unvalued training. In addition, past researchers have found evidence on the impact of training and development in improving the rate of organizational commitment (Vorhies & Harke, 2000; Oakland & Oakland, 2001; Jones, Jones, Latreille & Sloane, 2004).

Theoretical Framework

The study adopts the ‘common-sense theory.’ The proponents of ‘common-sense theory’ of succession planning are Guest (1962), Helmich, (1974), and Pfeffer and Salancik (1977). The common sense theory posits that organisations undertake leadership succession planning with the view to improve performance (Helmich, 1974, Pfeffer & Salancik, 1977). The theory opined that it is only common sense that those with the authority to replace the incumbent successor with another candidate, when the incumbent failed to sustain or improve performance, do so in order to bring about the desired organisational performance.

From the view of the common sense theory, it is common sense that leadership or management of an organization put all effort in place appropriately to ensure that the goals and aspirations of the company are achieved. The theory suggests a positive relationship between leadership succession and organizational commitment (Furnado & Rozeff, 1987: Weisbach, 1988: Davidson, Worrell & Dutia, 1993).

Review of Empirical Studies

Empirical studies carried out in both developing and developed countries regarding succession planning and outcomes in different businesses or organisations have been discussed in the literature. For example, Farashah, Nasehifar and Karahrudi (2011) examined succession planning and its effects on employees’ career attitudes using a case of Iranian governmental organisations. Their work evaluated effects of succession planning as an organisational level intervening program on career attitudes. Best practices of succession planning were selected from literature and compliance of succession planning system of organisation to these practices was defined as extensiveness of succession planning. A 22-item questionnaire was developed to measure the extensiveness of succession planning. Validity and reliability of questionnaire were confirmed by appropriate tests. For career attitudes, three variables of promotion satisfaction, perception of career success, and perception of job platitude were selected. Then the correlation of the succession planning extensiveness and three career attitudes were examined by empirical data gathered from 152 managers and key personnel in 23 large Iranian governmental organisations. Significant correlation existed between succession planning extensiveness and career success and satisfaction of promotion process. Perception of job plateau did not show correlation with succession planning extensiveness.

Osibanjo *et al* (2011) investigated how succession planning influences organisational survival using three private tertiary institutions in Ogun-State, Nigeria. The study employed six constructs (talent retention, turnover rate, career development, supervisors’ support, organisational conflicts and nepotism). The results indicated that talent retention, organisational conflict and nepotism positively and significantly correlate with organisational

survival. On the other hand, variables such as turnover rate, career development and supervisor's supervision) are not significantly correlated with organisational survival.

Akinyele, Ogbari, Akinyele and Dibia (2015) examined the impact of succession planning on organisational survival with reference to Covenant University. The data required for the study were gathered via questionnaire, and personal interview. The focus of the study was top and middle level management. The result showed that there is a significant impact of succession planning on organisational survival. The study confirmed that there is a positive impact of career development on organisational survival in Covenant University. Hence, employees perceived the need for career development as a requirement for advancement thereby meeting the succession needs and ensuring perpetuity and survival of the institution.

Fapohunda (2015) explored succession planning in higher education and the challenges connected with its implementation. The study revealed that most public sector universities in Nigeria do not have any calculated attempt towards talent retention and succession planning of academic staff. The study also revealed that public sector universities in Nigeria have not cultivated the habit of developing high potential for higher tasks; a situation that often results in placement of people in positions they are not suitable for. The author suggested that lack of succession planning depresses the morale and a general performance of management staff of the universities investigated. She noted that some of the institutions lack effective recruitment strategies, therefore often times a significant number of the faculties fall within similar age groups and would retire about the same time.

Seniwoliba (2015) examined succession planning practices in Ghana and found that the ability, skills and competence of potential successors are not put into consideration when developing succession planning programme. The study found that only few organisations have proper succession plans prepared to replace their leadership as 80 percent of CEOs were not prepared for succession. The study further revealed that most organisations neither have succession planning nor leadership development programmes.

Methodology

Research Design

This study adopts descriptive research design since it sought to gain insight on how succession planning is practised and the commitment thereof in Nigerian research institutes in the South-South and South-West geo-political zones of Nigeria.

