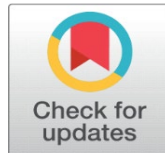


ANALYZING THE EFFECT OF SUCCESSION PLANNING AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT ON SUSTAINABLE ORGANIZATION PERFORMANCE: A STUDY OF IT-ENABLED SECTOR COMPANIES

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ABSTRACT

The world is moving towards an economy in which an organization's knowledge is its most valuable asset (Al Khajeh, 2018). Therefore, it is necessary to continuously improve the professional skills and knowledge of the employees in order to complement the standardized competence that they require in order to complete their jobs. And achieving this requires quality leadership to trickle down from the top management. Numerous scholars investigate leadership styles in order to quantify the impact they have on employee performance, thus further affecting organizational performance as a whole (Cherian et al., 2020). Employee loyalty and motivation to work well will increase when leaders grant them autonomy, improving organizational productivity and producing better results in terms of organizational performance.

1. INTRODUCTION

The world is moving towards an economy in which an organization's knowledge is its most valuable asset (Al Khajeh, 2018). Therefore, it is necessary to continuously improve the professional skills and knowledge of the employees in order to complement the standardized competence that they require in order to complete their jobs. And achieving this requires quality leadership to trickle down from the top management. Numerous scholars investigate leadership styles in order to quantify the impact they have on employee performance, thus further affecting organizational performance as a whole (Cherian et al., 2020). Employee loyalty and motivation to work well will increase when leaders grant them autonomy, improving organizational productivity and producing better results in terms of organizational performance. The efficient operation of any organization depends on its leadership. The fundamentals of leadership are its ability to influence people, which is an organization's source of competitive advantage, and the consequences that follow (Lu et al., 2021). An organization cannot succeed if its members are not engaged in their work and are not given the opportunity

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to grow in their career. This can be demonstrated by tracking the noteworthy contributions that employees make to the organization's success, which is measured in terms of financial gains, productivity, client satisfaction, and several appealing traits of individual workers, such as initiative and proactivity (Vito, 2018).

Succession planning practices are essential to achieve organizational performance (OP) and organizational objectives (Akpapere et al., 2019). This is the point where employees' achievement or performance and their connection cross. Employee work satisfaction and safety/integrity/dignity protection are key components of employee relationship management (Monyei et al., 2021; Nekhili et al., 2018). Succession planning is the tool used to protect one of an organization's most valuable, delicate, and often-ignored assets: its workforce, expertise, and knowledge. It is a technique for determining important management roles; it can start at the project manager and supervisor levels and go all the way up to the top position in the company (Imran & Aldaas, 2020). Future leaders' availability and identification always has a significant impact on the organization's overall performance. As a result, Succession planning has been one of the fundamental components of leadership development and career planning, referring to the organization's methodical and intentional efforts to guarantee the continuation of leadership in key positions (Ramseur et al., 2018). It also fosters and encourages employee advancement while developing and retaining future knowledge and intellectual capital. In contemporary corporate culture, succession planning is seen as a significant initiative that improves organizations' overall well-being and encourages employees to take part in the organization's development programs (Groves, 2019). Succession planning saves the time and expense associated with hiring and selecting external personnel. The most important benefit is that it enables an organization to develop a varied range of talented and skilled individuals (Barton, 2019). It also lessens the impact of downsizing and re-engineering and ensures the loyalty, morale, and dedication of the employees. Succession planning is not only needed for leadership development but also for keeping people on board (Jackson & Dunn-Jensen, 2021). Succession planning's mission is to assist businesses in managing or retaining their talent pool. To help organizations realize their full potential and capabilities, it actively works to manage and develop skilled labor, cultivate leaders, and retain talent (Griffith et al., 2019; Peter-Hawkins et al., 2018). This is incredibly important for multiple reasons. First, it saves the institution or organization money by avoiding the expense of hiring outside candidates and encourages or motivates current employees to pursue leadership roles in the future (Cierniewski, 2018). Second, succession planning helps get skilled and competent employees who enable businesses to be assigned or appointed to any last-minute openings for the smooth execution of the organization's activities (Tao and Zhao, 2019). Strategies for succession management convey knowledge to the younger generation, which will eventually take on significant and potential leadership roles (Cisneros et al., 2018). The present study aims to explore the impact of succession planning and leadership development on sustainable organizational performance.

To shed light on this issue, the study addressed the following research questions:

RQ1: What is the impact of leadership development on sustainable organizational performance?

RQ2: What is the impact of succession planning on sustainable organizational performance?

