2017

Leadership Transition Strategies for Medium-Sized Family Businesses' Sustainability

Okechukwu Vitalis Nwuke
Walden University

Walden University

College of Management and Technology

This is to certify that the doctoral study by

Okechukwu Nwuke

has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,
and that any and all revisions required by
the review committee have been made.

Review Committee
Dr. Susan Fan, Committee Chairperson, Doctor of Business Administration Faculty

Dr. Denise Gandy, Committee Member, Doctor of Business Administration Faculty

Dr. Neil Mathur, University Reviewer, Doctor of Business Administration Faculty

Chief Academic Officer
Eric Riedel, Ph.D.

Walden University
2017

Abstract

Leadership Transition Strategies for Medium-Sized Family Businesses' Sustainability

by

Okechukwu Nwuke

BSc, University of Nigeria, 1990

MBA, University of Birmingham, UK, 1998

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Business Administration

Walden University

October 2017

Abstract

Medium-sized family businesses are major contributors to economic activities and job creation in Nigeria, but more than 50% of such family businesses fail after leadership succession. The purpose of this multiple case study was to explore the strategies that owners of medium-sized family businesses use to sustain the businesses after the leadership transition from the founders. The population for this study included 3 family business leaders in Lagos and Port Harcourt in Nigeria who have sustained their family businesses after the leadership transition from their founders. The conceptual framework for the study was based on the transformational leadership theory and the theory of planned behavior. Data collection was through semistructured face-to-face interviews and from company documents and artifacts. Data analysis was supported by follow up questions and member checking to enhance the credibility and trustworthiness of interpretations. The 4 themes that emerged were the founders' desire and support for transition, preparation of successors, trust and credibility of successors, and clarity of vision for both the founders and the successors. The findings from this study could contribute to positive social change by providing family business owners with strategies for managing leadership transitions to enable them to sustain their business operations after these transitions. Sustaining the family businesses might lead to a reduction in unemployment and enhance the incomes and well-being of the family members, communities, and Nigerian economy.

Leadership Transition Strategies for Medium-Sized Family Businesses' Sustainability

by

Okechukwu Nwuke

BSc., University of Nigeria, 1990

MBA, University of Birmingham, UK, 1998

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Business Administration

Walden University

October 2017

Dedication

This study is dedicated to my immediate family members that constitute the major stakeholders in this DBA project. Special thanks and appreciation go to my wife, Ify, for putting up with all the lonely nights even when I am at home but locked away in my study. To my children, Ijay, Nonye, Kamsy, and Ogonna, I hope that you take lessons from my successful completion of this program that nothing can stop us from achieving our life targets if we put our mind and efforts to it. To my personal assistant Daniel, thanks for helping me overcome the challenges with Microsoft Word and other software that I had to use during the program. To my friends and other family members, I thank you for all your support and encouragement. God bless you all.

Acknowledgments

I would like express my sincere thanks to Committee Chair Dr. Susan Fan for her guidance and support that saw me to this finish line. I would also like to thank Dr. Denise Hackett (SCM) and Dr. Neil Mathur (URR) for their contributions and excellent feedback throughout the study. I will also like to thank Dr. Freda Turner, who until her recent retirement provided excellent leadership as the program director for the DBA program and wish her a restful time in retirement. Finally, I would like to thank all my other instructors, classmates, and the entire Walden University staff and faculty whose support and encouragement made it possible for me to succeed.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

Section 1: Foundation of the Study

Most businesses in developed and developing countries are structured as small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and are usually owned and managed by family members (Banki & Ismail, 2015). Such family owned businesses contribute significantly to the economic development, wealth creation, and employment of most emerging economies (Arasti, Zandi, & Bahmani, 2014; van der Westhuizen & Garnett, 2014). Though family businesses are key components of economies of most countries, only a few family businesses survive between the founding generation to the next (Miller, 2014). While several factors could account for the high failure rates of family businesses, failure in leadership succession critically affects the survival of family firms (Collins, Worthington, & Schoen, 2016).

Background of the Problem

Over 70% of registered businesses in the developed and developing countries are family businesses, which also account for over 60% of the total workforce and tax income of these economies (Poza & Daugherty, 2014). Most of the family businesses, however, appear to have significant challenges with transitions in management control from one generation of family members to another, and a large number struggle to survive after leadership change (Dalpiaz, Tracey, & Phillips, 2014; El-Chaarani, 2013). This phenomenon appears to be more prevalent in developing countries like Nigeria, where most family businesses have significant challenges transitioning from the founding generation to another, with high posttransition failure rates (Leap Africa, 2011; Ogundele, Idris, & Ahmed-Ogundipe, 2012; Oguonu, 2015).

Researchers have carried out many studies to understand why the leaders of many family businesses appear to have difficulties in operating profitably after a generational transition. El-Chaarani (2013) posited that few family firms succeed with the leadership transition to the next generation of family members. Researchers have been keen to explore the reasons why family businesses appear to perform poorly and subsequently fail after the exit of their founders. However, most of the existing literature is based in commercial and cultural settings in developed economies in Europe, United States, and Asia. Even with the significant contribution to the economy and identified high failure rates, there is a paucity of research on family businesses in Nigeria. Further research that focuses on the leadership transition experiences of Nigerian family owned businesses, which are the major drivers of economic activities, employment, and family incomes in Nigeria (Ajayi, 2016), could lead to enhanced sustainability of family business operations.

Problem Statement

Family-owned businesses contribute to economic health and account for a significant proportion of registered businesses, economic growth, wealth creation, and employment in most developed and emerging economies (van der Westhuizen & Garnett, 2014). However, the organization and outcomes of intergenerational succession processes determine the posttransition fortunes and account for the failure of over 50% of family owned businesses after leadership succession (Chaimahawong & Sakulsriprasert, 2013). The general business problem is that some leadership transitions take place in many family owned businesses without adequate preparation of the successors and other stakeholders. The specific business problem is that some owners of medium-sized family businesses lack strategies to sustain the business after the leadership transition from the founders.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore the strategies that owners of medium-sized family businesses use to sustain the businesses after the leadership transition from the founders. The population for this study included owners of three medium-sized family businesses operating in Port Harcourt and Lagos, Nigeria, who have sustained their operations after the leadership transition from the founders to the next generation of family members. The findings and conclusions of the study might lead to positive social change by providing strategies to owners of family owned businesses to prepare adequately for the leadership transition beyond the tenure of their founders. Providing family business owners with strategies for managing leadership transitions might also contribute to the prosperity of the family members, employees, and the communities.

Nature of the Study

I used a qualitative research methodology for this multiple case study. Researchers use the qualitative method to explore phenomena in their natural and dynamic settings and to evaluate contextual features where the researcher does not have full control of events (Garcia & Gluesling, 2013; Lach, 2014). By contrast, using the quantitative method enables researchers to use statistical tools to analyze data and to determine differences or relationships among variables through testing hypotheses (Ma, 2015). Use of mixed methods allows researchers to combine the features of quantitative and qualitative methods in a single study and to explore different interpretations of a subject (Ragas & Laskin, 2014). I was not testing hypotheses in this study, so quantitative and mixed methods were not appropriate. Using a qualitative method was, therefore, appropriate.

Some qualitative research designs are (a) narrative research, (b) phenomenology, (c) grounded theory, (d) ethnography, and (e) case study (Hunt, 2014). Researchers use narrative research to identify and explore meanings of stories of an individual or group while phenomenological researchers explore the essence of the experience of individuals going through a phenomenon (Hunt, 2014). I did not select narrative research or a phenomenological design because I did not intend to study the story of an individual or the lived experiences of a group of individuals who have experienced the phenomenon. Researchers use grounded theory to develop a common theme or theory from the study of experiences of a group (Hunt, 2014). Employing an ethnographic design enables researchers to dwell on the beliefs and interactions of a group with common culture (Ma, 2015). I did not select grounded theory or ethnographic design since the focus of the study was not on the development of common concepts to form a theory or the culture of a community. Researchers use case study designs to explore contemporary and dynamic situations that involve *what* questions, with little or no control of events (Yin, 2014). I elected to use a case study design to explore the strategies that owners of medium-sized family businesses use to achieve sustainability after a transition from the family business founders.

Research Question

The central research question was as follows: What strategies do owners of medium-sized family businesses use to sustain the business after the leadership transition from the founders?

Interview Questions

1. What strategies did you use to sustain the family business after the leadership transition from the founders?
2. What influenced the transition, and what roles did you and the founder play in the transition process?
3. How do you assess the effectiveness of the transition strategies?
4. What strategies did you adopt in the management of the relationship between the family and the business, and how did this impact the transition?
5. What challenges did you face during the transition, and what strategies did you adopt to overcome them?
6. What strategies did you use to manage employees and other stakeholders after the transition?
7. What else would you like to share about your experience with leadership transition strategies in your family business?

Conceptual Framework

I used the transformational leadership theory and the theory of planned behavior as the conceptual framework for my study. Burns (1978) developed the theory of transformational leadership to explain how some leaders were able to raise the consciousness of their followers towards common goals. Burns postulated that transformational leaders focus on developing the capacities of their subordinates to enable them to accomplish the objectives of the organization. The key constructs of transformational leadership theory include (a) willingness of followers to emulate the leaders, (b) idealized behavior where leaders impress their followers through their behaviors, (c) intellectual stimulation that allows the leaders to question the basis for the decisions of their followers, and (d) individualized considerations whereby leaders act as coaches and mentors to their followers (McCleskey, 2014). Most family businesses struggle to survive after the inevitable leadership transitions (Buang, Sidek, & Sidek, 2013), and thus require leadership styles that inspire employees and other stakeholders to key into the future visions of the businesses to enhance sustainability irrespective of short-term challenges (De Clercq & Belausteguigoitia, 2016). Transformational leaders enable organizations to survive disruptive changes through their ability to communicate the vision effectively, sharing authority with followers, motivating the followers to achieve the objectives of the organization, and responding quickly to such changes that could threaten the firm (McKnight, 2013). Transformational leadership theory was, therefore, appropriate to explore the strategies that owners of medium-sized family businesses use to sustain the businesses after leadership transition from the founders.

Ajzen (1991) developed the theory of planned behavior and posited that the intention to carry out an action influences the conduct of an individual with an attendant increase in the intention to perform an action enhancing the chance of success. The key constructs of the planned behavior theory include (a) desirability of action, which influences attitude, (b) norms of behavior, and (c) perceived difficulties in the action. Mussolino and Calabro (2014) posited that the combination of an initiator's desires for an action, the acceptability of the outcome by a reference group, and the originator's belief that the action will bring the desired results predicts the behavior of the initiator. In line with the theory of planned behavior, the intentions and perceptions of the owners of family businesses towards successions predict the nature and outcomes of transitions that they would implement for the family business (Boyd, Botero, & Fediuk, 2014). The theory of planned behavior offered a useful model for the understanding of the critical issues that influence leadership succession in family businesses (Sharma, Chrisman, & Chua, 2003), as it offered insights into the basis of transition decisions and the link between owners' intentions and the outcomes of leadership transitions (Boyd et al., 2014).

Operational Definitions

Business sustainability: Business sustainability entails maintenance of steady economic growth balanced with social and environmental developments that benefit the community and multiple stakeholders (Liboni & Cezarino, 2014).

Family business: A family business is an entity where individuals related by marriage or genealogy own significant stakes and are in management control (Duh, 2014; Naldi, Chirico, Kellermanns, & Campopiano, 2015).

Family business longevity: For this study, family business longevity refers to the ability of a business to survive a transfer from the founding generation to the second generation, with the probability of surviving to the third generation of family members (van der Westhuizen & Garnett, 2014).

Leadership transition: Leadership transition refers to the transfer of ownership and management of business from one generation of a family to another generation (Duh, 2014).

Medium-sized business: A medium-sized business is a company with not more than 300 employees (Ajayi & Morton, 2015; Central Bank of Nigeria, 2014).

Naira: The monetary currency used as legal tender in Nigeria (Central Bank of Nigeria, 2014).

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

Assumptions

Assumptions are the circumstances that are outside my control during the study. Assumptions are the things believed to be factual but with no proof (Gandy, 2015). An assumption enables a group or audience to make sense of information based on their common mental models and understanding (Sharma & Aniket, 2014). One assumption was that the owners of family businesses in Port Harcourt and Lagos in Nigeria who have been able to sustain their operations after leadership transitions from the founders would be willing to be participants in the study. I also assumed that the participants would provide reliable and trustworthy feedback and without biases during the interviews. There was also an assumption that information collected from the semistructured interviews and other relevant documents from the business owners would be sufficient to answer the research question. The final assumption was that owners of medium-sized family businesses were actively seeking strategies to sustain their businesses after the leadership transition from their founders.

Limitations

Limitations are the factors identified as likely deficiencies that could affect a study (Dean, 2014; Gandy, 2015). A possible limitation was the sample size, which consisted of only three family-owned businesses whose owners have gone through a successful leadership transition. Another limitation was the geographical location of the Port Harcourt and Lagos areas of Nigeria, which could affect the application of the conclusions in other places. It was also possible that the participants might not have shared all the strategies that led to their success, which could also be a limitation to the study's findings.

Delimitations

Delimitations are within my authority during the research and define the boundaries of the study. Dean (2014) defined delimitations as constraints or boundaries imposed deliberately by the researcher on a study. Amongst the delimitations of the research included the restriction of the participants to medium-sized family businesses within the geographic locations of the Port Harcourt and Lagos areas of Nigeria. The study included only participants (medium-sized family businesses) who have experienced leadership transition and have sustained their businesses.

Significance of the Study

Family businesses are major contributors to economic growth, wealth creation, and employment in most developed and emerging economies (van der Westhuizen &

Garnett, 2014). Though medium-sized firms in Nigeria are critical drivers of economic activities, especially in employment and poverty reduction, they underperform their Asian counterparts in national value creation (Tsagem, Aripin, & Ishak, 2015). The lack of sustainability in the performance of most family firms, due to failures in leadership succession and poor management, affect family incomes with a large population of Nigerian family members being poor and living under challenging economic conditions (Oguonu, 2015).

Contribution to Business Practice

Most family business owners find it difficult to manage leadership transitions successfully between successive generations of family members (Dalpiaz et al., 2014; Poza & Daugherty, 2014). The absence of workable plans and the inability to manage successions affect the survival of family businesses under the leadership of the next generation (Gilding, Gregory, & Cosson, 2013). I used the experiences of some leaders of medium-sized family businesses who have succeeded in sustaining the operations of their family businesses after leadership transitions to explore the strategies that enabled those leaders to succeed. By conducting this study, I provided insights for leaders of other family businesses on strategies to achieve successful transitions or to manage issues that arise from leadership transitions.