1 *Population of the Study*

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3 The population of this study consist of all top, senior and middle level
 4 management staff of research institutes in South-South and South-West geo-
 5 political zones of Nigeria. The choice for this category of employees was
 6 based on the fact that, they are the ones occupying leadership position and were
 7 therefore in better position to respond to the issues of succession planning
 8 practices and commitment in Nigerian research institutes. There are ten (10)
 9 full fledge (autonomous) research institutes in South-South and South-West
 10 geo-political zones of Nigeria. On this basis, information on their staff strength
 11 was obtained through the human resource department of each of the research
 12 institutes. The information as shown in Table 3.1 revealed that the ten research
 13 institutes in South-South and South-West geo-political zones of Nigeria have
 14 combined management staff (top, senior and middle levels) of 1,739 as at
 15 November, 2018. Thus the population of this study is 1,739.

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17 **Table 1.** *Size of Management Staff of Research Institutes in South/South and*
 18 *South/West Geopolitical Zones of Nigeria*

S/N	Research Institutes	Geo-political Zone	Year of establishment	Number of employees	Middle/Top Mgt. Staff
1	Nigerian Institute for Oil Palm Research (NIFOR), Benin city.	South/South	1939	1015	250
2	Rubber Research Institute of Nigeria (RRIN), Benin City.	South/South	1961	822	155
3	Cocoa Research Institute of Nigeria [CRIN], Ibadan.	South/West	1964	805	155
4	Federal Institute of Industrial Research, Oshodi (FIIRO), Lagos.	South/West	1953	610	120
5	Forestry Research Institute of Nigeria [FRIN], Ibadan.	South/West	1954	730	160
6	Institute for Agricultural Research and Training IAR&T, Ibadan.	South/West	1956	755	165
7	National Horticulture Research Institute (NIHORT), Ibadan.	South/West	1975	855	215
8	National Institute	South/West	1977	350	170

	for Medical Research (NIMR), Yaba, Lagos.				
9	Nigerian Institute for Oceanography and Marine Research (NIOMR), Lagos.	South/West	1975	625	184
10	Nigerian Institute for Social & Economic Research (NISER) Ibadan.	South/West	1977	630	165
	Total			7,197	1,739

Source: Authors' Computation (2018)

Sample Size and Sampling Technique

Since the population is known (1,739), sample size for the study was determined by Yamane (1967) formula. It is estimated as:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where:

N = Population size, n = Sample size, e = standard error of estimate at (0.05).

$$n = \frac{1739}{1 + 1739(0.05)^2} = 325.2 = 325 \text{ Management Staff}$$

Based on this analysis, a total of three hundred and twenty-five (325) top, senior, and middle management staff constitute the sample size for the purpose of questionnaire administration. The copies of the questionnaire were distributed proportionately to the sampled management staff in the ten research institutes across the two Geo-Political zones.

Research Instrument

The research instruments employed in this study are structured questionnaire. The choice of using questionnaire is to enable the researcher elicit information from a large number of top, middle and senior management staff who are the target respondents. The variables in the questionnaire were measured on a 5-point Likert-scale ranging from strongly agree (SA)=5; agree (A)=4; undecided (UD)=3; disagree (D)=2 to strongly disagree (SD)=1). The questionnaire contained fifty-one (51) carefully structured questions.

Source of Data

This study employed primary source of data collection. The primary source consist of information that was elicited directly from respondents of the ten research institutes through the administration of questionnaires.

Model Specification

The model has the following functional relationship:

$$ORGCOM = f(TMS, IDP, CAS, TRD) \dots \dots \dots (1)$$

Mathematically,

$$ORGCOM = x_0 + x_1TMS + x_2IDP + x_3CAS + x_4TRD + \varepsilon \dots \dots \dots (2)$$

Where:

ORGCOM = Organisational Commitment

TMS = Top Management Support

IDP = Identification and Preparation

CAS = Competence Assessment

TRD = Training and Development

x_0 = Constant

x_1 to x_4 = Coefficients

ε = Error term

The apriori expectation is stated as follows:

$$x_1 > 0; x_2 > 0; x_3 > 0; \text{ and } x_4 > 0.$$

Method of Data Analysis

This study employed quantitative method of data analysis. Data generated by means of questionnaire and successfully retrieved were analysed with both descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. Furthermore, diagnostic tests such as Pearson correlations; Kaiser Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Barlett's Tests, together with Ordinary Least Square (OLS) regression was used for test of hypothesis.

Data Analysis and interpretation

This section shows analysis of respondents' opinion based on specific objectives of this study and descriptive analysis of the variable statement questions.