2. THEORETICAL UNDERPINNING

2.1 Theory of Organizational Creativity

The theory of organizational creativity was proposed by a study that developed a conceptual framework to understand an organization's creativity in complicated settings. The theory proposed certain preconditions or antecedents of organizational creativity: individual characteristics, group characteristics, and organizational characteristics. The three antecedents lead to creative situations which further leads to organizational creativity (Woodman et al., 1993).

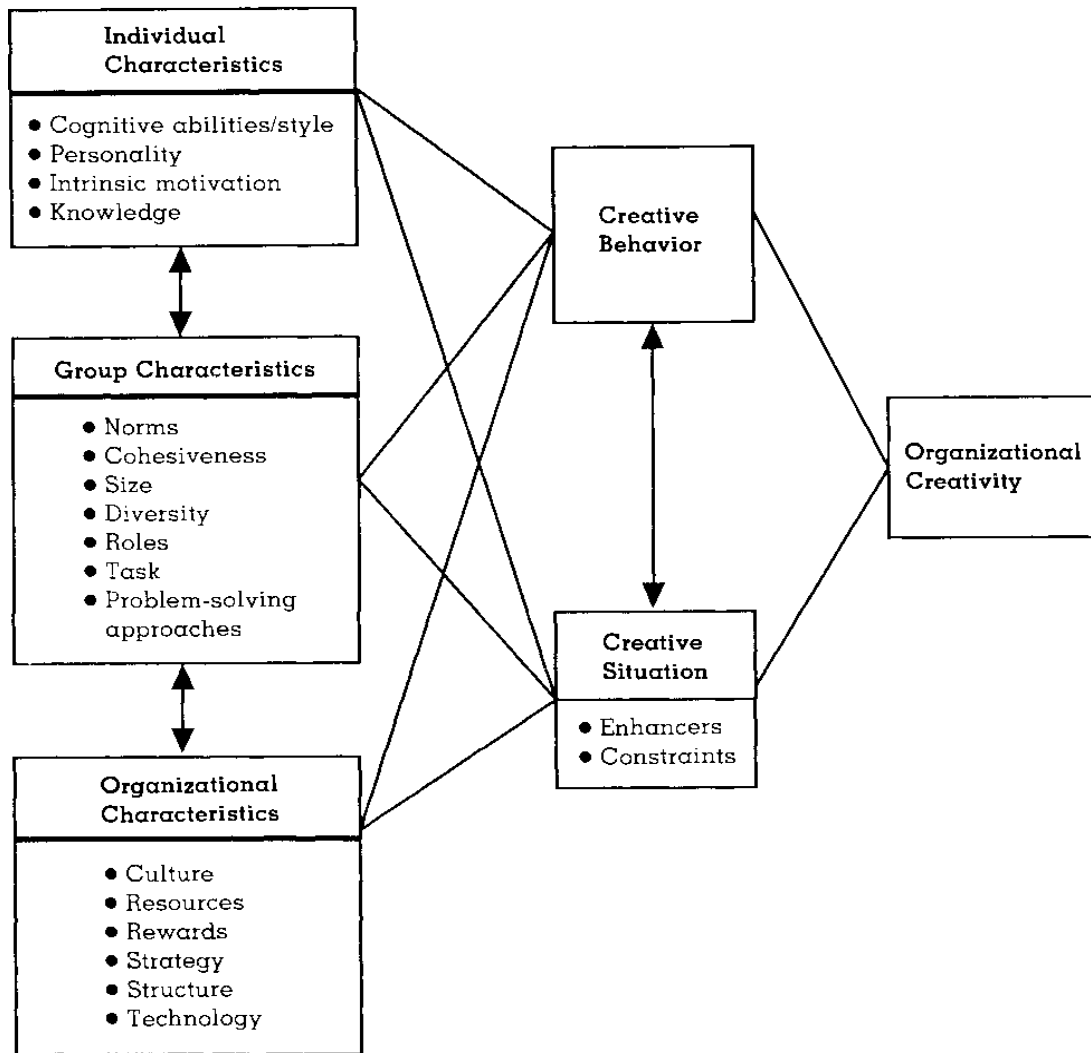


Figure 1 Source: (Woodman et al.,1993)

The present study takes into consideration creative behavior in the form of the independent variables of leadership development and succession in place of creative behavior and creative situation respectively. The dependent variable of sustainable organizational performance has been considered in the place of organizational creativity.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1 Succession planning and sustainable organizational performance