Implications for Social Change

Most family business owners in Nigeria have had challenges transitioning from their founders to the next generation with high failure rates (Leap Africa, 2011; Ogundele et al., 2012; Oguonu, 2015). The high failure rates of family businesses in Nigeria negatively affect the incomes of families and contribute to the increasing rates of unemployment in the country (Leap Africa, 2011; Oguonu, 2015). Successful management of transitions by Nigerian family business leaders could contribute to positive social change, as more business owners will be able to operate profitably after transitions from their founders, which will enhance the incomes of the members of the families and the communities. Providing family businesses owners with strategies for managing leadership transitions may also lead to a reduction in unemployment and poverty in Nigerian communities.

A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore the strategies that owners of family businesses use to sustain the businesses after the leadership transition from the founders. Though the contribution of family firms to countries' economic activities has continued to increase, most family businesses do not survive to the second generation (Gundolf et al., 2013). The central research question for the study was as follows: What strategies do owners of medium-sized family businesses use to sustain the business after the leadership transition from the founders? The essence of the literature review was to analyze, summarize, compare, and contrast the various sources of information that address the study topic. Literature reviews enable a researcher to (a) articulate the underlying assumptions for a study, (b) demonstrate an understanding of the subject and explore its applicability to a business context, and (c) situate the topic within the relevant research convention (Marshall & Rossman, 2015). The literature review functions as a building block to a study, which enables the researcher to understand the existing body of knowledge and methods adopted in prior research on the topic (Manhart & Thalmann, 2015; Smith et al., 2013).

In the literature review section of the study, I covered the subject areas related to the impact of decisions by both the founders and potential successors on transitions, preparation for successions, posttransition issues, and the effects of changes in both the family and the businesses. Most of the materials for this study were obtained from the Walden University Online Library. Out of the 89 references that I cited in the literature review section, 88 (98.9%) were peer-reviewed journal articles. I cited a total of 155 references, and 151 (97.4%) of them had publication dates between 2013 and 2017, which is within 5 years of my projected graduation date. Out of the 155 references that I used in the study, 150 (96.8%) were peer-reviewed journal articles, four (2.6%) were books, and one (0.6%) was a dissertation. The databases that I used most frequently included (a) SAGE Premier, (b) ScienceDirect, (c) Emerald Journal Management, (d) ABI/INFORM Complete, (e) Business Source Complete, and (f) Google Scholar. Some of the keywords used in the database searches included *family businesses and succession, family business survival,* and *family business failure*. Other keywords included *small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), family firms' strategy, family businesses in Nigeria, family businesses and economy, transformational leadership theory,* and *theory of planned behavior*. The organization of the literature review is in the following segments: (a) transformational leadership theory, (b) theory of planned behavior, (c) family owned businesses, (d) family business SMEs and the Nigerian economy, (e) family businesses and leadership transition, (f) success strategies, and (g) sustainability issues.

Transformational Leadership Theory

Burns (1978) developed the transformational leadership theory and attempted to differentiate leadership into transactional and transformational types based on the impact on followers. Burns posited that unlike transactional leaders who operate based on mutual value exchange with subordinates, transformational leaders attempt to raise the motivation and ethical values of followers. Bass (1985) extended the work of Burns and argued that transformational leadership (TFL) takes place in an organization when the followers become aware and motivated by the overall organizational goals, rather than self-interest. The features of TFL include (a) emphasis on employees' development to achieve the objectives of the organization, (b) recognition of employees' contributions and engendering trust in leadership, and (c) enhancement of employees' motivation and productivity through empowerment and focus on shared values (Yahaya & Ebrahim, 2016). Yahaya and Ebrahim noted that transformational leaders influence, inspire, and stimulate their followers to challenge themselves intellectually and work beyond their capacities to achieve the organizational targets.

Khalifa and Ayoubi (2015) stated that transformational leaders laid emphasis on moral values and conducts, and the impacts on behaviors inspired and motivated their followers to find a meaning of work and to apply their intellectual strength to solve problems and question known assumptions. Tromp and Blomme (2014) noted that the key element of TFL was the ability to inspire followers through an appealing future vision of the organization, setting high-performance objectives, and encouraging their subordinates to achieve them. Transformational leaders also reinforce desired behaviors that place greater values on the organization's goals over the self-interest of either the leader or the followers (Tromp & Blomme, 2014). Khalifa and Ayoubi noted that while the exchange of contingent considerations motivates the relationship under transactional leadership, transformational leaders earn their respect by putting the needs of their subordinates over their personal concerns.

Comparison of TFL with transactional leadership. Yahaya and Ebrahim (2016) argued that transactional and TFL styles were on opposite ends of a leadership scale and that while transactional leadership resulted mostly in short-term results, TFL focused on the long-term development of the subordinates and sustainable improvements in organizational productivity. Yao, Fan, Guo, and Li (2014) pointed out that while transactional leaders encourage their followers with a reward for good performance and sanction them with denial of rewards and threats, the process of TFL enhances employees' development and commitment by building a relationship based on trust. Tromp and Blomme (2014) noted that transformational leaders inspire their followers to become committed to the ideals of the organization and eager to invest significant energy towards the achievement of the goals and visions of the organization. Tyssen, Wald, and Heidenreich (2014) examined the features of leadership in different types of organizations and noted that transactional leadership focuses on task-oriented situations while TFL draws attention to the long-term goals of organizations.

Theorists of leadership try to highlight the different impacts of transformational and transactional leadership styles on employees in the workplace. While both transactional and TFL styles impacted positively on the motivation and commitment of subordinates in change situations, TFL had a stronger positive correlation to workers' duties and organizational chances of success (Tyssen et al., 2014). Tyssen et al. (2014) argued that leaders must be aware of the implications of the various leadership styles and know when to use each option to manage the increasingly challenging business situations. Khalifa and Ayoubi (2015) found that in line with previous research findings, the inspirational motivation component of TFL was a useful corrective tool in organizational learning. As highlighted by Yao et al. (2014), TFL reduces work stress and employees' negative behavior. Yao et al. also contended that though transformational leaders drive employees towards increased productivity, the engagement process results in more positive attitudes, which reduces employees' stress levels.

Many leadership writers have also argued that TFL and transactional leadership have different effects on followers' motivation. Unlike transactional leadership that focuses on conditional rewards and passive management style, transformational leaders motivate their followers through emotional connection and trust building processes that result in a mentoring relationship (Vito, Higgins, & Denney, 2014). The use of TFL theory as part of the conceptual framework for this study is to focus on the important role of leadership, which influences the outcomes of key activities, including the succession process and the long-term survival of most medium-sized family-owned businesses. Though there could be several factors that account for the high failure rates of family firms, one of the most critical factors has been the inability to successfully manage leadership transitions (Collins et al., 2016). The elements of TFL enable organizations to galvanize organizational resources and build structures to cope with future changes

(Abrell-Vogel & Rowold, 2014; McKnight, 2013). Through effective communication of shared visions and strategies, transformational leaders extract an optimum commitment from followers that enable organizations to respond quickly to disruptive and revolutionary changes that suddenly threaten their survival (McKnight, 2013).

Transformational leaders ensure organizational coherence and success in change situations by securing the support of the middle management team leaders, who act as role models and influence the support of their team members to achieve set objectives (Abrell-Vogel & Rowold, 2014). By deemphasizing the focus on short-term rewards and results and taking actions based on long-term values in line with the mission and vision of organizations, transformational leaders minimize the perceptions of stress by employees, especially during change situations (Yao et al., 2014). Transformational leaders emphasize teamwork and collaboration and, therefore, engender trust between team members and with their leaders, which generates a positive attitude that makes the employees more efficient in the achievement of the goals in a change situation (Cha et al., 2015; Chi & Huang, 2014). TFL theory was relevant to explore the strategies that owners of medium-sized family businesses use to sustain the business after leadership transition from the founders.

TFL and innovation. McKnight (2013) examined how the elements of TFL theories as proposed by Burns (1978) impacted organizational change processes and noted that TFL enables followers to optimize their potential, which enhances organizational performance. McKnight pointed out that to achieve success in change management in organizations, the elements of TFL (idealized vision, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration) would be required to galvanize the organizational resources to meet the objectives of the change. Furthermore, McKnight argued that two forms of change take place in organizations: (a) continuous change that occurs due to the regular changes in the environment and (b) punctuated or disruptive changes, which suddenly threaten the survival of the organization. Transformational leaders enable organizations to survive these changes through their ability to communicate the vision effectively, sharing authority with followers, motivating the followers to achieve the objectives of the organization, and responding quickly to such changes that could threaten the firm (McKnight, 2013). Abrell-Vogel and Rowold (2014) conducted a study on the impact of TFL on employees and concluded that the personal attitudes of TFL influenced workers' disposition to innovation. Abrell-Vogel and Rowold argued that there is a positive correlation between TFL and the perception of the subordinates towards change and innovation and that the effect of TFL was more profound on the followers when the leaders displayed personal support for such change projects. Also, TFL supports effective collaboration between various teams in the organization due to the positive dynamics within groups (Cha, Kim, Lee, & Bachrach, 2015).

Impact on trust and productivity. There is still some debate amongst researchers on the impact of TFL on trust in the workplace and employee productivity. Cha et al. (2015) argued that team members under transformational leaders had more trust between themselves and with their leaders and were more effective in meeting their goals in change situations. Chi and Huang (2014) studied the effects of TFL on team performance in an organizational change situation and found that TFL predicted positive team performance by ensuring coherence and focus of team members towards common goals. TFL also engenders a positive attitude in the team members, which impacts effectiveness and enhances the performance of a team (Chi & Huang, 2014). Hammond, Cleveland, O'Neill, Stawski, and Tate (2015) studied the impact of leadership on the work-life balance of employees and noted that transformational leaders act in the best interest of the team and motivate followers to adopt the same attitude, which results in superior organizational performances. Hammond et al. pointed out that within the framework of TFL, a strong relationship exists between the leaders and the subordinates based on the leaders' influence (idealized influence) as the leaders communicate and execute motivational visions of the future (inspirational motivation). Pradhan and Pradhan (2016) stated that unlike most other leadership theories, TFL motivates subordinates and leaders to achieve organizational objectives, over and above their individual self-interests. Pradhan and Pradhan also highlighted that TFL encourages employees to compete and cooperate in an ethical manner with the focus on achieving organizational goals, which helps individual employees to meet their potentials.

Pradhan and Pradhan (2016) also noted that TFL enhances staff productivity and achievement of organizational vision by motivating followers to attach values to their jobs, rather than viewing assigned jobs as boring and less dignifying. Pradhan and Pradhan pointed out that TFL engenders employees' total commitment to the goals of the organization, which results in more efforts and increased productivity. Hammond et al. (2015) also contended that TFL drives the subordinates to think and solve problems themselves (intellectual motivation) and pays attention to the personal needs of each follower (individualized consideration), and that by allowing members the independence to think and solve problems, transformational leaders promote creativity in the workplace. Simon, Chan, and Mak (2014) contended that transformational leaders communicate clear visions and goals of their organizations and provide a supportive framework, which encourages followers to put their best effort in the overall interest of the organization. Simon et al. also highlighted that some of the attributes of TFL behavior include the articulation of a believable and compelling vision of the future and consideration of individual issues of each employee. As espoused by Simon et al., the other attributes of TFL include leading by acceptable ethical example and encouraging followers to think and solve problems that arise in the workplace. Given the perceived impact on employee productivity, I considered TFL to be relevant in the study of the effects of leadership transition on family owned businesses.

Employee motivation and loyalty. Regarding effects on employees, Hammond et al. (2015) found a positive relationship between TFL and work-life enrichment and argued that TFL enriched the work contents of their followers by allowing them the autonomy to think and solve problems. Hammond et al. argued that the positive effect of TFL on the employees could also impact positively on the family lives of employees given the supportive framework it provides to the employees. Also, Pradhan and Pradhan (2016) noted that TFL had a positive influence on subordinates’ commitment to the organization and that employees’ loyalty to both the leader and the team arose from their belief in the vision of the organization as shared by management. Pradhan and Pradhan also argued that there is a positive correlation between TFL and the performance and productivity of the followers in the workplace. Simon et al. (2014) argued that there is a direct correlation between TFL and employees' sense of pride in followership and commitment to the organization and that the presence of transformational leaders could predict subordinates' pride in the leadership of an organization.

Leadership styles influence employees' motivation and loyalty to organizations. Pradhan and Pradhan (2016) contended that TFL results in productivity enhancement through the inspiration from the leaders, which motivate subordinates to think beyond their personal interests and to be willing to go the extra mile towards the achievement of the overarching organizational goals. Employees' pride in the leader leads to pride in the firm, which results in increased commitment and productivity (Simon et al., 2014). Simon et al. concluded that an understanding of the emotions of each employee would be useful for leaders to extract increased loyalty and productivity from employees. Accordingly, Pradhan and Pradhan contended that TFL motivates employees to perceive their roles as critical to the overall achievement of the aims of the organization, thereby increasing the emotional connection with their jobs, their leader, and the team.

Mesu, Sanders, and van Riemsdijk (2015) conducted a study on the possibility of extending the identified influence of TFL on large companies to SMEs. Mesu et al. contended that given that large corporations offer better career prospects and better employee retention opportunities, SMEs needed to identify sustainable strategies to engender workers' commitment. Yahaya and Ebrahim (2016) highlighted the features of transformational leaders as (a) emphasizing individual employee's development to achieve the objectives of the organization rather than the self-interest of employees, (b) valuing employees' contributions and engendering trust in leadership, and (c) increasing employees' motivation and productivity through empowerment and focus on shared values. Mesu et al. argued that TFL conducts are among the sustainable strategies that engender workers' commitment, which uplift employees to achieve beyond their capabilities and encourage alignment with organizational objectives. Furthermore, Yahaya and Ebrahim contended that transformational leaders influence their followers who see them as role models for both professional and ethical conducts and also inspire subordinates to work beyond their capacities to achieve the agreed organizational targets. Transformational leaders also motivate their followers to challenge themselves intellectually to come up with problem-solving ideas that enhance productivity in the workplace (Yahaya & Ebrahim, 2016).

Reduction in employees' work pressure. In their study to understand the impact of leadership and work pressure on the behavior of workers and how this is affected by the transformational or transactional leadership styles, Yao, Fan, Guo, and Li (2014) found a positive correlation between work pressure and negative behavior by employees in organizations. Yao et al. argued that unlike TFL, transactional leadership leads to increased stress and negative behavior by employees due to the emphasis on short-term outcomes, which leads to increased stress and negative conducts. Also, Hamstra, Van Yperen, Wisse, and Sassenberg (2014) noted that transformational leaders impacted on their subordinates by communicating higher ideals and big picture for the future, and by paying attention to their individual needs while transactional leaders used value exchange mechanism to influence followers to attain set objectives.

