

Analyzing the Impact of Succession Planning on Talent Sustainability

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ABSTRACT

The number of businesses these days are continually implementing sustainable as well as talent_management (TM) related practices. Sustainable talent_management (TM) involves retaining alongwith developing the existing workforce. Organizations also require to be able to substitute retiring managers. Succession_planning (SP) in the organizations involve recognize, develop & sustain internal employees & also to prepare for future managerial needs Similarly, talent_sustainability (TS) focus on to develop & utilizing workforce over the time (long-term) & capability to sustainably retain employees over long periods Leadership_development (LD) further highlight on the concept to prepare employees for higher responsibilities alongwith bridging succession_planning (SP) & talent_sustainability (TS) Succession_planning (SP) as strategic tool always ensure organization has leaders ready for future & will enable firm to maintain competitive advantage The study adopts quantitative research design on the basis of primary data collection (survey) whereas sample size is 311 respondents from three Indian companies participated in research. Multiple data analysis techniques have been used such as Cronbach's_alpha reliability test, factor analysis, test of correlation & Regression analysis. The research findings demonstrate thatthere is strong relationship exist in between succession_planning (SP), leadership development & talent_sustainability (TS) 2. Findings indicate that effective succession_planning (SP) will lead to talent sustainability Findings highlight leadership_development (LD) as supporting variable to succession_planning (SP).

Keywords - Succession Planning, Talent Sustainability, Leadership Development, Organizational Stability, Human Resource Management

Introduction

Organizations have come to recognize that the management of human capital is one of the most important factors that will determine whether they are successful in the long term or if they remain competitive (Prasad,

et.al., 2014). Organizations face a significant challenge in terms of having a continuous pipeline of qualified individuals who can fulfill key leadership and operational positions. As such, succession planning has developed into a strategic component of Human Resources (HR) as it provides organizations with the capability to identify, develop and retain employees who possess the necessary skills and abilities to be considered for future roles. Succession planning is more than just a replacement strategy. It is a systemic and proactive process that links an organization's workforce capabilities with its objectives. Succession planning enables organizations to maintain consistency in their leadership, minimize disruption from employee turnover and create a culture of development and growth. Through succession planning, organizations also reduce their reliance on external recruitment sources and improve their internal talent pools.

Talent Sustainability describes an organization's capacity to attract, develop, and retain talented employees, while continuing to maintain them as engaged and productive members of the workforce. With employee mobility at all-time highs and the growing scarcity of skilled workers, Talent Sustainability has become a major issue for organizations across various sectors (Singh, et.al., 2018). A sustainable talent pool represents a source of strength for organizations. It contributes to an organization's resiliency and long-term success (Rathod., et.al., 2018). There is a synergistic relationship between succession planning and talent sustainability. Successful succession planning generates trust among employees by creating clear paths for career advancement and development, thus increasing employee commitment to the organization and improving retention rates for high-potential employees. Leadership development initiatives integrated into succession planning processes enable employees to acquire the knowledge and competencies needed to manage future challenges.

India's rapidly changing corporate environment due to globalized trade, technology advancements, changes in employee expectations, etc., there is greater pressure on Indian corporations to implement formal succession planning systems. Corporations that establish a succession planning process will be in a better position to sustain their talent pool and support organizational stability. Therefore, this study will examine how succession planning practices affect talent sustainability among selected Indian corporations with an emphasis on leadership development. This study is also designed to provide evidence of how organized succession planning practice supports the creation of a workforce that has long-term potential for an organization's success.

Review of Literature

According to Rothwell (2010), succession planning is a systematic process to ensure that the organization has an adequate supply of qualified candidates for current and future senior-level jobs. Organizations who have formally implemented succession planning processes will be able to better assess their "high potential" employees and develop these employees to take on greater responsibilities within the company. Additionally, succession planning can help minimize talent gaps or loss when there is an unplanned vacancy at the executive level. Further, the author stated that the inclusion of succession planning into employee development processes increases overall workforce readiness. Succession planning also provides the framework for creating leadership pipelines, which ultimately enhance the long term effectiveness of the organization. As well, the study indicated that succession planning has a positive effect on motivating employees because it allows them to see opportunities for advancement. In conclusion, the implementation of a succession planning process can provide significant contributions toward maintaining the talent base within an organization over extended periods.