According to Monyei et al. (2021), succession planning is related to human capital planning and development and includes actions like filling important jobs, keeping talent and employees, lowering turnover, fostering career development, getting supervisor support, and minimizing nepotism and organizational conflicts. Furthermore, Sholesi et al. (2022) defined succession planning as "the intentional and methodical focus on identifying leadership requirements, identifying pools of high-potential employees at all organizational levels, enhancing the development of mission-critical leadership competencies in the employees through planned growth, selecting employees from the identified pools for critical roles, and then, continuously evaluating and monitoring progress." However, successional planning is not all about the filling and retaining of organizational positions (Maguta. 2016). The undertaken studies aimed to figure out the effect of such approaches on sustainable organizational performance and their relation to it, whether in negative or positive ways. Performance has been illustrated and defined in many ways; for example, "to accomplish something with a specific intention", "the results of an action", "the ability to accomplish or the potential for creating a result", or "a surprising result compared to expectations", as well as "performance can be understood

differently depending on the person involved in the assessment of the organizational performance”.

Action-oriented performance has been mentioned, along with the outcomes and accomplishments achieved in relation to competition. Financial and non-financial metrics can also be used to assess an organization's success (Al Aina & Atan, 2020). The measurement of an organization's effectiveness in creating, implementing, and modifying strategies is known as organizational performance. Financial performance and organizational performance have often been linked throughout history. Because of this, businesses usually assess their performance using financial metrics like sales, profit per share, and return on investments. Following that, companies began concentrating more on sustainable business performance than on financial performance alone. The economic, environmental, and social performance of a corporation is used to assess its sustainability (Kovilage, 2021).

Companies need to plan for succession in order to guarantee their long-term sustainability. Companies that want to guarantee their long-term survival and sustainability need to plan for succession. Planning for succession effectively increases the likelihood that competent and skilled people will assume leadership positions in the company. Through the execution of an effective succession plan, the business can create a remarkable growth strategy predicated on the accomplishment of significant objectives. Organizations are able to match their goals with their existing expectations and needs thanks to succession planning. A corporation can develop a purposeful plan for achieving long-term success by concentrating on putting contingency measures into place (Olanipekun & Oderinde, 2024). For modern firms, effective leadership is essential since it involves carrying out a thorough performance plan. Through succession planning, staff members receive training on some critical responsibilities to guarantee smooth business.

Additionally, enterprises establish systems and plans to support their pursuit of long-lasting viability, aiming to achieve positive results quickly. When emphasis is placed on producing important outcomes in a short time frame, skilled workers are more likely to stay with the company.

Several developing economies, businesses, and organizations continue to prioritize sustainability as a means of achieving organizational performance. Sustainable development, according to the UN, is defined as "meeting present needs while maintaining the ability of subsequent generations to meet their own needs." An organization's sustainable organizational performance (SOP) is primarily focused on carrying out its action plans and includes the best possible placement of its goods and services to those of its rivals. As a result, sustainability is viewed as beneficial to the organization, to the point where it is recognized as an ideology that unites ecological, social, and economic concerns (Rasool et al., 2019).

3.2 Leadership development and sustainable organizational performance

Leadership development is important because it contributes a major role in the organization and also because the leaders will make a difference and also a positive group and create an organizational effect are also produced by the leaders and also contribute in the leadership processes as well. Managers and owners or leaders are widely recognized as time-constrained and this limits them from getting prepared to engage in some effective management activities it restricts their participation in specific programs (Ahsan, 2018). Evaluating particular abilities can assist build good leadership, which will ultimately contribute to organizational performance. Good management and effective planning can also aid in the development process. Additionally, from a wider angle, opportunities to watch and learn from others including peers and facilitators were also exploited during the scheduled sessions. There is always fear in the minds of corporate management regarding the lack of future leaders and replacements for all levels of employees. This can easily bring a gap in continuity of business which in turn brings a high need to have a structured succession plan implemented in every organization. This preparation is a signal of the importance of Succession planning which is the only productive methodology for competence building, career development, and promotion of employees (Fusarelli et al., 2018). Organizations encountered numerous complicated challenges at the same time as a result of political conflict, rapid technical advancement, globalization, and sociological changes.

Forward-thinking organizations started to question the viability of this new, slow-moving hierarchical structure with separated abilities. They understood that cooperation amongst leaders at all levels was essential to restructuring the business. As a result, programs for developing leaders reached out to lower levels of the organization and created relationships between people there to work together on issues. Succession planning is an important area in which pharmacy programs need to be very vigilant. Growing internal talent has the potential to help organizations retain individuals, promote growth as an organizational value, and save costs in recruitment, onboarding, and orientation (Fuentes, 2020; Douglas et al., 2022). However, the idea that leadership is “a collective phenomenon that is distributed

or shared among different people, potentially fluid, and constructed in interaction” is becoming more and more common in current leadership literature. These combined methods aim to comprehend leadership as an attribute of groups, networks, divisions, and organizational structures (Skipper & Bell, 2008). The efficacy of modern organizations is impacted by a variety of complications that are faced by open systems. Organizations need leaders and leadership to adapt, change, and develop in the face of internal and external shocks.