The styles that leaders adopt impact employees' perception of pressure in the workplace. Hamstra et al. (2014) noted that transformational leaders, unlike transactional leaders, focused on group goals rather than personal goals. TFL engenders more enduring behaviors in followers, unlike transactional leadership that encourages the attainment of immediate objectives (Hamstra et al., 2014). Ghadi and Fernando (2013) noted that TFL involves a mutually supportive relationship between leaders and the followers, which leads to increased motivation and positive attitude in the supporters. Ghadi and Fernando (2013) argued that transformational leaders display higher levels of maturity and morality and build employee loyalty through interactions, which motivates subordinates to higher levels of performance and behavior. Ghadi and Fernando, therefore, contended that workers who were supervised by transformational leaders appeared more motivated and dedicated to their work. Hamstra et al. concluded that the leadership style that managers of organizations adopt plays a significant part in the performance and efficiency of their followers. Furthermore, organizations that require short-term achievement of goals would be better off with transactional leaders while organizations that desire to build an enduring learning culture would promote TFL style (Hamstra et al., 2014).

TFL and intrafamily succession. The behavior of leaders impacts the outcomes of transitions in family businesses. Marcoux, Guihur, and Koffi (2016) noted the positive effect of TFL to the achievement of successful leadership transition in family businesses. TFL enhances the quality of the relationship between the incumbents, the identified successors and other workers and increases the confidence of the successors to learn and grow on the job while sustaining credible relationships with other employees and members of the family (Marcoux et al., 2016). Furthermore, Marcoux et al. asserted that the legitimacy conferred on the successor within the context of TFL makes it possible to sustain the motivation of the employees and other stakeholders after the succession process, which could enhance the success of intrafamily leadership transition. In their study on the resolution of conflicts within the workplace, De Clercq and Belausteguigoitia (2016) noted that workers are more contented when they believe that their work environment is supportive. The TFL process engenders open and transparent communication in the workplace, which facilitates employees' learning and skills development in a less stressful environment (De Clercq & Belausteguigoitia, 2016).

Jyoti and Dev (2015) examined the connection between TFL and the resourcefulness of subordinates and noted that TFL focuses on shared objectives of a group, which motivates the subordinates to achieve beyond their capabilities. Jyoti and Dev stated that transformational leaders operate based on ethical values, attend to the individual needs of subordinates, encourage feedback and criticism of actions, and act as role models for followers. De Clercq and Belausteguigoitia argued that TFL engenders creativity and resourcefulness in employees, which enables them to overcome workplace challenges and achieve organizational goals. Jyoti and Dev argued that there was a positive correlation between TFL and employee resourcefulness due to the conducive learning environment that transformational leaders provided employees to question existing procedures and to generate new solutions. Jyoti and Dev added that the existence of a learning culture in an organization enhances the capacity of employees to develop and implement new ideas under the guidance of a transformational leader. With their perception as role models, transformational leaders enable employees to key into the future visions of the business and to work diligently towards the organizational goals irrespective of short-term challenges. (De Clercq & Belausteguigoitia, 2016). Furthermore, Jyoti and Dev contended that the impact of TFL, coupled with a learning environment enhances workers' morale and promotes creativity. The perceived positive effects of TFL on employees' motivation, productivity, loyalty, and disposition to organizational changes impact the outcomes of leadership transitions in family businesses

Theory of Planned Behavior

The theory of planned behavior (TPB) proposed by Ajzen (1991) served as a model for the prediction and understanding of behavior. In the TPB, Ajzen posited that intentions, attitudes, and beliefs influence human behavior and that there are cause and effect relationships between the behavior of an individual, and the intention to act, which is influenced by perceptions and attitude towards the act (Padgett et al., 2013). The central theme of the TPB was that every behavior is influenced by an intention to carry out a particular action and that the intention towards a conduct explains why human beings make certain decisions (Ajzen, 2015; Kautenen et al., 2015). Furthermore, the intention to perform an act is determined by the individual's perception of the consequences of the action, the perceived behavioral norm shared with a significant social circle or persons, and the perception as to the ease or difficulty of performing the action (Ajzen, 2015; Alonso & Krajsic, 2015; Joensuu-Salo et al., 2015). The intentions and perceptions of the owners of family businesses towards successions predict the nature of transitions that they would implement for the family business, and this is influenced by the perception of acceptable norms within the family and social circle (Boyd et al., 2014).

The TPB was a fundamental element of the framework for my current study, which focuses on the identification of the leadership transition strategies for medium-sized family businesses' sustainability. An individual's intentions to carry out a particular conduct influences the extent of his or her commitment towards the actual performance of the action (Alonso & Krajsic, 2015; Tolba & Fahmy, 2016). The proponents of the TPB offered insights into the basis of transition decisions and the link between owners' intentions and the definition of successful outcomes (Boyd et al., 2014). A person's conduct reflects convictions of the possible results of the actions and the acceptability of that behavior within the social circle (Kautonen, van Gelderen, & Fink, 2013; Malebana, 2014). Padgett, et al. (2013) posited that intentions, attitudes, and beliefs influence human behavior and that there is a cause and effect relationship between the behavior of an individual. Padgett et al. also asserted that perceptions and attitude influence the intention to act.

Boyd, et al. (2014) evaluated the decision-making processes of incumbents on leadership succession and pointed out that transitions begin with owners' considerations of the net benefits of handing over to either family or non-family members. Boyd et al. drew from the TPB and argued that the intentions and dispositions of the owners towards successions should serve as predictors of the nature and outcome of transitions for the family business as the owners' intentions influence the decision to implement any change.

Boyd et al. pointed out that the perception of acceptable norms within the family and social circle impacts the attitudes of the owners towards an action. Boyd et al. also highlighted three key situational factors within the provisions of the TPB that influence the owners' decisions on transition (a) the commitment of the potential successor, (b) the events within the family, and (c) the relationship between the household and the business.

Malebena (2014) sought to validate the provisions of the theory that an individual's intention, which predicts behavior, is influenced by attitude and acceptable norms. Malebena contended that within the TPB, a person's conduct reflected convictions of the possible results of the action and the acceptability of that behavior within the social circle of the individual. Malebana, therefore, posited that an action becomes attractive to a person when as it is perceived favorably and the individual believes that such an action would receive the approval of family members and friends. Boyd et al. also argued that entrepreneurs came to different decisions on transitions due to their different dispositions to the situational factors; and that a combination of situational factors, regard for the family and the business, and perceived outcome of the transition influence the decision on the nature of succession for the family business. Boyd et al. provided insights into the basis of transition decisions and the link between owners' intentions and the definition of successful outcomes, which can be useful to owners of family businesses involved in succession processes.

Within the TPB, the subjective norms act as the subtle social pressure as to whether the social circle will approve the decisions of an individual while the influence of the social pressure is directly proportional to the importance the individual attaches to the opinions of the members (Joensuu-Salo et al., 2015). Stronger intentions lead to more commitments to perform an act and increase the chances of success (Alonso & Krajsic, 2015; Joensuu-Salo et al., 2015). As such, the actions and intentions of human beings draw from their thinking, irrespective of how the thoughts arose, which makes such actions planned (Ajzen, 2015).

TPB and entrepreneurial intentions. The intention of an individual to carry out a particular conduct influences the actual performance of the action and stronger intentions lead to more commitment from the individual and increases the chances of successful outcomes (Alonso & Krajsic, 2015). Alonso and Krajsic noted that the key elements of the TPB that predict the intention to carry out a behavior include (a) the disposition towards a behavior, (b) the acceptable social norm, which puts pressure on the person, and (c) the perceived ease or difficulty to carry out the behavior. However, in their study, Heuer and Kolvereid (2014) also found a positive correlation between entrepreneurial education and entrepreneurial intentions (instead of the intentions leading to the desire for entrepreneurial education), which suggested a failure of the theory. Heuer and Kolvereid concluded that the phenomenon could be due to either use of inappropriate constructs or a deficiency in the theory, which indicates a need for further studies on the applicability of the TPB.

Forster-Holt (2013) used the TPB to explore the factors that motivate entrepreneurs to retire and hand over the management of their businesses to others. Forster-Holt argued that there are two different forms of entrepreneurial exits – voluntary and forced, which could either be due to a planned transition or closure of the business.

Maes, Leroy, and Sels (2014) stated that intentions of an individual for entrepreneurial activities are a function of attitude, accepted social norms, and the person's perception of behavioral controls. Furthermore, Maes et al. (2014) noted that intentions combine with the perceived behavioral controls to influence an individual's actual conduct. Perceptions, which are made up of accepted norms (social pressure) and the level of desire for an action, influence intentions and intentions then motivate conducts (Forster-Holt, 2013). Forster-Holt therefore, argued that under the TPB, the plan to carry out an action (retirement) becomes stronger when there are a favorable attitude and positive perception as the nature of efforts (ease or difficulty) required to perform the act. Maes et al. argued that the desirability of entrepreneurial actions, the acceptability of entrepreneurship by an individual's relevant social circle, and the perceived feasibility of becoming an entrepreneur influence the intentions of an individual to become an entrepreneur. However, Maes et al. contended that within the provisions of the TPB, a person's intentions could only result in actual conduct if the individual perceives an ability to perform the required actions.

Personal experiences of incumbents in family businesses influence their behavior and dispositions towards leadership transition. Makpotche, Logossah, Amewokunu, Lawson-Body, and Sedzro (2015) evaluated the impact of cultural factors of prudence on the intentions of the owners to take on debt capital from banks rather than other available sources of funding. Makpotche et al. stated that a key element of the TPB was that intentions predicted every behavior that needs planning before implementation and that intentions indicate motivations for actions. With regards to the retirement of founders, Forster-Holt (2013) contended that in line with the provisions of the TPB, the subjective factors and belief in a controlled succession process influenced the intentions of the owners to retire from the business. Forster-Holt concluded that the key subjective factor that influenced the retirement decision of incumbents was whether most other members of the same generation were taking similar retirement decisions. Makpotche et al. (2015) contended that the desire to maintain the family culture and fears of losing control of the business influence the owner's financing decisions and intentions towards the various financing options. Makpotche et al. concluded that this behavior accounts for why many small family businesses choose to finance their operations from owners' personal savings and contributions from other family members.

There is a debate on the impact of gender and ownership status on the disposition of incumbents towards leadership transitions. For salaried employees, Forster-Holt (2013) found that subjective norms like information about retirement benefits influenced their intentions to retire. However, objective factors like business profitability or environmental barriers to exit did not affect owners' retirement decisions (Forster-Holt, 2013). Maes et al. (2014) found that gender influenced the different entrepreneurial intentions of men and women. Maes et al. asserted that while women desired entrepreneurship to achieve economic independence and for work-life balance purposes, men wanted entrepreneurship for the purpose of wealth accumulation. Makpotche et al. (2014) noted that the provisions of the theory of TPB explain the impact of perceptions on the conduct of individuals. Maes et al. contended that women perceived a greater lack of internal control compared to men due to the general perception that associates entrepreneurial skills to men. Maes et al. therefore, asserted that their findings indicated that gender differences played important roles in entrepreneurial intentions.

TPB and family business succession. Sharma, Chrisman, and Chua (2003) drew from the TPB to evaluate the influence of the incumbent intentions on succession process. Sharma et al. (2003) noted that the TPB offers a useful model for the understanding of the critical issues that influence leadership succession in family businesses. Gilding, Gregory, and Cosson (2013) argued that the motive of the incumbent who initiates the succession process is a key determinant of the outcome of the process, and the continuity of the business after a transition. Sharma et al. (2003) noted that in line with the provisions of the TPB, the chances of leadership succession is a function of the intentions of the relevant individuals engaging in the process. The initiators' perception of the possible outcomes, the acceptance of the outcome by the initiator's social circle, and the initiator's perceived feasibility of the process also moderate such intentions. Sharma et al. (2003) argued that for succession to be an intention, the initiator must find the process to be desirable, the process must be acceptable within the social norm, and the initiator must perceive a positive payoff from the outcome.

Researchers showed the different attributes of incumbents that influence their behavior in family businesses. Gilding et al. (2013) posited that there are four possible typologies of incumbent's motivations and harmony with other family members that can lead to different outcomes for the family business. Some of the typologies include incumbents that derive motivation from both the continuity of the firm and family harmony and incumbents who are neither driven by the continuity of the business or family harmony (Gilding et al., 2013). Other typologies included incumbents who draw motivation from the continuity of the family business, but indifferent towards family unity and incumbents that are only driven by peace in the household, but indifferent towards continuity of the family business (Gilding et al., 2013). Sharma et al. (2003) argued that in the context of the family business, the following attributes must be present in a planned succession (a) the incumbent must have a preference for intrafamily leadership succession, (b) the family as the reference group, must be committed to retaining ownership of the business, and (c) the conduct of the potential successor must assure the incumbent as to the probability of achieving success with the transition.

Successful intrafamily transition requires effective planning and preparation by the incumbents and potential successors. Sharma et al. (2003) concluded that the positive disposition of the incumbents towards transition in family firms creates the readiness for intrafamily succession and forms the basis of transition planning. Sharma et al. pointed out that the critical elements of succession planning include the identification and preparation of the potential successor, articulation of the post-transition business plan, articulating the role of the incumbent in the business after the leadership succession, and an effective communication of plan outcomes to all relevant stakeholders. Mussolino and Calabro (2014) stated that the transitions in family businesses are affected by a combination of the readiness of the incumbents to transfer authority and the commitment of successors to the business. Mussolino and Calabro argued that the ideology of the predecessors affects the disposition of the successors and their consideration of success in the family businesses and that successors with autocratic predecessors are likely to have more opposition from other stakeholders. Sharma et al. also argued that the family social norm influenced the nature of communication to stakeholders. However, the desire by the preferred successor to assume leadership, rather than the commitment of the incumbent, influences the nature and outcomes of leadership successions in family businesses (Sharma et al., 2003).

Zahrani, Nikmaram, and Iatifi (2014) assessed the factors that determine the nature of succession planning in family businesses and noted that while family firms serve as key drivers of economic activities in most countries and contribute significantly to new employment and sustained entrepreneurial activities, most family businesses find it difficult to achieve success with leadership transition. Koffi, Fillion, Ekionea, and Morris (2014) contended that while family businesses were critical to the economic activities of many countries, several factors including the unwillingness of incumbents to completely hand over authority to their successors, and inadequate planning and implementation of leadership transitions, limit their performances. Zahrani et al. (2014) argued that succession planning enhances efficient utilization of human resources; and enables organizations to identify and prepare the most suitable candidate for a position at the most appropriate time, to achieve the set objectives. Zahrani et al. found a direct correlation between succession planning and achievement of successful outcomes in the leadership transition process. Zahrani et al. argued that a successful planning process predicts positive succession results and that the level of family support for the business and the desire of the potential successor to succeed the incumbent influences the nature and duration of the succession planning process. Koffi et al. (2014) asserted that through succession planning, successors in family businesses convince both their predecessors and other stakeholders in the business, of their capability to assume leadership control. Koffi et al., therefore, concluded that it important for the incumbents to facilitate the acceptance of their successors, through mentoring, delegation of authority, and communication of the successors' legitimacy to other members and stakeholders in the firm.