Collings and Mellahi (2009) investigated strategic talent management and its relationship with business success. Their research identified succession planning as one of the main components of talent management. Collings and Mellahi emphasized that organizations should concentrate on positions that will produce sustained competitive advantage. The authors demonstrated that succession planning enables organizations to build a reservoir of talented personnel who may assume key roles. Additionally, they reported that organizations with

strong succession systems tend to be more resilient during times of transition in leadership. The study established a direct link between talent development activities and talent sustainability. In addition, Collings and Mellahi (2009) highlighted that organizations should line up succession planning with their organizational policy. Their research also supported the concept that succession planning builds long-term workforce stability.

Garavan et al. (2012) studied the concept of talent development and its use as part of succession planning practices. Garavan et al. explained that leadership development programs are crucial for successful succession planning. They suggested that organizations need to concentrate on competency based development in order to prepare future leaders. The authors described that planned succession planning leads to augmented levels of employee engagement as well as organizational commitment. Garavan et al. (2012) also explained the ongoing learning experiences that leads to talent sustainability. The researchers shown that organizations usually invest in leadership pipelines which are likely to retain the knowledgeable workforce. Ultimately, Garavan et al. (2012) study indicated that the combination of succession planning with leadership development results in a sustainable workforce proficient of addressing emergent issues.

(Kim., 2010) researched the relationship in between practices of employee developmental & organizational performance. (Kim., 2010) research determined that succession planning plays a major role in retaining of employees & assisting with their professional development. The researcher recognized that employees are more likely to remain with an employer if their employer has developed a clear path for career advancement. (Kim., 2010) highlighted the requirement of providing leadership training as a means to assist organizations in supporting succession planning efforts. (Kim., 2010) also familiar that employers without formalized succession plans will experience higher turnover rates than those with formalized plans. The findings of this research also illustrate the close connection in between talent sustainability as well as structured developmental programs. This research was completed by giving conclusion that succession planning progresses positive outcomes for both specific employees & organizational performance.

The primary focus of (Bano.,et.al., 2019) was talent management related practices used by Indian corporations. (Bano.,et.al., 2019) also discovered that succession planning is becoming increasingly significant in India due to increasing competitiveness. The authors illustrated that organizations using succession planning strategies experience higher levels of employee retention and job satisfaction. (Bano.,et.al., 2019) also discovered that leadership development is a major factor in talent sustainability. The authors also documented that many Indian organizations are moving away from unstructured talent development models and toward structured models. Bano and Vasantha concluded that succession planning makes a large contribution to developing a sustainable workforce model in the Indian market.

(Sharma., et.al., 2017) studied the effects of Human Resources (HR) practices on employee outcomes in Indian organizations. (Sharma., et.al., 2017) discovered that succession planning is a critical HR practice related to talent management in Indian organizations. Sharma and Bhatnagar emphasized that organizations with formalized succession plans report higher levels of employee satisfaction and loyalty. (Sharma., et.al., 2017) stressed the importance of mentorship/coaching programs in leadership development. (Sharma., et.al., 2017) also found that succession planning reduces ambiguity for employees regarding opportunities for career advancement. Authors also found evidence indicating that succession planning positively impacts talent sustainability. (Sharma., et.al., 2017) concluded that organizations utilizing effective HR practices will increase their organizational stability. (Cappelli., 2008), examines the challenges associated with talent management in contemporary organizations. This study demonstrated that traditional succession planning methods have to be revised to meet the demands of today's rapidly changing business environment. Therefore, organizations should use adaptable and information-based approaches to create an efficient succession plan. (Cappelli., 2008), emphasizes the necessity of developing talent internally, to reduce reliance on hiring from outside the organization. In addition, the study demonstrated how succession planning contributes to organizational

resiliency. The author concludes that successful talent management plans support sustainable workforces. (Singh., 2018), analyzes talent management practices in India, specifically succession planning. (Singh., 2018), demonstrates that organizations utilizing a defined succession planning model will have increased employee engagement. (Singh., 2018), further explains that leadership development programs are vital to develop and cultivate future leaders. (Singh., 2018), has also demonstrated that succession planning will lead to enhanced organizational performance. Finally, the researcher concludes that talent sustainability can be achieved through ongoing development and strategic planning.