Response Rate by Research Institutes

A total of 325 copies of questionnaire were administered on management staff of various sampled research institutes. Management staff was defined as officers from CONRAISS 09 to 15 (grade level 10 to 16). Of these, 281 (86.5%) copies were successfully retrieved from respondents and used for the analysis, while 44 (13.5%) which were not properly completed or returned were not used. Table 2 presents the response rate by research institutes.

1 **Table 2. Response Rate by Research Institutes**

S/N	Research Institute	Location	No of Questionnaires Administered	Percentage (%) of total	No of Questionnaires Returned	Response Rate
1	NIFOR	BENIN	47	14.5	43	91.4
2	CRIN	IBADAN	29	8.9	25	86.2
3	RRIN	BENIN	29	8.9	28	96.6
4	FIIRO	LAGOS	22	6.8	22	100
5	NIOMR	LAGOS	34	10.5	30	88.2
6	NIHORT	IBADAN	40	12.4	35	87.5
7	FRIN	IBADAN	30	9.2	22	73.3
8	NIMR	LAGOS	32	9.8	21	65.6
9	NISER	IBADAN	31	9.5	27	87.1
10	IAR&T	IBADAN	31	9.5	28	90.3
	TOTAL		325	100	281	86.5

2 Source: Researchers' Survey (2018).

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identification and preparation of potential successors, assessment of potential successors' competency, training and development of potential successors, and organisational commitment respectively are greater than the bench mark mean of 3.0 which showed that majority of the respondents agreed with the statements. The p-value of the one sample t-test revealed that the mean scores of the different variables are significantly different from the bench mark value of 3.0 at $p < 0.05$.

Diagnostic Tests and Estimation of Ordinary Least Square (OLS) Regression Results

Diagnostic Tests

The various diagnostic tests carried out in this study include Pearson correlations, Kaiser Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Barlett's Tests which were analysed as follows:

Table 4. Pearson Correlations

Variables	ORGCOM	TMS	IDP	CAS	TRD
ORGCOM	1				
TMS	.231**	1			
IDP	.285**	.514**	1		
CAS	.335**	.420**	.758**	1	
TRD	.289**	.265**	.418**	.548**	1

** . Correlation is significant at 0.01 level (1-tailed).

Source: Authors' Compilation (2018) using SPSS 20

Table 4 showed Pearson correlations for the purpose of examining associations among variables and to check if there is presence of multicollinearity. When organisational commitment was at perfect value, succession planning practices in the research institutes like Top Management Support (TMS = 0.231**); Identification and Preparation (IDP = 0.285**); Competency Assessment (CAS = 0.335**); and, Training and Development (TRD = 0.289**) were positively and significantly associated with commitment at 1% (1-tailed). There is no presence of multicollinearity since none of the variables was perfectly associated with outcome as suggested by Bryman and Cramer (2005). The results further implied that variable data were suitable for regression purposes, hence we proceeded to check for sampling adequacy using Kaiser Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's test of sphericity as indicated in Table 5 below.

Table 5. Kaiser Meyer-Olkin(KMO) and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.	.733
Approx. Chi-Square	460.209
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Df
	10
	Sig.
	.000

Source: Authors' Compilation (2018) using SPSS 20.

The Kaiser Meyer-Olkin (KMO) which is concerned with testing of sampling adequacy and Barlett's Test of Sphericity proved to be significant following the result of the estimated chi-square value of 460.209. This implied that sampled research institutes and required observations were adequate to justify the study. Also, collated questionnaire data were quite reduced using the principal component analysis (PCA) for the use of ordinary least square (OLS) regression. Hence, we proceeded to the use of ordinary least square (OLS) regression in the next section.

Multiple Regression Result

Table 6. Ordinary Least Square (OLS) Regression Coefficient Estimation Results

Variables	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T-value	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	1.356	.366		3.706	.000
TMS	.174	.115	.099	1.519	.130
IDP	.049	.117	.038	0.418	.676
CAS	.224	.113	.185	1.981	.049
TRD	.135	.062	.146	2.175	.031
S.E of Estimate	0.885		F-statistics	11.030	
R ²	0.657		Prob. (F-statistics)	0.000	
Adjusted R ²	0.612		Durbin-Watson statistics	1.862	

Source: Authors' Compilations (2018) using SPSS 20

$$ORGCOM = 1.356 + 0.174TMS + 0.049IDP + 0.224CAS + 0.135TRD + \varepsilon \dots\dots\dots (3)$$