Researchers note that business leaders who plan and prepare their organizations for possible changes enhance the chances of achieving successful succession outcomes. Zahrani et al. (2014) contended that there was a higher probability of success for transition planning when it was conceived and implemented by the founders of the business, with appropriate post-succession roles designated for the incumbents. Zahrani et al., therefore, asserted that the incumbents' willingness to hand over control, significantly impact the outcomes of most leadership succession programs. De Massis, Sieger, Chua, and Vismara (2016) pointed out that the incumbents, whose attitudes regarding intrafamily transitions are usually a function of contemporary situations and experiences that influence their perceptions (good or bad) of the potential outcomes of such transitions, mostly determine the success of family business successions. However, the critical factors that result in successful transitions in family businesses include the existence of a good relationship between the incumbent and the identified successor, strong desire by the successor, quality preparation of the successor, and cordial intrafamily relationships (Jaskiewicz, Combs, & Rau, 2015).

Christiano (2014) contended that the effectiveness and success of transition in most family businesses were affected by the family dynamics and the nature of a relationship between the household and the business. A harmonious relationship between the incumbent and the potential successor, which enables the replacement to learn from the outgoing entrepreneur, is an essential element for success in transgenerational succession (Christiano, 2014). Gilding et al. (2013) also asserted that the best outcome in a family business succession process, which leads to the institutionalization of the family business, is where there is both a high motivation from the incumbent towards business continuity and a harmonious relationship with family members. Furthermore, Mussolino and Calabro (2014) evaluated how the fatherly attitudes of incumbents influenced the performance of successors in family businesses and noted that when predecessors are overprotective of their successors, their behaviors impact the behavior of the successors either in a positive or negative way.

Collins, Worthington, and Schoen (2016) examined the impact incumbents' expectation of personal well-being on the success of leadership transition process and overall performance of family firms. Collins et al. (2016) noted that only a small proportion of family businesses survive to the second generation of household members, while an even smaller number make it to the third generation. Collins et al. argued that though a combination of several factors could account for the high failure rates of family businesses, failure in leadership succession critically affects the future existence of family firms. Hauck and Prugl (2015) noted that a family business succession process takes place over several years and involves a gradual handover of authority from an older to a younger generation of household members. Hauck and Prug however, pointed out that transitions usually create challenges for the businesses due to several factors that include conflicts and lack of trust between the incumbents and successors. Furthermore, Collins et al. noted that the incumbents' lack of trust in the ability of the potential successors to successfully manage the family business after succession affected the succession process. Furthermore, Collins et al. contended that the expectation of incumbents about their well-being after retirement influenced their level of support for the succession process.

Similarly, Hauck, and Prugl (2015) noted that a favorable disposition of the incumbents and trust in the ability of potential successors enhanced the success of transition processes and other change initiatives. Collins et al. (2016) also argued the retiring CEOs with favorable future outlooks worked actively to position the firm to take any identified opportunities and allowed employees to make decisions that improved the performance of the business. With regards to the impact of intrafamily relationships, Hauck and Prugl found a negative correlation between strong intrafamily relationships and favorable disposition of the family businesses to undertake required changes during the transition processes. Given the impact of the expectations of retiring CEOs on the performance of family firms, Collins et al. concluded that family businesses should be able to overcome the challenges of succession by resolving identified frictions between the incumbents and other family members. However, as stated by Hauck and Prugl, the support of incumbents is critical to the success of the transition phase of family firms. Hauck and Prugl therefore, concluded that the lack of will by incumbents influence the behavior towards leadership succession and innovation, more than possible shortcomings in implementation capability for planned transition processes. The findings, therefore, imply that the intentions and dispositions of the incumbents towards intrafamily transitions and the level of preparation of the potential successors influence the outcomes of leadership succession in family businesses.

Family-Owned Businesses

A family business is an entity where individuals related through marriage or genealogy own significant stakes and are in management control (Duh, 2014; Gundolf, Meier, & Missonier, 2013; Naldi, Chirico, Kellermanns, & Campopiano, 2015). Hatak and Roessl (2015) pointed out that family firms relate to businesses where several members of the same family maintain majority shareholding or dominant in senior management positions and the family depends on the business for financial subsistence and influence. Significant ownership and control in family businesses are usually vested in a family member or a group of household members, which affects decision-making in the firm (Wiklund, Nordqvist, Hellerstedt, & Bird, 2013). Ajayi and Morton (2015) and Mihic, Arsic and Arsic (2015) contended that though there is no standard description of size of family businesses, most researchers use the numbers of employees to categorize the sizes of family firms into small (between 10 to 49 employees), medium (between 50 to 300 employees), and large (over 300 employees). Family firms play critical roles in the economic activities of most countries (Basco, 2014; Gill & Kaur, 2015). A large majority of registered businesses are mostly owned and controlled by family firms, which also contribute significantly to job creation and the GDP of most economies (Miller, 2014).

Though family businesses constitute a critical component of the economies of most countries, only a few of them survive between the founding generations to the next (Miller, 2014). The performance of family businesses was affected by some factors that include (a) absence of common purpose by family members, (b) poor leadership skills of the next generation or successors, and (c) relationships between the family members (Miller, 2014). Miller also noted that the absence of common purpose in family businesses leads to poor communication, which results in the inadequate preparation of the next generation for leadership roles. The relationship between the household members and the business also impacts the disposition towards financial advisers and on the effectiveness of strategy implementation and performance of family firms.

Business and non-business issues impact the performance of family businesses. Naldi, Chirico, Kellermanns, and Campopiano (2015), therefore, noted that unlike non-family firms, consultants to family businesses were required to be versed in both business and nonbusiness issues, which impact on the performance of the family business. However, Naldi et al. (2015) contended that financial advisors had little impact on family businesses when domineering founders were still in control and did not appreciate the value of such professional advisors. Basco (2014) noted that families who maintained an appropriate balance between business issues and family interests in decision-making processes had more positive effects on the performance of the family business. Basco argued that such balance enabled the firms to optimize the benefits of family participation and enhances business performance. Miller (2014) highlighted that while the nature of intrafamily relationships affected the family members' views of the firm, the existence of shared values enhances the performance of the next generation of family leaders. The owners of family businesses that invest resources in creating a common business objective by the family members are more likely to develop effective leaders for the next generation to carry the business forward (Miller, 2014). Miller concluded that given the high impact of intra-family relationships on the other factors that influence the longevity of family businesses, the owners should view the maintenance of common objectives by family members as a key business survival strategy.

Family Business SMEs and the Nigerian Economy

Most family businesses in Nigeria are structured as Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and are significant to the social and economic health of the families. Researchers have however noted that though the SMEs foster employments opportunities, they do not contribute significantly to the economic development of the country. Ajayi (2016) conducted a study to evaluate the factors that affect the capacity of Nigerian SMEs' capacity to compete in the export market and noted the growing participation of the SMEs in the export market, which reflects their importance as a source of foreign exchange to the Nigerian economy. However, the Nigerian SMEs contributed minimally to the GDP of Nigeria due to several factors that included the challenging operating and regulatory environment, lack of infrastructure, policy inconsistencies, limited access to financing, as well as the high failure rate of such businesses (Ajayi, 2016). The Nigerian SMEs also struggle with insufficient resources and high failure rates that impact their ability to engage in innovative activities (Ajayi & Morton, 2015). Oguonu (2015) also highlighted the adverse effects of the weak performance of the SMEs to Nigerian families, with a significant proportion of households living below the poverty lines and with low life expectancy periods.

Most SMEs in Nigeria contend with significant operational challenges, which impact their performance. Oguonu noted that besides infrastructural challenges, other factors that constrained the performance of Nigerian family businesses include inadequate or poor implementation of succession plans, different mindsets by incumbents and potential successors about the business, and weak management capabilities. Though these factors result in a high failure rate amongst Nigerian SMEs, Oguonu argued that good intra-family relationships moderated the impact of these factors, as most of Nigerian family businesses thrived when there was harmony amongst the family members and with the firm. Furthermore, Ajayi (2016) contended that performance of Nigerian SMEs was influenced by the entrepreneurial behavior of their founders, their ability to network with other businesses, and the capacity of the SMEs to compete in the international export market to counter the institutional challenges of the operating environment. Alarape (2014) noted the importance of SMEs in the economic development of most countries. Garba, Mansor, and Djafar (2013) stated that micro, small and medium-size enterprises (MSMEs) that result from entrepreneurial activities account for significant employment within the communities and provide platforms for the nurturing of citizens for managerial competence.

The Nigerian government could play important roles to sustain the operation of SMEs. In recognition of their critical roles, the Nigerian government through its various agencies has offered incentives including tax holidays, reduced borrowing interest rates from development finance agencies, and reduced export duty rates as incentives to SME players in the country (Alarape, 2014). Garba et al. noted that MSMEs are especially relevant in developing countries like Nigeria, with high poverty and unemployment rates. However, Alarape stated that the Nigerian SMEs do not contribute significantly to the manufacturing sector of the economy. Garba et al. pointed out that despite the presence of a significant number of MSMEs in Nigeria, their impact on the economic development of the country has been minimal. Alarape contended that the reasons for the poor performance of Nigerian SMEs include poor physical infrastructure, inadequate funding, and changes in government policies.

The background and personal experience of founders also impact the performance of SMEs. Upon the examination of the impacts owners' entrepreneurial dispositions on the performance of SMEs in Southwestern Nigeria, Alarape found that most owners of SMEs showed a moderate level of entrepreneurial disposition but a small degree of innovation. Also, Garba et al. (2013) contended that the level of education attained by MSME entrepreneurs was a critical factor that influenced successful business management, given that the productivity of the MSMEs increased with enhancement of the educational level of their entrepreneurs. Alarape argued that the impact of the entrepreneurial orientation was positive for SMEs in a growth phase, but harmful for SMEs that were either in a decline or no-growth period. Garba et al. found that access to finance was a major factor that affected the growth and performance of MSMEs, which makes most intending MSME entrepreneurs to fund their startup operations with personal and family savings due to the apparent difficulty in accessing funding from external sources. Alarape, therefore, contended that an improvement in the entrepreneurial attributes of innovation, positive attitude towards risk, and proactive exploitation of opportunities would enhance the performance of SMEs in Nigeria.

Furthermore, cultural practices hinder the performance of most Nigerian SMEs. Garba et al. (2013) contended that religion and cultural practices in the northern parts of Nigeria adversely impacted the number of women that ventured into entrepreneurial activities. Garba et al., therefore, suggested that the Nigerian government should provide both financial support and training to encourage more women into business. Oni and Adepoju (2014) also posited that there is a direct correlation between the educational levels of heads of rural households and the potential of the wellbeing of the family members. Oni and Adepoju contended that the welfare of families improved when the heads were in the employment of the public sector to enhance the stability of incomes, compared with families whose heads were in self-employed entrepreneurial activities. Oni and Adepoju suggested that with the central role of education in the well-being of rural households, the Nigerian government should pay attention to the development of the educational sector, which would serve as a catalyst for the increase in the welfare of families.

Family Businesses and Leadership Transition

Most family businesses appear to struggle with leadership succession between different generations of family members. Buang, Sidek, and Sidek (2013) examined why most family businesses struggled to survive after management succession and noted the linkages between the level of preparation of successors, the nature of the relationship between the family members with the business, and the performance of the firm after succession. There is a significant relationship between the preparation of the successors, which in itself is affected by the relationship between the family and the business, and the smoothness of the succession process (Buang et al., 2013). Chaimahawong and Sakulsriprasert (2013) pointed out that companies should pay attention to the relevant factors that impact on the effectiveness of leadership succession to ensure post-succession survival. Personal factors of both the potential successor and the incumbent had the greatest impacts on the succession process followed by the nature of intra-family relationships (Chaimahawong & Sakulsriprasert, 2013).

Researchers contend that the leadership succession process impacts the performance of most family businesses. For example, Chaimahawong and Sakulsriprasert (2013) argued that there is a positive correlation between the succession process and post-succession performance; and that the success of a family business after a transition, is significantly impacted by how well the process went. Furthermore, Van der Westhuizen and Garnett (2014) explored the relationship between leadership practices and business performance of the founders and subsequent generation of leaders of family firms and noted that there was a significant association between leadership practices of the first generation founders and the performance of family businesses. Van der Westhuizen and Garnett argued that the apparent inexperience of the second generation of family leaders impacted the performance and survival of family businesses after a transition. Van der Westhuizen and Garnett also asserted that the lack of leadership experience of the second and subsequent generations of family business leadership could be the major factor in the high failure rates of family businesses. Van der Westhuizen and Garnett's work is significant as it explained the reasons for the persistent failure of family businesses especially after a transition of leadership. However, Buang et al. (2013) pointed out that despite the importance of systematic preparations of the successors, even when it is informal, to the effectiveness of the succession process, the smoothness of the succession process does not guarantee a successful post-succession financial performance.

Influence of incumbents. Incumbent leaders in family businesses significantly influence the outcomes of the transition process. In a study to examine how family businesses in different countries fared with succession, Christiano (2014) highlighted the factors that influenced transition in various European countries. Christano pointed out that the goals and objectives of the incumbent entrepreneur who initiates and manages the succession process, the level of preparation of the potential successor through training, internships in businesses outside of the family, the skills and professional discipline of both the incumbent and the successor impacted the outcome of succession processes. Carney, Gedajlovic, and Strike (2014) argued that several factors that are external to the business combine to shape the nature and determine the chances of family businesses succeeding with transgenerational transitions and longevity. Carney et al. conducted a study on the impacts of inheritance laws in different countries on the transition of family businesses from one generation to another and found that the nature of inheritance tax influenced the development of family businesses. Carney et al. contended that SME family firms in some countries like France are undeveloped due to heavy inheritance taxes that hinder capital accumulation and transfer across generations of family members. However, Carney et al. noted that the flexible trust laws in the USA, which enabled family businesses to minimize the incidence of inheritance taxes, result in preservation rather than the growth of incumbent family businesses.