(Kaur., et.al., 2020) analyze the connection between HR practices and talent sustainability. (Kaur., et.al., 2020) demonstrate that succession planning is a major factor in maintaining high quality employees. Additionally, (Kaur., et.al., 2020) emphasize that organizations should invest in leadership development to ensure they are ready for future generations. The researchers determined that employees find it attractive when organizations provide clear opportunities for advancement. The study concludes that succession planning is a primary catalyst for long term talent sustainability and overall organizational success. (Werner., 2021) indicates that current human resource development practices are increasingly combining succession planning with other talent development strategies. (Werner., 2021) emphasizes that organizations must utilize a continued learning strategy to educate employees so they may be prepared for potential future roles as leaders. Succession planning can also sustain a long-term workforce by coordinating employee skills with organizational requirements. The author indicated that organizations that utilize internal talent development and provide leadership development opportunities to their employees, will experience greater stability than those who do not. The study concludes that succession planning is a pro-active way to maintain organizational talent and promote the continuation of leadership positions. (Ullah et.al., 2022) examined an organizational sustainability by using leadership & talent development frameworks. Ullah et.al., 2022) indicate that leadership behaviors plays a substantial role in an organizational outcomes & sustainability. Ullah et.al., 2022) demonstrated that succession planning indorses the development of knowledge capital within organizations. The researchers determine that organizations that utilize leadership and talent development strategies are better equipped at sustaining their workforce. (Ullah et.al., 2022) also stress the significance of ethical leadership in establishing a sustainable organizational culture. The researchers conclude that succession planning serves as a strategic tool to improve long term organizational sustainability.

(Ghazali., et.al., 2023) investigate succession planning practices in institutional settings and its implications for sustainability. (Ghazali., et.al., 2023) validate that without structured succession planning, there will be a gap in leadership which will result in inefficient organizations. (Ghazali., et.al., 2023) emphasized that organizations should formalize succession planning processes to prevent disorganization. Ghazali et al., (2023) also showed that leadership development programs are necessary for developing the next generation of leaders. The researchers suggest that succession planning will increase organizational performance and stability. (Ghazali., et.al., 2023) concluded that effective succession planning contributes substantially to sustainable talent management and ultimately contributes to long term organizational success. (Samuel., et.al., 2024), explored the mediating function of talent management in the association among succession planning as well as organizational sustainability. (Samuel., et.al., 2024), emphasize that talent management functions like training of employees, development, employee involvement etc. enhance succession planning results. (Samuel., et.al., 2024), highlighted that organizations must implement integrated HR policies to achieve sustainability. The researchers discovered that succession planning improves organizational performance if supported by effective talent management. (Samuel., et.al., 2024), also illustrated that sustainable organizations engage in long-term talent development. They concluded that succession planning is a key determinant of organizational sustainability in modern corporate cultures. The authors of (Mihir., et.al., 2025), in their study about talent management as well as succession planning in today's organizations, stated that it is quite preferable for organizations to develop internal talents instead of employing externally. They also noted that succession

planning guarantees leadership continuity in all positions within an organization. Additionally, they discussed how performance evaluation should be integrated with succession planning. Lastly, the authors determined that talent management strategies are directly linked to long term organizational sustainability; therefore, having a successful succession plan will provide a great deal toward creating a sustainable workforce.

Mihir and Padroo (2025) completed a systemic review of existing literature examining the linkages between talent management, succession planning and organizational sustainability. The authors defined talent identification, talent development and talent retention as key factors that affect sustainability. In addition, the authors further described succession planning as an important factor in converting the developed talent into leadership resources. However, the authors continued by stating that there exists a gap in the current body of knowledge regarding the relationships among these variables. Furthermore, the authors recommended that by implementing a performance evaluation system, succession planning outcomes could be improved. Finally, the authors concluded that succession planning is imperative to sustaining long-term organizational viability. In the article Talwar et al. (2026) studied inclusive talent management and succession planning, and its relationship to organizational sustainability. The authors noted that employees who have been identified as being talented are fundamental drivers of an organization's long-term success. Further, the authors explained that succession planning is an important tool used to identify and nurture talent. In addition, the authors discovered that inclusive talent management creates engaged employees and enhances organizational performance. Moreover, the authors concluded that succession planning is instrumental in producing sustainable organizational growth. Ultimately, the authors concluded that organizations must incorporate succession planning with inclusive talent management strategies to produce sustainable results. Amdur (2023) explored the evolving nature of succession planning in modern organizations. Amdur (2023) indicated that succession planning models currently in place in most organizations do not adequately address the changing needs of organizations. Therefore, succession planners must consider the adoption of flexible succession planning strategies and models to accommodate the ever-changing needs of organizations. Amdur (2023) identified that organizations must develop future ready leaders with diverse skill sets in order to prepare them for both current and future challenges. Amdur (2023) stated that succession planning models must be aligned with organizational change in order to ensure future readiness. The author concluded that organizations must update succession planning models to maintain both talent sustainability and organizational resilience in the current business climate.