Understanding the relationship and effects of leadership development on the organization is still lacking, but it helps the company be more capable of generating opportunities, leveraging organizational renewal, and adapting to threats (Douglas et al., 2022). One frequent way to explain adult leadership growth is using the selection, optimization, and compensation (SOC) model. According to the SOC framework, people and their surroundings interact dynamically to build leadership qualities and abilities. This perspective holds that circumstances that people choose for themselves or are permitted to enter by their organizations have an impact on the process of developing leadership skills. More specifically, self-selection and organizational selection are often the two processes used to choose participants in adult leadership development. People with certain relevant talents, abilities, and characteristics that make them "visible" in the organization are more likely to be chosen by organizational decision-makers (Asghar et al., 2023)

Gemeda and Lee (2020) studied the relationships among leadership styles, work engagement, and work outcomes designated by task performance and innovative work behavior. The method used was multiple linear regression analysis. The findings demonstrated that while transactional leadership style had a substantial positive link with employees' task performance, transformational leadership style had a large positive association with employees' job engagement and innovative work behavior. On the other hand, work performance was significantly impacted negatively by a laissez-faire leadership style. A study (Baig et al., 2021) investigated how leadership style improves workers' performance at work and assessed how various approaches to leadership affect employee productivity further impacting organizational performance. The results of this study demonstrated that employees' performance is significantly but negatively impacted by laissez-faire leadership and employee performance has a significant impact on organizational performance. Furthermore, transactional leadership has a negligible impact on worker performance; this relationship has now turned positive. In a study (Cui *et al.*, 2022) that attempted to examine the connection between organizational learning, enterprise innovation performance, and leadership styles (transformation and transaction kinds) in Chinese SMEs, it was found that organizational learning benefits from both transactional and transformational leadership approaches. Second, a leader's style has a beneficial effect on innovation performance. Third, the performance of innovation is positively impacted by organizational learning. Mehreen and Ali (2022) studied how utilizing the principles of human capital theory, employee development factors directly affect succession planning and indirectly enhance employee performance. This study employed the time-lag method to gather data from bank workers and tested the suggested model and hypotheses in Mplus. Employee performance and succession planning are favorably correlated with employee orientation training and development. The relationship between staff development elements and performance is mediated by succession planning.