There is still a debate on the desirability of internal or external leadership successors in family businesses. Wiklund, Nordqvist, Hellerstedt, and Bird (2013) evaluated the factors that influence the choice of successors by owners of family businesses, between internal and external candidates and noted the critical role of ownership succession in the strategic direction of family firms. Wiklund et al. argued that though there could be some benefits derived from diversity from multiple-ownership of family businesses, multiple ownerships could weaken social ties and decision-making effectiveness. According to Wiklund et al., increased multiple-ownership initially resulted in a greater probability of internal ownership succession, but subsequently increased the chances of divestment and external ownership succession. Wiklund et al. also argued that the chances of internal ownership transfer increase when ownership of the family business is across different generations of family members and that a greater probability of external ownership transfer existed in family businesses with external CEOs than in businesses with family members as CEOs. Wiklund et al. concluded that the presence of family members in top decision-making positions increases the commitment of the business to the family and reduces the chances of external ownership transfers. The findings indicate that the incumbent leaders significantly determine the choice of their successors and the nature of the succession process in most family businesses.

The leadership styles of the incumbents influence the outcomes of transition processes. Miller (2014) argued that three factors – absence of shared vision of the business, poor leadership practices by the second-generation successors, and dynamics of relationships between the family members, impact the outcomes of leadership transitions in family firms. Miller found that the existence of a mutually agreed vision for the family businesses resulted in a perception of effective leadership. Miller argued that other employees and family members perceive leaders of family firms who took the time to articulate and communicate their visions of the business as being effective. Miller therefore, contended that owners of family businesses stood a good chance of developing effective next generation leaders through a regular practice of sharing their visions for the businesses to both the family members and employees.

The impact of intrafamily relationship. The relationship between members of the family impacts the performance of family owned businesses. In a study to understand the historical relationship between the family members in the firm, Dalpiaz, Tracey, and Phillips (2014) underscored the importance of family tradition in transitions and argued that successors in family businesses legitimize their tenures by emphasizing the ethos that is important to the family members. Dalpiaz et al. noted that most successors stress family relationships by (a) highlighting the relationships with their predecessors, (b) preaching the importance of family unity, and (c) seeking the endorsement of critical nonfamily members. Dalpiaz et al. noted that most family firms are affected by the relationship between the family members, as well as the regular but concealed contests for power by the members. Nordqvist, Wennberg, Bau, and Hellerstedt (2013) contended that transitions in family businesses appear complicated, as both business and non-business factors including the unknown intentions of the owners and several other factors outside the control of the firm influence most of such processes. Besides, Nordqvist et al. noted that most transitions in family businesses not only involve leadership shifts, but most times include changes in the ownership of the business, either to other generations of the family or outsiders or inject new capital resources that alter the course of the family business. Cordial relationship enhances the trust between incumbent leaders and family members and the chances of successful leadership succession in family businesses.

There is also a perception of nepotism by non-family-member employees and other stakeholders towards leadership transitions in family businesses, which impact on the performance of the firm post-transition. Dalpiaz et al. asserted that given that family members do not usually compete with nonfamily members for their leadership positions in the business, nonfamily employees often presume nepotism in the leadership transition processes. Chung and Luo (2013) evaluated the relative merits of an internal member succession compared with an outside candidate and found that companies led by outside successors performed better after a transition than those led by inside successors. Chung and Luo noted that while family tradition could limit inside successors, outsiders brought fresh perspectives and were able to initiate changes that impacted positively to the business. The background of successors affected the performance of the family firms after transition and the successors that had active social networks were able to attract resources that enhanced the fortunes of the businesses, which conferred legitimacy to their tenures (Chung & Luo, 2013).

There is still a debate on the need to include non-family members in the boards and senior management teams of family businesses. Gill and Kaur (2015) described family businesses as organizations where members of the same family hold significant ownership stakes and are in control of management. Gill and Kaur argued that the involvement of the family in business did not impact adversely on financial performance, but generated superior returns compared to non-family owned businesses. Family members on the board of the companies made unique contributions that impacted positively on performance (Gill & Kaur, 2015). However, Gill and Kaur also found that family firms with boards composed mostly of non-family members performed better than others with a majority of family board members. Owners of family businesses should strike a balance between family members and outside professionals in the governance structure of their businesses, to mitigate the possible adverse impact of family dynamics on the firm (Gill & Kaur, 2015). However, Mihic, Arsic, and Arsic (2015) noted that the high-performance expectations by the owners and their constant fear of failure could lead to disaffection and increased stress on employees, which negatively affect organizational performance. Mihic et al. also noted that owners should ensure that a peaceful working relationship existed between family member employees in the business, given the significant impact of the household on the fortunes of the firm. Mihic et al. concluded that there is a negative correlation between the number of family member employees and the performance of the business due to poorly defined responsibilities and hierarchy of such family members. The implications of the findings are that family businesses achieve more efficiency when there is a balance in the number of family and non-family employees in the business.

The spouses of the male entrepreneurs contribute significantly to the affairs of both the family and the business. Smith (2014) noted that while male entrepreneurs usually get the credit for successful outcomes of family firms, the roles of their spouses and other prominent members of the family are often not recognized. As stated by Smith, due to the blurred lines that separate business and family issues, success in the family business does not only depend on good business decisions of the founders but on the activities of the family matron working together with other family members, which ensures favorable intrafamily relationships. Furthermore, Smith contended that while the male entrepreneurs acted as the visible head of the business and family, the spouses served as the subtle motivational factors for the companies through their emotional control of the household members. Smith also asserted that the matrons of the families were happy to influence activities from behind the scenes, leaving the male entrepreneurs to enjoy the recognition as business drivers.

The impact of a family on strategy. The nature of intrafamily relationships impacts the strategic direction of family businesses. Brundin, Samuelsson, and Melin (2014) conducted a study on the impact of family ownership on the operation of family owned businesses and noted that family ownership is one of the important determinants of the success of family firms. Brundin et al. pointed out that members of the family usually form the board and management of most family owned businesses. Brundin et al. argued that the beliefs and activities of the family as owners influenced the performance of family firms over different generations. Also, Brundin et al. asserted that the structure and dynamics (coherence or regular conflicts) of the family determined the strategic direction of the business. The owners' attitude to risk also affect the approach and strategic direction of the firm. Puri and Robinson (2013) conducted a study to understand the factors that influence such decisions by entrepreneurs of family businesses and noted that the non-financial benefits of being self-employed motivated the leaders of most family businesses; hence they are willing to receive lower levels of compensation than salaried entrepreneurs. However, Puri and Robinson pointed out that entrepreneurs who founded their businesses had different attitudes to risk than entrepreneurs that inherited their businesses. Entrepreneurs that inherited businesses had similar attitudes to risk, with a less favorable disposition towards the future like non-entrepreneurs. The conclusions by the authors indicate that the values transmitted between the generations of business-owning families influence the operations of family businesses.

Many writers argue about the impact of low levels of diversity on the performance of family businesses. Zou, Chiu, and Hsu (2014) however contend that non-family businesses performed better in financial terms than family firms, as the ownership structure and style of management of family businesses made them less efficient compared with non-family businesses. In a study on the impact of multicultural management on the financial performance of family firms compared with nonfamily businesses, Singal and Gerde (2015) found that family firms were less disposed to diversity in senior management compared with nonfamily businesses. due to the familial relationships, which influenced the selection of the senior leadership positions in many family businesses. Singal and Gerde argued that most family firms did not consider diversity (women and minorities) in the appointments to senior management, boards of directors or the selection of suppliers. Singal and Gerde, however, concluded that the absence of diversity did not impact on the financial performance of the family businesses.

Gender biases by some incumbents create conflicts in the families and impact the succession process in family firms. Glover (2014) posited that while the motivation of most owners of family businesses is to sustain the family name in the firm through intra-family successions, some of the successions are affected by perceived gender biases, that result in conflicts between the founders and daughters regarding roles within the business and the choice of successors. Glover noted that in such situations, while the father (founder) prefers the views of the male offspring and perceives the daughter's opinions as challenges to his authority, the daughter becomes jealous of the attention given to the views of the male siblings. Glover argued that if not resolved, the gender power conflicts within family businesses could affect both the operations of the business and the dynamics of the family. The effective resolution conflicts and maintenance of harmony within the families could enhance the chances of successful outcomes leadership transition processes.

Doubts about the willingness of some leaders of family businesses to hand over to identified successors impact the outcomes of the succession process. Mahto, Davis, and Khanin (2014) pointed out that while most founders of family firms had the objective of long-term sustenance the operations of their businesses and handing over to the next generation, not all the potential successors from the next generation shared the same desire. In their study that evaluated the factors that influence families' support for their family businesses, Mahto et al. found that there is a negative correlation between the educational level of the household member CEO with the commitment of other family members to continue with the family business. Mahto et al. contended that some family members perceive that in the course of acquiring the high level of education, the sibling that becomes CEO loses touch with the shared family values and practices, which reduces the interest of other family members in the business. However, Mahto et al. noted that family members' expectation that the returns from the business will take care of their future need served, continued to act as a strong motivation for continued affiliation with the firm.

The effective management and transfer of historical family knowledge between incumbents and successors could enhance the outcomes of the transition process in family businesses. Hatak and Roessl (2015) examined the knowledge management process in family businesses and how this is affected by intrafamily leadership transition and noted the importance of specific business knowledge to family firms. Hatak and Roessl argued that ability to successfully transfer such knowledge to successors influences the outcome of leadership transitions. Hatak and Roessl argued that conflicts and lack of trust between incumbents and potential successors and the unwillingness of the predecessor to hand over control could hinder the process of knowledge transfer and the implementation of continuing sustainable innovation strategies. Hatak and Roessl found a positive correlation between knowledge transfer and the quality of the relationship between the predecessor and the successor. The transfer of relevant firm knowledge suffers in the absence of good relationship and trust between the successor and the predecessor (Hatak & Roessl, 2015). Hatak and Roessl concluded that the willingness of the predecessors to trust their replacements directly influences the volume and quality of information that is passed on to the successor and impacts on the outcomes of succession programs. The conclusions indicate that cordial relationship in the family is essential for the transfer of knowledge between generations of leaders in family businesses.

Some leaders of family firms appear to lack sufficient motivation to implement effective business strategies and steps required to achieve success in a transition process. Arasti, Zandi, and Bahmani (2014) examined the contributing factors to the failure of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and noted that SMEs were central to the economic activities of most countries, but most of them contend with several challenges that impact performance and threaten their survival. Arasti et al. pointed out that some of the factors from the external environment that hinder the performance of SMEs include excessive regulation, inconsistencies in the articulation and implementation of policies, bureaucratic processes, and perceived lack of institutional support. Some of these factors that limit the performance of SMEs relate to the owners of the businesses and include management competence, attitude, and lack of consistent personal motivations (Arasti et al., 2014). Inappropriate policies including inconsistency in regulatory rules, poor implementation of policies, and multiple taxations adversely impact the performance of businesses (Arasti et al., 2014). Both successful and unsuccessful entrepreneurs considered harsh operating environment – high rate of inflation, borrowing rates, and reduced consumer disposable incomes as significant factors that affected the financial performance of SMEs (Arasti et al., 2014). However, as stated by Arasti et al., unsuccessful entrepreneurs considered the poor implementation of business strategies and reduction in the owners' motivation over time due to cumulative disappointments, as leading causes of business failure.

Leaders of family businesses with exposure to diverse economic conditions are better able to manage through adverse conditions. Kelly et al. (2015) explored the factors that influence the chances of failure of SMEs during periods of sustained adverse economic conditions. The macroeconomic factors including low disposable incomes and high unemployment rates influence the failure or survival of SMES during distress periods (Kelly et al., 2015). In particular, a reduction of the bank credit facility limits available to SMEs during distress years reduced their chances of survival (Kelly et al., 2015). Kelly et al. also contended that SMEs that evolved during times of economic prosperity with applicable lenient credit conditions had lower chances of survival during economic depressions than those that came into business during periods of tighter credit conditions. The findings indicate that unity and cordial relationship between family members enhances the articulation and implementation of a coherent business strategy that enhances the chances of family businesses to survive through difficult change processes.

Success Strategies

Researchers have noted that some factors including friendly intrafamily relationship, articulation of plans for the succession process, and effective preparation of the potential successors, enhance the outcomes of transitions in family businesses. In a study on the factors that influence the outcome of successions in family businesses from the perspective of successors, Ghee, Ibrahim, and Abdul-Halim (2015) noted the importance of intergenerational succession planning and implementation to the survival of family firms. Ghee et al. also highlighted the critical roles that founders of family businesses play in shaping the value system of the firm. However, Rao (2015) contended that change is an imperative in the life of organizations and that the role of leadership is to ensure that such inevitable changes do not lead to organizational decline. Rao argued that change management is usually a planned action by leadership to reposition an organization away from the status quo to the desired future state that will shield organizations from anticipated volatilities. Ghee et al. pointed out that inadequate training of potential successors and poor management of the relationships between the firm and key members of the family-owned businesses, affect change processes and account for the failure of many family firms after the transition from their owners. Lansberg and Gersick (2015) also noted the importance of education to business continuity and planning for intergenerational succession. Due to expansion, some family businesses sometimes venture into arrangements with inadequate knowledge and understanding of inherent risks, which underlines the need for continuous education (Lansberg & Gersick, 2015).

Trust and support of the successor by other family members could also influence the outcomes of leadership transition in family businesses. Furthermore, Ghee et al. (2015) found a direct correlation between the management practices and the performance of family businesses and argued that the management styles practiced across generations influenced the performance of family firms. Ghee et al. pointed out that family businesses performed better when authority and decision process is decentralized (Ghee et al., 2015). Lansberg and Gersick (2015) provided a framework for a curriculum that covered the key issues that family businesses faced including poor intrafamily dynamics, which hinders their successful operations and longevity. Some of the elements included in the framework by Lansberg and Gersick include – understanding the concept of the family firm, expanding collective knowledge of the owners' objectives for the business, discussions on succession planning, and the idea of governance in family businesses. Ghee et al., therefore, contended that leadership successions happened more smoothly in family businesses when there is a friendly intrafamily relationship and successors are prepared, trusted and supported by other members of the family. Also, ongoing training provides family business owners with the capacity to gain relevant insights from their experiences and increases collaboration to achieve the objectives of the company (Lansberg & Gersick, 2015). Lansberg and Gersick argued that customized education enhances the capacity of the owners of the family business to reflect and imagine the future of the firm through a visioning process. As such, families with common objectives and expectations from the business are more likely to have positive influence in the leadership succession process.