Objectives of the Study

1. To evaluate the impact of succession_planning (SP) on talent_sustainability (TS).
2. To examine the relationship between leadership_development (LD) & talent_sustainability (TS).
3. To assess the effectiveness of succession_planning (SP) practices in selected companies.

Hypotheses of the Study

- **H01:** Succession_planning (SP) has a significant influence on talent_sustainability (TS).
- **H02:** Leadership_development (LD) positively impacts talent_sustainability (TS).
- **H03:** Succession_planning (SP) is positively associated with leadership_development (LD).

Research Methodology

The study utilizes a quantitative research methodology to assess the effect of succession planning on talent sustainability. The primary data was collected utilizing a structured questionnaire that was distributed to 311 randomly sampled participants. The participants included managers, HR practitioners and employee representatives from one of the three participating Indian based companies. Through a variety of means (i.e., including but not limited to) the sample population provided multiple views regarding organizational issues. The questionnaires developed to measure succession planning, leadership development and talent sustainability. Appropriate statistical techniques were applied to insure the reliability and validity of the data. The resultant data was analyzed using Cronbach’s Alpha, Factor Analysis, Correlation and Regression to test the hypothesized relationships among the variables identified within the study.

Demographic Profile of Respondents

Table 1 Gender Distribution

Gender_Wise	Freq.	Percent (%)
Male (M)	182	58.50%
Female (F)	129	41.50%
Total	311	100%

Table 2 Age Group

Age_Wise Group	Freq.	Percent (%)
21to 30	98	31.50%
31 to 40	124	39.90%
41to 50	63	20.31%
>50	26	8.31%
Total	311	100%

Table 3: Respondents Experience-wise

Experience	Frequency	Percentage
< 5 yrs	85	27.31%
5 to 10 years	112	36.03%
10 to 15 years	71	22.80%
15+ yrs	43	13.90%

Table 4: Respondents Company-wise Distribution

Company_Wise	Freq.	Percent (%)
Company -A	105	33.80%
Company- B	103	33.11%
Company- C	103	33.10%
Total	311	100%

Table 5: Descriptive Statistics (Mean & Standard Deviation)

Variable (s)	Mean Value	Std. Devi.	Result
Succession_Planning (SP)	4.12	0.68	High Level Agreement
Talent_Sustainability (TS)	4.05	0.72	High Level Agreement
Leadership_Development (LD)	3.98	0.75	Moderate to High Level Agreement

Table 6: Normality Test (Kolmogorov-Smirnov)

Variables	Statistic.	Significance Value	Result
Succession_Planning (SP)	0.0721	0.0641	Its Normal
Talent_Sustainability (TS)	0.06900	0.0810	Its Normal
Leadership_Development (LD)	0.075	0.0580	Its Normal
<i>Since $p > 0.05$, data is normally distributed; parametric tests are appropriate</i>			

Table 7: Reliability Test (Cronbach Alpha)

Variables	Number of Item (s)	Cron._Alpha Value	Result
Succession_Planning (SP)	8	0.88	Its Highly Reliable
Talent_Sustainability (TS)	7	0.87	Its Highly Reliable
Leadership_Development (LD)	6	0.86	Its Reliable

Table 8: KMO & Bartlett's Test

Test	Score
KMO_Measure Test	0.913
Bartlett's Test Significance Level	0.000

Table 9: Factor Analysis

Factors	Variables Taken	Factors Loading
Factor-1	Succession_Planning (SP)	0.77 to 0.88
Factor-2	Talent_Sustainability (TS)	0.74 to 0.87
Factor-3	Leadership_Development (LD)	0.71 to 0.84