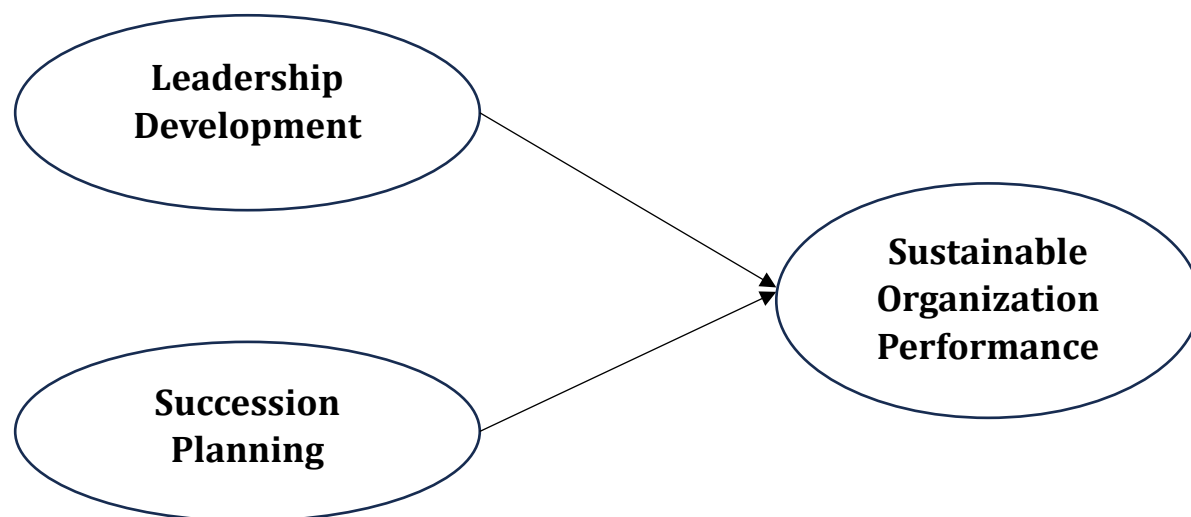
4. RESEARCH GAP

The extensive literature review done by using keywords like succession planning, employee performance, organizational performance and leadership development, found that most studies had linked succession planning to employee performance and organizational performance. Other studies explored the role of succession planning in predicting employee performance and organizational performance through, leadership style. There were comparatively few research papers accessible about succession planning and leadership style on business performance in High-tech IT sectors in India. Moreover, the studies that were found mostly linked leadership development and succession planning to organization performance or business performance. Very few studies were found to have investigated the two constructs of leadership development and succession planning with sustainable organization performance. Hence the present study builds on the previous studies as well as extends the available literature to explore the impact of leadership development and succession planning on sustainable organization performance. Therefore, this study attempts to explore the role of succession planning and leadership style in enhancing the sustainable business performance of IT sector firms in India.

5. PROPOSED THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The proposed theoretical framework in Figure 2 below provides an overview of how succession planning and leadership development impact sustainable organization performance and how the three variables interact among themselves in IT-enabled service companies. An organization may set itself apart from its competitors through sustainable organizational performance (SOP). Thus, in recent years, academics and practitioners have paid close attention to comprehending the causes and propelling forces of SOP.

Figure 2: Theoretical Framework



6. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Succession planning is crucial for all types of organizations. Formalized planning techniques have been adopted by many organizations, despite the concept's progression and diversification. According to the trend, succession planning is beginning to become more important in large organizations. Because of their interdependence, businesses are putting a lot of effort into preserving their place in the global economy. Businesses or companies that operate with a specific purpose and structure have changed their focus from solely concentrating on boosting productivity and distinguishing themselves. Employees are the ones who commit their time and energy to helping the company reach its objectives, both individually and collectively. Employees are the most crucial resource and asset in any organization. Employees perceive incentives to be fair if they are in line with their contribution to the organization in terms of their performance (Al Qershi et al., 2022). Organizations that can effectively and efficiently oversee their human resources are more likely to achieve their organizational goals. More often than not, talent constraints provide difficulties for organizations. According to the literature, talented people make up only 3–5% of all personnel in an organization (Al Qershi et al., 2022). Talent is the ability of an individual to learn and develop as well as their capabilities, experience, knowledge, intelligence, and qualifications. It is a critical success element for improving and maintaining organizational performance. Developing skilled employees for top leadership positions is important because they can achieve sustainable organizational goals with exceptional performance and efficiency. They also have a higher level of commitment to the company because they are highly motivated to complete their tasks, which gives the business a significant competitive advantage and boosts productivity and profitability (Kariuki & Ochiri, 2017).

Organizations see talent as a valuable resource that supports exceptional performance and a long-term competitive advantage. Because of this, businesses are now concerned with developing and putting into practice a personnel management plan that is appropriate for the global marketplace. The objective of talent management is to establish an enduring organizational performance that aligns with its operational and strategic objectives. The current unstable economic environment has increased the importance of sustainability for organizations in all sectors (Miller et al, 2011) In this context, sustainability refers to the long-term environmental, financial, human, and social contributions made by an organization. According to several management academics, success in the twenty-first century necessitates a

fundamental shift in corporate philosophies, systems, and governing policies. Sustainable performance in the present and future demands a combination of unique capabilities that support innovation, quality, and flexibility. Talent management, then, is defined as attracting, fostering, and keeping top performers (Al Qershi et al., 2022). It's a broad term that encompasses all the ways a business attempts to bring in, manage, motivate, reward, encourage, train, and develop employees. It applies to all kinds of businesses that desire to maintain high performance (Wang et al., 2017). Due to globalization, intense competition, and technical advancements, firms currently work to maintain their position in the global economy. Since people are the most valuable resource and asset in any organization, businesses have changed their focus from merely boosting productivity and differentiating their goods and services to concentrating on their unique resources. The primary factor prompting leadership development is succession planning, which also benefits businesses by increasing human resources (HRs) and fostering a wide range of employee attitudes and behaviors that enhance employee and organizational performance (Abdullahi et al., 2024). The business sector is progressively implementing talent management programs and practices in their day-to-day management since talent management is becoming a vital component of organizational performance. The company's greatest competitive edge will be its capacity to draw in, nurture, and keep talent during unstable and prosperous times alike. By proposing a theoretical model, the present paves the way for an empirical investigation into the role of leadership development and succession planning in enhancing sustainable organization performance.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflict of interest between them.

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