It is important to prepare other employees and stakeholders for the changes that result from leadership transition. Employees appear to resist change due to some factors including fear of possible redundancy, the anticipation of increased workloads and lack of trust in the leaders' motives for change (Rao, 2015; Soken & Barnes, 2014). Rao (2015) contended that to enhance the chances of success in change situations, leaders need to communicate efficiently and secure buy-ins of employees and other stakeholders on the desirability of proposed change projects. A collective visioning process enhances intrafamily communication and enables family members to acquire the benefits of using standard nomenclature, which shapes governance and culture among the different generations (Lansberg & Gersick, 2015). Furthermore, Lansberg and Gersick asserted that the continuous education of the family members increases the chances of arousing the interest of the next generation of household members, which provides a foundation for a successful leadership transition. Soken and Barnes (2014) also argued that the management styles that create a sense of uncertainty, fear and lack of direction among employees make it less likely to achieve success in innovation projects. Soken and Barnes, therefore, contended that to enhance the chances of success, leaders need to send out clear communication on all aspects of change initiatives, which removes any ambiguities and create a common purpose between the leader and the workforce.

Regular reviews of the businesses by outside consultants (e.g., audits) provide the owners of family businesses with proactive strategies that could impact the performance of the business. Rolleri, Nadim, and Lussier (2016) stated that while several studies have focused on the causes of small businesses' failures, the ability to predict failure factors would be more useful than knowledge of failure factors to avoid the disruptive effects of business failure to all stakeholders. As part of the measures to prevent widespread failures of small businesses, Rolleri et al. recommended that small businesses should conduct annual audit exercises, which helps to assess the status of the businesses and enhances the chances of viability. The use of a standard control checklist for the regular check-ups forces a review of operations, which could highlight potential problem areas before they materialize as business problems (Rolleri et al., 2016). Such routine and proactive status-reviews enable the companies to remain healthy, enhance profitable operations and improve the chances of the long-term viability of small businesses (Rolleri et al., 2016). The findings indicate that good intrafamily relationship and active support of the family is critical to the success of family owned businesses before and after a transition process.

Sustainability Issues

Most owners of family firms desire to achieve long-term success and to hand over to succeeding generation of family members. Delmas and Gergaud (2014) defined sustainability from the perspective of actions taken to meet current needs of stakeholders, but which should not impact adversely on the future. The short-term profit orientations of businesses might not support long-term operations and sustainability (Delmas & Gergaud, 2014). Delmas and Gergaud argued that family businesses where the owners did not have intra-family succession intentions were more disposed to short-term actions, without much consideration for issues relating to the longer-term future. Delmas and Gergaud contended that owners were only willing to extend their business views beyond their lifetimes when they have intentions to hand over to their heirs. Delmas and Gergaud posited that the plan to transfer to the next generation was a motivator for family businesses and in a bid to maintain the business legacy for the future generations, become more innovative and embed the concern for the future into their practices. Glover and Reay (2015) noted that despite numerous challenges, some family firms have been able to survive through several generations, even when operating with negative financial returns. Accordingly, researchers assert that most family firms are willing to sacrifice some short-term gains to achieve sustainable success in the overall interest of the family.

The desire for sustained success influences the strategic direction and operations of most family businesses. Glover and Reay (2015) argued that family businesses adopt four different strategies to aid survival under conditions of minimal financial returns. The survival strategies include entry into other business segments to diversify the family incomes and increasing the use of debt to finance the operations of the firms, which reduced short-term profits but enabled the businesses to expand operations. According to Glover and Reay (2015), other strategies include family members providing various forms of subsidy (unpaid services, longer working hours) to the business and compromising the needs of the family by accepting the low returns in the interest of the firm. Glover and Reay found that the options of diversification and increased use of debt generated the most discomfort to family businesses, as members felt became stressed with debt with the fear of losing family legacy through possible bankruptcy or suffering loss of household identity with diversification outside the known family business lines. Glover and Reay also contended that while the strategy of sacrifice by family members for the firm resulted in conflict within the household, the option of compromise and acceptance of the possible low returns provided the best emotional outcome to the family members. However, leaders of family businesses are only able to achieve sustainable success when they share common objectives with the members of the family.

There is constant balancing between decisions in for short-term imperatives and long-term interests of the business. For example, Goel and Jones (2016) noted that while the motivation of family businesses was to retain ownership within the household, the consistent search and exploitation of opportunities that follows from entrepreneurship leads to value creation, which enables the companies to compete efficiently and enhances long-term sustainability. Goel and Jones contended that the interplay of exploration, which entails the search for new opportunities outside a firm's existing base, and the exploitation of available resources to deliver agreed targets, involves trade-offs between short-term and long-term objectives. Given that family companies take decisions that must meet both the goals of the family members and the business, the decision-making processes involve compromises between short-term business objectives and sustaining long-term family ownership of the firm (Goel & Jones, 2016). Panwar, Nybakk, Pinkse, and Hansen (2015) studied the impact of worsening financial performance on the disposition of organizations towards sustainability initiatives and noted that businesses usually respond to declining financial situations by focusing on core activities that will generate maximum profitability to stay alive.

Decisions are not only based on financial logic but consider the interrelationship between the family business and the host community. Panwar et al. (2015) found that a decrease in funding available to companies influenced their commitment to sustainability activities, especially in uncertain and dynamic operating environments. Panwar et al. concluded that organizational leaders are likely to suspend long-term sustainability decisions in the interest of short-term survival during such periods of economic downturns, without any fear of losing legitimacy within the community. Reay, Jackiewicz, and Hinnings (2015) argued that the leaders of family firms take actions to ensure sustainability by integrating their businesses with the community and making decisions to create values for their businesses, the family, and other members of the community. Reay et al. (2015) posited that the interrelationships between the firms and the community influence the conducts of the family companies and also enable the businesses to affect the community norms to their benefit. Reay et al. contrasted the behavior of family businesses with the non-family firms, who focus mostly on financial performance, profitability and returns on investments with minimal interests in sustainability considerations, except where such actions lead to improvements in sales and profits. The conclusion by most writers is that family businesses achieve sustainable success when their leaders have common goals with the family members and are able to balance their strategic focus between meeting the needs of the family, the community, and the goals of the business.

Transition

Section 1 contained the background of the problem, the problem statement, the purpose statement, and the justifications for my choice of qualitative method and case study design for the study. Section 1 also contained the significance of the study, the contribution of the study to business practice, and a review of the professional and academic literature. The literature review and the theories that form the conceptual framework highlighted the significance of family businesses, the impact of leadership succession to the survival of family businesses and the potential strategies that owners of family businesses could adopt to enhance the success of their leadership transitions programs. In section 2, I provided an overview of the case study process and included (a) the role of the researcher, (b) the participants in the study, (c) the research method and research design, (d) the population and sampling, (e) the requirements for ethical research, (f) data collection instruments and technique, (g) data organization techniques and analysis, and (h) reliability and validity. Section 3 includes the presentation of findings of the study and recommendations for business application.

Section 2: The Project

In this study, I focused on the medium-sized family businesses in Lagos and Port Harcourt in Nigeria that have sustained their operations after the leadership transition from the founders to the next generation of family members. Medium-sized businesses are key drivers of economic activities, employment, and continued social development in Nigeria (Eniola & Entebang, 2015). It is important, therefore, to avail the owners of family-owned businesses with the success strategies for a leadership transition, which will enhance their ability to handle such processes and to sustain their businesses postleadership succession. In Section 2, I present the purpose statement, the role of the researcher, participants, research method and design, population and sampling, ethical research, data collection instruments, data collection technique, data organization technique, data analysis technique, and reliability and validity.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore the strategies that owners of medium-sized family businesses use to sustain the business after the leadership transition from the founders. The population for this study included owners of three medium-sized family businesses operating in Port Harcourt and Lagos, Nigeria, who have sustained their operations after the leadership transition from the founders to the next generation of family members. The findings and conclusions of the study might lead to positive social change by providing strategies to owners of family owned businesses to prepare adequately for the leadership transition beyond the tenure of their founders. Providing family business owners with strategies for managing leadership transitions might also contribute to the prosperity of the family members, employees, and the communities.

Role of the Researcher

The role of researchers in qualitative studies includes collection and analysis of written and oral data from participants to describe the phenomenon of inquiry (Collins & Cooper, 2014). A qualitative researcher serves as the research instrument (Marshall & Rossman, 2015). As the instrument, I was responsible for the selection of the participants and collection, organization, and analysis of the data. I interacted with the participants by way of semistructured, face-to-face interviews and collected secondary data from company documents (information from artifacts such as the companies' websites and periodic journal publications). Researchers are required to take the cultural norms of the participants into consideration and establish healthy relationships and trust with the participants to achieve the objectives of the interview (LeBaron, Iribarren, Perri, & Beck, 2015). Qualitative study researchers also require adopting participatory methods of data collection to ensure that their conclusions reflect the context (Hills & Maitland, 2014).

I used methodological triangulation in the collection of data. The triangulation of data from semistructured interviews and company documents enhances the quality of data and serves as empirical proof, which is one of the strengths of the case study design (Maxwell, Baillie, Rickard, & Mclaren, 2013; Nagasaka, Bocher, & Krott, 2016). Semistructured interviews also enable the researcher to clarify and verify information by asking the same questions to different participants (Nagasaka et al., 2016) with the use of case study interview protocol (Appendix A). To present a credible representation of the study's objectives and ensure that prior knowledge of the subject does not influence the conclusions, the researcher must avoid bias, actively seek contrary evidence, and maintain ethical standards (Yin, 2014). I used bracketing and attempted to ask follow-up questions to ensure clarity and mitigate any self-biases. The use of bracketing enables the researcher to minimize the impact of preconceived ideas and facilitate a deep exploration of the study phenomenon (Skiba & Disch, 2014).

The orientations and mindsets of researchers influence the design, nature, and conclusions of qualitative, social science studies (Yip, Lee, & Tsui, 2015). The personal experiences, views, and perspectives of researchers can introduce biases in the analysis and conclusions of qualitative studies (Rosenthal, 2016). In addition, as a human instrument that could significantly influence the collection and quality of data analysis, qualitative researchers should ensure high ethical standards in studies that involve people (Goodell, Stage, & Cooke, 2016). Qualitative researchers, therefore, must adhere to the provisions of the Belmont Report to maintain ethical standards in all conduct and activities throughout the study (LeBaron et al., 2015; Wao et al., 2014). The fundamental ethical principles of fairness, respect, and beneficence as provided in the Belmont report should govern studies that involve human beings (Brakewood & Poldrack, 2013). I ensured that the Belmont protocols guided me throughout the study.

Researchers enjoy the cognitive flexibility to choose the appropriate research design, nature, and type of data to collect for qualitative research (Maxwell et al., 2013). As the nature and quality of data influence the credibility of analysis and research findings (Rosenthal, 2016), to minimize bias and errors, I used methodological triangulation of data from different sources. A triangulation of data collected from face-to-face interviews and information from company documents is useful to avoid possible validation of researchers' prestudy notions (De Massis & Kotlar, 2014). Data management software was helpful for the coding of interview data to facilitate the generation of themes (Rosenthal, 2016).

I have lived and worked as a banker in the Lagos and Port Harcourt areas of Nigeria for 26 years. I am, therefore, familiar with the activities of some of the medium-sized businesses in those locations in the course of my banking career. I also currently work for a family-owned business, which I have been with for the last 2 years. The professional experience of a researcher is useful in the identification of relevant information during data collection and in data analysis to achieve the objectives of a study (Yin, 2014). However, I have not had any working relationship with the potential participants in the study.

Participants

The participants for this study included leaders of three medium-sized family businesses operating in Port Harcourt and Lagos, Nigeria, who have sustained their operations after leadership transition from their founders to the next generation of household members. To be classified as medium-sized, the number of employees in each of the businesses must not be more than 300 (Central Bank of Nigeria, 2014). I used the purposive sampling method to select the participants for the study. Through purposive sampling, a researcher can select participants that fit within specified criteria for inclusion in a study and with enough information that provide answers to the research question (Kalla, 2016). A researcher adopts purposive sampling method based on the judgment to achieve a set study objective (Cant & Hefer, 2014). A researcher attains data saturation when further interviews of participants cease to provide additional relevant information (Walker, 2012).

I gained access to the target participants who are successors to the founders of their respective medium-sized family businesses, through a personal delivery of the participants' consent form that explained the purpose of the study to the participants. I identified the qualifying participants from the records of the Lagos Chamber of Commerce and the Port Harcourt Chamber of Commerce. The direct contact with the participants was necessary to secure permission to conduct the interviews at their various locations (Mitchelmore & Rowley, 2013). The contact with the participants, however, was after obtaining the consent of the Walden University Institutional Board (IRB) for the study. I also sent a participant's consent form to the participants to get their approval to participate in the study. The engagement process with the participants needs to be efficient to avoid delays and to enhance the relationships with the participants (Lamb, Backhouse, & Adderley, 2016). To maintain the confidentiality of the participants and acceptable ethical standards, researchers use password-protected computers to record the interviews, while the study is guided by the protocols of the Belmont Report (Akhavan et al., 2013; LeBaron et al., 2015). I established a good working relationship with the participants through transparency, honesty, and trust. It is required for researchers to ensure that interactions with study participants must be cordial and respectful to meet the requirements of the case study protocols (Davis, Demby, Jenner, & Gregory, 2016; Yin, 2014).

Research Method and Design

Research Method

I used a qualitative research methodology for this multiple case study. My objective was to explore the experiences of participants who have successfully sustained the operations of their businesses after leadership transitions from their founders to the next generation of family members. Three research methods, (a) qualitative, (b) quantitative, and (c) mixed method, are available to researchers who seek to understand a phenomenon (Makrakis & Kostoulas-Makrakis, 2016). However, researchers use qualitative methods to explore phenomena in their natural and dynamic settings and to evaluate contextual features where the researcher does not have full control of events (Garcia & Gluesling, 2013; Lach, 2014). Using the quantitative method enables researchers to use statistical tools to analyze data and to determine differences or relationships among variables through testing hypotheses (Ma, 2015).

Use of mixed methods allows researchers to combine the features of quantitative and qualitative methods in a single study and to explore different interpretations of a subject (Ragas & Laskin, 2014). I was not testing hypotheses in this study, so quantitative and mixed methods were not appropriate. The need for an in-depth understanding of a phenomenon influences the selection of a suitable research approach (Dasgupta, 2015). The qualitative method enables a researcher to capture the real meaning of a participant's behavior, emotions, and words (Parker, 2014). The qualitative research approach also enables an integration of the participants' interviews with analysis of data from various sources to understand and explain the identified phenomenon (Holt & Goulding, 2014). Using a qualitative method was, therefore, appropriate for this study. Furthermore, the qualitative method allows researchers to analyze and reach logical conclusions from contextual records and narratives that may be difficult with a quantitative approach (Anyan, 2013).