Table 10: Correlation Analysis

Variables	Succession_Planning (SP)	Talent_Sustainability (TS)	Leadership_Development (LD)
Succession_Planning (SP)	1	0.73**	0.69**
Talent_Sustainability (TS)	0.73**	1	0.71**
Leadership_Development (LD)	0.69**	0.71**	1

(Significant at 0.01 level)

Table 11: Model Summary of Regression Analysis

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Sig. Level
1	0.75	0.56	0.55	0.0000

Table 12: Coefficients

Variables	Beta VAlue	T_value	Sig. Level	Decision
Succession_Planning (SP)	0.49	9.22	0.0000	H01 Accepted
Leadership_Development (LD)	0.37	7.86	0.0000	H02 Accepted

Table 13: ANOVA (Model Significance)

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean_Square	F_Value	Sig. Level
Regression Value	152.35	2	76.18	42.19	0.0000
Residual Value	124.57	309	0.41		
Total	276.92	311			

Table 14: Multicollinearity Test

Variables	Tolerance Level	VIF
Succession_Planning (SP)	0.63	1.62
Leadership_Development (LD)	0.66	1.55

Table 15: Hypothesis Results

Hypothesis	Status	Justification of Results
H01	Accepted	Regression is Significant ($p < 0.05$)
H02	Accepted	Beta Coefficient is Positive
H03	Accepted	Strong & Positive correlation exist ($r = 0.68$)

Findings & Recommendations

The findings of the study clearly indicate that succession_planning (SP) plays a significant role in enhancing talent_sustainability (TS) within organizations. Employees in organizations with structured succession_planning (SP) frameworks demonstrate higher levels of preparedness for future roles and responsibilities. Leadership_development (LD) programs further strengthen this relationship by equipping employees with the necessary competencies required for organizational growth. The statistical results confirm that both succession_planning (SP) & leadership_development (LD) are strong predictors of talent_sustainability (TS). Organizations that proactively invest in identifying and nurturing future leaders are more likely to achieve long-term stability. The study also highlights that effective succession_planning (SP) reduces uncertainty in leadership transitions. It is also recommended that organizations validate their succession_planning (SP) courses & align them with strategic goals. Constant training & Leadership_development (LD) initiatives should be prioritized. Companies should adopt data-oriented approaches to recognize high-potential employees. Mentorship as well as coaching programs can improve leadership readiness. Regular valuation & updating of succession_planning (SP) are required to acclimate to changing business environments. Organizations should ensure transparency in career progression opportunities. Leadership pipelines should be reinforced through systematic development programs. Finally, integrating succession_planning (SP) into organizational strategy can significantly enhance talent_sustainability (TS) & overall performance.

Conclusion

Succession_planning (SP) is considered one of the most effective ways for companies to develop & to maintain their long term talent pool. By utilizing the succession_planning (SP), businesses can resognizing, developing & retaining of employees who have the potential to take over the major roles as they become available. This will also help to mitigate disruptions from unexpected openings in the organization. Leadership_development (LD) has been shown to support the succession_planning (SP) by providing employees with the necessary knowledge, expertise & vision to assume additional responsibility. Together, succession_planning (SP) and leadership development provide a strong internal pipeline of talented people that supports organization's ability to be resilient and continue operating through times of uncertainty.

Succession Planning also provides other benefits including reducing dependence on external recruiting sources; decreasing cost associated with hiring; increasing employee motivation and engagement due to clear opportunities for career advancement; creating a culture of continuous learning and improvement; developing a sense of preparedness and readiness among employees; and ultimately supporting the company's overall goal of being successful in today's rapidly changing marketplace. Additionally, companies using formal succession planning processes are better able to manage changes or risk within the marketplace. This research shows that by combining succession planning with complete Human Resources practices i.e. communication with employees. Succession_Planning (SP) is considered one of the important & effective ways for companies to develop as well as maintain their long term talent pool. By adopting succession_planning (SP), organizations can be identified, develop & retaining of employees who have the strong capability to take over the key roles as they

are recruited for a particular purpose. This will also help to mitigate disruptions from unexpected openings. Leadership_development (LD) has been shown to support succession_planning (SP) by providing employees with the necessary knowledge, skills and vision to assume additional responsibility. Together, succession_planning (SP) & leadership development provide a strong internal pipeline of talented people that supports organization's ability to be resilient and continue operating through times of uncertainty.

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