(3.706) (1.519) (0.418) (1.981) (2.175)

The results in Table 6 reveals that all the independent variables used to proxy succession planning practices (top management support (TMS), identification and preparation (IDP), competency assessment (CAS) and training and development (TRD) have positive coefficient values. However, competency assessment (CAS), and training and development (TRD) were statistically significant meaning that they contribute significantly to organisational commitment. On the other hand, top management support and identification and preparation were not statistically significant. This implies that though, they relate positively to commitment but were not statistically significant. Table 6 further reveals that the coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.657$) implies that the explanatory variables in the model accounted for close to 67% variations in the dependent variable (COMMITMENT). Also, the adjusted coefficient of determination (Adjusted $R^2=0.612$) indicates that about 63% of the variations well explained after adjusting the degree of freedom by the independent variables. The overall test (F-statistic) with value of 11.030 and at significant level of 1%, compared with standard error of regression with minimal value of 0.9585, was an indication that the entire results were significant.

Discussion of Findings

This study examines succession planning practices and commitment in Nigerian research institutes. Succession planning practices were measured in terms of top management support, identification and preparation, competency assessment, training and development. Firstly, the study revealed that the relationship between top management support and organizational commitment is positive but is not statistically significant in Nigerian research institutes. This implies that top management support for succession planning may be in the form of delegation of authority, grooming and selecting candidates from internal pool of talents to occupy strategic position, keeping records of potential succession and tracking developmental activities that prepare successors for eventual advancement. The results were consistent with the view of Rothwell (2010) and Seniwoliba (2015). Secondly, the study also revealed that identification and preparation has a positive relationship with commitment in Nigerian research institutes but is not statistically significant. Identification and preparation may come in the form of selection of staff for promotion on merit, tracking staff who are due to exit within a period in order to identify and nurture possible successors, conducting performance appraisal to identify possible successors to key position among others. The findings are in line with the view of Groves (2007). Thirdly, the study further revealed that competency assessment has a significant positive relationship with organizational commitment in Nigerian research institutes. Competency assessment could come in the form of devoting adequate time in assessing the required skills needed for future key position, making effort to determine if potential successors have required skills, knowledge and behaviours for future key positions, determining competencies of senior managers in order to identify possible successor and comparing the competencies of potential successors with those required for future positions. This finding is in line with the opinions of Armstrong (2011) and Seniwoliba (2015). Finally, the study revealed that training and development has a significant positive relationship with commitment of Nigerian research institutes. Training and development may take the form of provision of mentoring programme, coordinating workshop and seminars, individual development plans and programme and preparing potential successors for further key positions. Employees who perceive their training as being beneficial will be more satisfied and willing to stay with the organization than those who get no training or get an unvalued training. This finding is consistent with Vorhies and Harke (2000); Oakland and Oakland (2001); Jones *et al* (2004); and Rowden and Conine (2005).

Conclusion and Recommendations

Conclusion

The thrust of this study is succession planning practices and commitment in Nigerian research institutes. The need for succession planning practices is important because it has implications for the future of the organisation. One of the most important demands on management in any organization, today including the Nigerian research institutes, is keeping the most vital and dynamic employee (talent). Succession planning practices are fundamental in enhancing organizational commitment for continuity and sustainability of the organization.

Effective succession planning practices requires full support of top management whose role is to direct the affairs of the program me. In this regards, there is need for proper identification and preparation of potential successors who will replace the incumbent in the future on exit, assessment of present competency of the potential successor and the competency required for future position in order to equip him with the relevant training and development to effectively discharge the duty of the key position. Following review of various related literature and results of our analysis, it is concluded that prevalent succession planning practices such as top management support, identification and preparation, competency assessment have positive but statistical insignificant effect on commitment while training and development has positive statistical effect on commitment in Nigerian research institutes.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

- (1) Nigerian research institutes should increase their effort for succession planning practices and ensure that they are fully implemented. Increase in these practices will lead to a significant increase in commitment.
- (2) The research institutes should encourage continuous training and development programs for potential successors based on mandates of institute for succession.
- (3) Effectiveness of succession planning practices in the research institutes should be based on competency assessment, training and development, identification and preparation, fully supported by top management.
- (4) Policy makers in Nigerian research institutes should ensure that grooming of candidates for succession is done within, in order to enhance commitment in the research institutes.

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