Research Design

For this qualitative research, I used a descriptive multiple case study design. Examples of qualitative research designs include (a) narrative research, (b) phenomenology, (c) grounded theory, (d) ethnography, and (e) case study (Hunt, 2014). Researchers use narrative research to identify and explore meanings of stories of an individual or group while phenomenological researchers explore the essence of the experience of people going through a phenomenon (Hunt, 2014). I did not select narrative research or a phenomenological design because I did not intend to study the story of an individual or the lived experiences of a group of persons who have experienced phenomena. Moreover, researchers use grounded theory to develop a common theme or theory from the study of experiences of a group (Hunt, 2014), while ethnographic design enables researchers to dwell on the beliefs and interactions of groups with common culture (Ma, 2015). I did not use grounded theory or ethnographic designs since the focus of the study was not on the development of common concepts to form a theory or the culture of a community. Case study designs enable researchers to explore contemporary and dynamic situations that involve *what* questions when they have little or no control of events (Yin, 2014). Furthermore, case studies allow researchers to combine data from multiple sources to explore given contextual phenomena (Almutairi, Gardner, & McCarthy, 2014; Boblin, Ireland, Kirkpatrick, & Robertson, 2013).

I elected to use a descriptive case study design to explore the strategies that owners of family businesses use to achieve sustainability after a transition from the family business founders. Descriptive case studies, rather than explanatory or exploratory case studies, enable researchers to describe events in their particular contexts (Yin, 2014). Multiple case studies allow a researcher to explore the various perspectives of a phenomenon and to gain insights from the differences and similarities of the cases (Dasgupta, 2015). Multiple case studies also enhance the credibility of research outcomes as researchers can draw conclusions from emerging patterns from the different cases, which equally help to substantiate the findings (Vohra, 2014). I conducted multiple case studies and collected data from various sources for this research until I attained data saturation. Researchers achieve data saturation when they have fully explored a phenomenon, such that subsequent data becomes repetitive and does not lead to new conclusions (Morse, 2015). I achieved data saturation by continuing with the participants' interviews, member checking, and collection of company documents until no new information resulted from additional data collected. In this study, therefore, I used the descriptive multiple-case study design to explore the experiences of some leaders of family businesses who have succeeded in sustaining the operations of their family businesses after leadership transitions to understand the strategies that enabled those leaders to succeed.

Population and Sampling

The population for this study included a purposive sample of three leaders of family businesses operating in Port Harcourt and Lagos, Nigeria, who have sustained their operations after the leadership transition from the founders to the next generation of household members. Purposive sampling enables a researcher to select cases and participants with the relevant experience that facilitates an in-depth exploration of the business problem (Marshall & Rossman, 2015; Yin, 2014). Researchers select participants through the purposive sampling method using their judgment based on the set study objectives (Cant & Hefer, 2014).

A researcher plans a sample size to determine the required number of participants and interactions for a selected type of study (Nelson, 2016). Though there are no prescribed criteria for the determination of an adequate sample size for a qualitative study, the objectives of research, the nature of information required, and the relevance of data collected should serve as a guide for qualitative researchers (Nelson, 2016). However, the number of participants in a sample becomes adequate upon data saturation, at which point additional data collected do not offer new insights into the phenomenon (Ram, Kurpad, & Swaminathan, 2014). I used a sample size of three participants and ensured that I achieved data saturation required for an in-depth exploration of the phenomenon to answer the central research question of this study. A small sample size could be beneficial to a qualitative researcher as it could provide opportunities for in-depth insights into the business problem of a study (Trotter, 2012). Data were collected through semistructured interviews with the participants and from relevant operational company documents.

The participants for the study were successors to the founders of their respective family businesses in Lagos and Port Harcourt, Nigeria, and whose businesses have continued to operate profitably after intrafamily leadership transition. The experience of the selected participants has to be relevant and should facilitate the exploration of the phenomenon in a study (Chou & Pearson, 2012). The semistructured interviews took place at times and locations that were convenient to the participants. Holding interviews at participants' selected locations enhances the quality and confidentiality of interactions (Nelson, 2016). Deakin and Wakefield (2014) contended that participants are more disposed to provide detailed and useful information when they are in comfortable surroundings. In the course of the interviews, I listened attentively to the participants, offered no personal opinions, and ensured that I did not display any emotions.

Ethical Research

I commenced this study after receiving approval from the IRB at Walden University, which provides the ethical guidelines to protect potential participants. Walden University's IRB approval number for this study is 06-23-17-0568778. The fundamental ethical principles of fairness, respect, and beneficence as provided in the Belmont report governed the study, as it involved human beings (Brakewood & Poldrack, 2013). I, therefore, ensured that the Belmont protocols guided me throughout the study. Through emails, I provided each participant with information about the research, the process, inherent risks, potential benefits, and a copy of a consent form that each participant reviewed and signed to signify agreement to participate. In the consent form, I indicated that I would audio-record the interviews with participants and collect company information. Also, within the consent form, I assured the participants that they could opt to withdraw from the study at any time by contacting me via phone or email, and that this would be without any consequences. The process of informed consent assures participants of confidentiality and encourages them to provide detailed and honest responses to interview questions (Nelson, 2016).

There were no incentives to participants in the study, and participation was voluntary, but each participant will receive a summary of the findings of the study upon approval. I did not use the names of the participants in the study to ensure confidentiality and to protect the identities of the participants. Instead of names, I used codes to label and identify the various participants. Researchers should consider the privacy of participants in the collection and handling of data (Marshall & Rossman, 2015). I will store all written data collected during the study in a secure and fireproof cabinet for a minimum of 5 years before shredding the data. I have protected and am storing the electronic data on my computer and will erase such data after the 5-year period. I communicated the entire process of storage and destruction of data to the participants. Researchers need to demonstrate that their data collection process is planned to protect the study participants (Yin, 2014).

Data Collection Instruments

I was the instrument for data collection in this qualitative case study. Given the significant human involvement in qualitative studies, the researcher serves as the primary instrument of data collection (Sarma, 2015; Yin, 2014). Human instruments can identify the human perceptions and individual attributes from interviews that reflect the contextual nature of case studies (Nelson, 2016). Data for case studies can be collected from a combination of various sources including interviews of participants, observation of participants, and from records maintained in the archives (Vohra, 2014). Researchers seek to find meaning in data to answer their research questions (Gibbins, Bhatia, Forbes, & Reid, 2014). I combined data sources from semistructured interviews and company documents (artifacts such as the companies' websites and periodic journal publications) for this study.

Semistructured interviews enable the researcher to obtain information from various perspectives and serve as a critical source of data in qualitative case studies (Singh, 2013; Yin, 2014). The protocols for the protection of human participants derived from the Belmont Report (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1978) and the established case study protocols guided me in the study. Qualitative researchers use the case study protocols to ensure focus and to enhance reliability (Yin, 2014). I adopted the case study protocols that Jacob and Furgerson (2012) and Yin (2014) proposed, which require researchers to (a) obtain relevant approvals including the IRB permission, (b) obtain participants' consent, (c) record interviews, and (d) follow procedures for data collection and case study report development. Researchers enhance the credibility of their findings through intensive editing of collected data, removal of data outside the boundaries of the study, and checking for correctness and integrity (Dube, Roberts-Lombard, & van Tonder, 2015). Furthermore, the use of member checking enhances the validity and reliability of the data; and influences the conclusions of the analysis (Nelson, 2016). Through member checking, researchers allow participants to review the researcher's interpretation of the interviews (Houghton et al., 2013). I used member checking by having the participants review my interpretation of the interviews.

Data Collection Technique

The central research question for this study was as follows: What strategies do owners of medium-sized family businesses use to sustain the business after the leadership transition from the founders? I used a prepared set of questions (Appendix B) to interview three participants, who are intrafamily successors of the founders of family businesses that have continued to operate successfully after leadership transition. I used company documents (artifacts such as the companies' websites and periodic journal publications) as additional data collection sources. I contacted and introduced myself to the participants by telephone and email, and also provide a background to the study. An effective introduction forms the basis of an enduring relationship of trust and openness between a qualitative researcher and study participants (Nguyen, 2014; Singh, 2013). Upon the agreement of the business leaders to participate in the study, I set up appointments for interviews with these potential participants in places most convenient to them. Holding interviews at natural environments to participants reduces tension and promotes a smooth exchange of valuable information (Nelson, 2016).

I conducted semistructured face-to-face interviews with the participants. Semistructured interviews enable researchers to introduce follow-up questions to further explore phenomena (Hashim, Noordin, & Saifuddin, 2015). I also provided the overview of the study to the participants and ensured that they were comfortable with the interview process. I obtained members' consent to audio-record the interviews. Audio-recording of interviews enhances the accuracy of data collection and analysis (Dasgupta, 2015; Vohra, 2014). Data collection continued until saturation, at which point the researcher became more confident about the consistency of the phenomenon (Morse, 2015). I would keep all collected data (electronic and print) for 5 years, after which I would destroy them.

Among the benefits of face-to-face interviews to qualitative researchers include the ability to generate significant volumes of valuable information within short periods (Marshall & Rossman, 2015). Face-to-face interviews also enable researchers and participants to clarify issues and observations during the process and avoid possible misinterpretations of feedback (Petrulaitiene & Jylha, 2015). However, Marshall and Rossman (2015) contended that the intimate nature of face-to-face interviews could inhibit participants from disclosing some sensitive personal information that is relevant to the understanding of a phenomenon. I used face-to-face interviews in line with the approved interview protocol (Appendix A) for this study, as the merits exceed the limitations.

Data Organization Technique

Proper organization of data is critical to the successful completion of a qualitative case study. It is advisable for a researcher to begin a study with a plan for data organization (Marshall & Rossman, 2015). A well-arranged database makes future retrieval easy, both for the researcher and for an interested external audience (Yin, 2014). I audio-recorded the participant interviews with the available recording function on my MacBook Pro laptop for subsequent transcription into text and also took hand-written notes. I also collected other company documents (artifacts such as information from the companies' websites and periodic journal publications), which provided additional information on the operations of the businesses. I developed a filing arrangement with appropriate codes for both the electronic and printed data, for ease of retrieval. Coding and connecting related documents enhances subsequent usage of data for analysis (Boblin, Ireland, Kirkpatrick, & Robertson, 2013; Nelson, 2016). I would store all collected data in a fire-proof safe for 5 years, after which I would destroy all the data.

Data Analysis

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study is to explore the strategies that owners of family businesses use to sustain the business after leadership transition from the founders. The interview questions were structured to enable me to explore the strategies that owners of family businesses use to sustain their businesses after leadership transition from the founders. I also collected information from artifacts such as the companies' websites and periodic journal publications. The essence of data analysis is to enable the researcher to explore the meaning of data by reviewing the emergent themes to form a coherent logic (Nelson, 2016). The meanings that scholars ascribe to the data collected from participants influence qualitative studies (Dasgupta, 2015). I used methodological triangulation to enhance the validity of the conclusions and analyze the documents with the theoretical lens of the TFL and the TPB.

Methodological triangulation makes it possible to combine and derive meaning from data collected from different sources, which enhances the credibility of findings (Van Dijk, Vervoort, Van Wijk, Kalkman, & Schuurmans, 2015; Yin, 2014). The collection of data through different methods also provides a researcher with different perspectives about the phenomenon (Noble & Smith, 2015). The use of methodological triangulation enabled me to have a more comprehensive picture than could have been possible from a single source of data.

Researchers incorporate rigor into qualitative studies by conducting a detailed analysis of data to minimize errors of interpretation and to identify emergent themes and patterns (Dube, Roberts-Lombard, & van Tonder, 2015). My process of data analysis commenced with the transcription of the audio-recorded interviews of the participants, and a development of a database to organize the study and ensure easy retrieval of data. I used Microsoft Excel for the database and all the contents (participants, notes, patterns, themes), had appropriate labels for identification. I also used QSR NVivo software to facilitate further in-depth analysis of the data. Computer software programs will facilitate data analysis for the arrangement of relevant information, review of linkages within the data, and identification of emerging keywords and themes (Marshall & Rossman, 2015; Nelson, 2016).

Computer software applications enable case study researchers to process data and enhance the credibility of findings (Ram, Kurpad, & Swaminathan, 2014). However, it is the responsibility of the researcher, and not the software, to interpret data and reach appropriate conclusions (Marshall & Rossman, 2015; Yin, 2014). I used software applications (QSR NVivo) to identify codes and themes within the data and used this as a basis to analyze the transcribed interview records and company documents. The next stage of the process was to interpret the data and draw conclusions. I also conducted member checking to ensure clarity of the feedback from the participants and offer them the opportunity to provide additional information about the phenomenon. Member checking enables researchers to minimize errors in data recording and enhances the accuracy of research conclusions (Nelson, 2016). After identifying the successful leadership transition strategies of the medium-sized family businesses in Nigeria, I related my findings with the conclusions of existing literature and the theories that formed the conceptual framework of the study.

Reliability and Validity

For the purpose of credibility, it is essential for qualitative researchers to incorporate strategies that ensure rigor in their studies (Houghton et al., 2013). Noble and Smith (2015) posited that the terms reliability and validity describe the strategies used by qualitative researchers to assure the trustworthiness of their findings and conclusions. While scholars could adopt different validity strategies, the standard measure of credibility is the extent to which participants' feedback and context are reflected accurately in research findings (El Hussein, Jakubec, & Osuji, 2015).

The various criteria utilized in assessing the trustworthiness of qualitative research include (a) credibility, (b) dependability, (c) confirmability, and (d) transferability (Elo et al., 2014; Houghton et al., 2013). A study is perceived to be credible when it has a detailed description of the processes and phenomenon, such that the findings reflect a correct interpretation of participants' feedback and contexts (Anney, 2014; El Hussein et al., 2015). I enhanced credibility by ensuring that the research question, the conceptual framework, data collected from participants, and the conclusions of the research, were in alignment. Researchers aim to confer dependability to qualitative studies by making the decision-making processes that justify their conclusions available for the scrutiny of readers (Houghton et al., 2013). I interviewed the participants and reviewed the relevant company documents to gain a deep understanding of the strategies that owners of family businesses use to sustain their operations after leadership transition. I also used member checking to enhance the dependability of the study. The process of member checking enabled me to validate the correctness of my interpretations and understanding of the data collected from participants.

Confirmability relates to the extent to which other researchers could corroborate the research processes (El Hussein et al., 2015). According to Kihn and Ihantola (2015), the findings of a researcher attain confirmability when the data collection process and analysis support the conclusions and are easy to understand. I used the NVivo software program to maintain an audit trail of all processes that support the decisions and conclusions that I make during the study. Transferability refers to the degree to which other researchers could generalize the conclusions of a qualitative study in other similar contexts (Houghton et al., 2013). I ensured transferability by providing the readers with details of the data analysis and extracts of direct quotes by the participants that support my conclusions.

Reliability

The extent of dependability and consistency of processes and conclusions measures the reliability of qualitative studies (Nelson, 2016; Stone, 2015). Researchers enhance the reliability of their research by ensuring data accuracy and minimizing biases

(Singh, 2014). I improved reliability through a process that included (a) following the interview protocol in engagement with every participant and also collected artifacts such as the companies' websites and periodic journal publications from the participants, (b) reviewing the interview transcripts for possible errors and omissions, and (c) conducting member checking with all participants. Through member checking, participants review the researcher's interpretation of the interview, which enhances data accuracy and reliability of the findings (Houghton et al., 2013). Researchers conduct member checking by allowing the participants to review the themes from the collected data and the summaries from the data interpretation to confirm that they are credible (Andraski, Chandler, Powell, Humes, & Wakefield, 2014). Through the process of member checking, I incorporated the feedback from the participants and enhanced the validity of my findings.

Validity

Readers assess the conclusions of qualitative studies based on their level of credibility and trustworthiness (Marshall & Rossman, 2015; Nelson, 2016). The concept of validity refers to the extent of accuracy in the description of a phenomenon in a study (Kihn & Ihantola, 2015). Credibility demonstrates the degree to which the conclusions of research reflect an accurate interpretation of data and feedback from the participant (Anney, 2014). I conducted member checking and methodological triangulation of interviews and collection of company data (artifacts such as information from the companies' websites and periodic journal publications) to enhance the validity and credibility of this study. The purpose of member checking was to get the participants to review the summaries of interpretations from collected data to provide validations to the summaries or to provide further feedback to enhance the accuracy of the conclusions. Researchers use member checking as a quality control measure to minimize errors in data recording and strengthen report accuracy (Nelson, 2016). Through methodological triangulation, researchers can combine data from different sources, which ensures data completeness and provides information on the phenomenon from various perspectives (Houghton et al., 2013). The analysis of data from different sources (interview data, member checking data, and company documents) also enhanced the achievement of data saturation.

Some of the measures of validity in qualitative studies include the level of dependability, confirmability, and transferability (Kihn & Ihantola, 2015). Qualitative researchers enhance transferability by providing detailed information, which makes their conclusions relevant in other similar contexts (Anney, 2014). To improve transferability of the findings of this study, I provided detailed descriptions of my findings, extracts from participants' interviews, and some corroborating company documents. Researchers achieve confirmability by providing the audit trail of decisions and actions that make their conclusions logical and dependable (El Hussein et al., 2015). Qualitative researchers also attain data saturation when they have explored all parts of the phenomenon when no more information comes from data collection (Morse, 2015). According to Fusch and Ness (2015), one of the methods that researchers use to attain data saturation is to ask the same questions to different participants. I continued with interviews of participants and achieved data saturation when subsequent data became repetitive and did not generate fresh themes for coding. The achievement of data saturation enhances the credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability of the study conclusions.

Transition and Summary

In Section 2, I provided information on the purpose of the study, the structure of the study, as well as the research participants, and the detailed research methodology and design. I provided relevant literature to support my preferred sampling method and ethical considerations that would guide the study. I also presented information on the data collection instrument, data collection technique and organization, and data analysis techniques. I concluded Section 2 with discussions on the methods to assure reliability and validity of the research findings. Section 3 includes the presentation of the study findings and how the recommendations could be applicable in professional practice, as well as how the owners of family businesses could benefit from the findings to enhance the success of their leadership transition programs and reduce the failure rates of the businesses after such leadership succession.

Section 3: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore the strategies that owners of medium-sized family businesses use to sustain the business after the leadership transition from the founders. Family owned businesses contribute significantly to the economic development of most emerging economies (Arasti et al., 2014). However, most of these family businesses appear to have significant challenges with leadership succession from one generation of family members to another, and a large number struggle to survive (Dalpiaz et al., 2014; El-Chaarani, 2013).

I conducted semistructured, face-to-face interviews with three leaders of family businesses in Lagos and Port Harcourt in Nigeria that have sustained their businesses after the leadership transition from their founders. Semistructured interviews enable researchers to obtain information from various perspectives and serve as a critical source of data collection (Singh, 2013; Yin, 2014). I used methodological triangulation to combine the transcribed interview data with company documents. Methodological triangulation makes it possible to derive meaning from data collected from different sources, which enhanced the credibility of findings (Van Dijk et al., 2015). Upon the achievement of data saturation, I used QSR Nvivo software to facilitate data analysis and to identify the strategies that leaders of family businesses use to sustain their businesses after transition. The themes that emerged from the data analysis include (a) founders' desire and support for transition, (b) preparation of successors, (c) trust and credibility of successors, and (d) clarity of vision.

Presentation of the Findings

The central research question for this study was as follows: What strategies do owners of medium-sized family businesses use to sustain the business after the leadership transition from the founders? The participants in the study comprised of three leaders of medium-sized family businesses that operate as (a) a law firm, (b) a steel trading company, and (c) as an import and export company with interest in shipping, agriculture, and fishing. Two of the participants were located in Lagos, while one operated from Port Harcourt. The leader of the law firm took over the business after 21 years of its existence and worked formerly as an investment banker before the transition. Subsequent to the transition, the new leader has expanded the focus of the law firm from litigation to other areas of commercial law practice like finance, banking, and capital market. The steel trading business was in operation for 41 years before the current leader assumed leadership, having successfully conceived and nurtured a new restaurant business. Posttransition, the business has grown and diversified into entertainment, quick-service restaurants, and a chain of hotels. The leader of the import and export company took over the business after 39 years of its existence. The business has since grown to include (a) oil and gas, (b) banking, (c) real estate, and (d) shipping and logistics. The three participants provided consistent answers to the seven interview questions, which together with the collected company documents facilitated the identification of the themes during the data analysis process.

To ensure confidentiality and privacy, I used codes PT1, PT2, and PT3 rather than names to identify the individual participants in the study. For example, PT1 represented

Participant 1, PT2 represents Participant 2, while PT3 represented Participant 3. Through the review of the feedback from interviews with the leaders of these three family businesses and a review of information from artifacts such as the companies' websites and periodic journal publications, I identified four emergent themes. The conceptual framework for the study comprised of transformational leadership theory (Burns, 1978) and theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1991). Certain findings from the study confirmed results from the literature review and aligned with the conceptual framework. Other findings extend the body of knowledge in the field and offer opportunities for future research. Table 1 contains the summary of general and demographic information on the three leaders of the family businesses who participated in the study.

Table 1

General and Demographic Information on the Family Business Leaders

Characteristics	Business 1	Business 2	Business 3
Leader code	PT1	PT2	PT3
Nationality	Nigeria	Nigeria	Nigeria
Age	43	48	57
Highest education level	Masters' Degree	Harvard OMP	Masters' Degree
Years as after transition	7 years	19 years	20 years

As I highlighted in the introduction and as contained in Table 2, the four emergent themes that I identified from the data collection and analysis process were (a) importance of the founders' desire and support for transition, (b) preparation of successors, (c) trust and credibility of successors, and (d) clarity of vision for both the founders and successors for the business.

Table 2

Emergent Themes: Frequency of Mention by Participants

Important issue	PT1	PT2	PT3	Total
Founder's desire and suppoı	5	5	13	23
Preparation of successors	8	12	10	30
Trust and credibility of successors	6	10	8	24
Clarity of vision	13	6	7	26

Theme 1: Founders' Desire and Support for Transition

There was an agreement by all three business leaders on the importance of the founder's desire for a succession and active support for the transition process. All three participants stressed the importance of the founders' willingness to retire and hand over the leadership to the successful outcomes of the transition process of their respective businesses. As the participants explained, the founders' intention and desire to hand over to an identified successor at a future date set the tone and created a conducive environment and foundation for a successful transition process. Sharma et al. (2003) found that the willingness of the incumbents for transition in family firms creates the readiness for intrafamily succession and forms the basis of transition planning. The three participants in their own words attributed the successful transitions in their businesses to their respective founders' commitment to the succession process. Gilding et al. (2013) asserted that the motive of the incumbent who initiates the succession process influences the outcome and the continuity of the business after a transition. PT1 explained, "My father had the intention to retire and made plans for the succession while he was still in charge." According to PT2, "I would give a lot of credit for the transition to my father, the founder of the business, who saw the need for the future transition and supported the process." PT3 added that "the tone for the transition was set by my father and the other stakeholders got the message through the examples that he, the founder, set."

As noted by the three participants, it is not enough for the incumbent (founder) to desire a transition; there must be proof of active support for both the identified successor and the implementation of the succession process. According to Zahrani et al. (2014), there was a higher probability of success for the transition process when it was conceived and implemented by the founders of the business, with appropriate postsuccession roles designated for the incumbents. PT1 noted that "when I joined the business, my father delegated most of his authority to me, so, there was no doubt as to who was in charge." PT2 pointed out, "With benefits of hindsight, I can say that my father had a grand design in his head on the transition, how he wanted it to go, and tried to implement this plan until when he became ill." Furthermore, information obtained from the quarterly journal publications of Business 2 indicated that the company conducts annual staff reviews as part of its succession planning process. As for PT3, "It was an orderly planned succession. My father knew the time he wanted to retire and at some point, defined the hierarchy, started staying at home, and allowed me to run the office and take important decisions."

The founders' desire and support for the transition theme confirms the findings of

Zahrani et al. (2014) that the incumbents' willingness to hand over control significantly impacts the outcomes of leadership succession programs. Koffi et al. (2014) also found that to enhance the success of transition process, it is important for incumbents to facilitate the acceptance of their successors through delegation of authority and communication of the successors' legitimacy to other members and stakeholders in the firm. The theme also aligns with the findings of Hauck and Prugl (2015) that a favorable disposition of the incumbents for succession and trust in the ability of potential successors enhanced the success of transition processes and other change initiatives. The founders' desire and support for transition theme, therefore, ties with the theory of planned behavior, which is one of the conceptual frameworks for this study.

Theme 2: Preparation of Successors

All three participants were in agreement that the quality of preparation they had as successors influenced their ability to handle the challenges they faced upon assumption as leaders of their respective businesses. The participants acknowledged that their preparation, which included formal education, mentoring, character formation, and informal business management lessons helped to shape their world views on how to run their businesses successfully. The participants also noted that the opportunities given to them by their founders to acquire external experience or to make decisions and to make mistakes enhanced their level of preparedness to assume the leadership position of their businesses. Buang et al. (2013) underscored the significant relationship between both the formal and informal preparation of successors and the effectiveness of the intrafamily leadership succession process. PT2 explained that "it took a lot of efforts for my father and mother to prepare me for leadership of the business. The intentional but gradual preparation played a major role, mentally, to get me successfully into leadership of the business."

All of the participants considered formal education to be of critical importance to their leadership preparation process. The level of education attained by SME leaders significantly influenced their management capability, productivity, and overall success of the business (Garba et al., 2013). From the feedback I received during the interview process, the three business leaders had postgraduate qualifications, which they all believed formed the foundation of their development. PT1 commented that "a major part of my preparation was education, which my father monitored actively." PT2 added, "My parents considered education to be very critical to running a successful business." When asked about the key elements of his preparation, PT3 shared similar sentiments with the other participants and explained that "my father ensured that I combined academic education with business education." The findings are similar to those of Oni and Adepoju (2014) of a direct correlation between the educational level of leaders and the productivity of the family firms and the well-being of their families.

Another critical component of the preparation of successors theme was the informal education and mentoring of the successors by the founders (incumbents) of the businesses. The importance of the lessons of the acceptable moral values and business norms derived from their respective fathers featured prominently in the feedback from all three participants. Information from journal publications of the three businesses point to their use of formal mentoring systems to prepare staff for readiness to assume leadership positions in the future. The mentoring relationship between the incumbents and the identified successors enhances the confidence of the successors to learn and develop on the job while sustaining credible relationships with employees and other members of the family (Marcoux et al., 2016). According to PT1,

> My father as a mentor, helped me with the soft skills like maturity, wisdom, and diplomacy needed to manage a business. I learnt to be independent with strength of character, which prepared me for the task of managing the firm when I took over.

PT2 commented that “instead of teaching me business skills directly, my parents taught me responsibility, ownership, prudence, and perseverance. They allowed me the independence to exercise my business ideas, take decisions, make mistakes and learn from them to develop myself.” PT3 similarly commented,

> My father was very strict – he treated me like a staff and not just his son. One day, he walked me out of his office in front of a guest for not being properly dressed, I was so embarrassed but that was part of the training and discipline I got from my father.

The theme of preparation of successors as an important factor in leadership transition relates to the conceptual framework of the transformational leadership theory and the theory of planned behavior. The need for informal education of the successor by the incumbents aligns with the findings of Khalifa and Ayoubi (2015) that transformational leaders lay emphasis on moral values, conducts, and impacts of their followers on behavior of others, which enhances their developments and improves organizational productivity. Transformational leaders motivate their followers through emotional connection and trust building processes that result in a mentoring relationship that enhances the business outcomes (Vito et al., 2014). The importance of the preparation of identified successors also confirms the findings by Miller (2014) that the poor leadership skills of successors that result from inadequate preparation adversely impact the performance of family businesses. Furthermore, the critical factors that result in successful intrafamily transition include a good relationship between the incumbent and the identified successor and the quality of preparation of the successor (Jaskiewicz et al., 2015). As such, when identified successors in family businesses are prepared through both formal education and informal learning processes, they stand a better chance of succeeding as leaders and sustaining their businesses upon the transition from their founders.

Theme 3: Trust and Credibility of Successors

The third theme that emerged from my data analysis was the trust and credibility of successors. The participants agreed that the credibility of successors impacted the outcomes of their intrafamily leadership transition. All of the participants acknowledged that the trust and cordial relationship with the founders enhanced their credibility, which facilitated their acceptance as leaders by the employees and other family members. According to PT2, "My father gave me the opportunity to prove myself in other fields and within the business before I took over. So, when I came back to take over leadership, I had earned the respect and credibility I needed." Hammond et al. (2015) emphasized that by allowing their followers the independence to think and solve problems, transformational leaders enhance the confidence and credibility of their followers and also promote creativity in the workplace. PT1 added, “I didn’t come in as a leader just because it was my father’s business, I came in with requisite skills to run a commercial practice.” PT3 also added that “My father had the confidence that I could run the business. I must add that the success of my business ideas enhanced my credibility.” The theme also aligns with the findings of Yahaya and Ebrahim (2016) that through trustworthy relationships, transformational leaders motivate their followers to challenge themselves intellectually to have the confidence to solve organizational problems, which enhances productivity in the workplace. Being perceived as trusted and credible leaders by the stakeholders not only boosted the confidence of the successors but also made their leadership tasks of achieving set objectives easier.

The participants noted that incumbent leaders of family businesses need to trust their identified successors and give them room to make decisions, which could include working in non-family businesses or even setting up and running their own small businesses. The participants were in agreement that though the opportunity to take independent decisions resulted in mistakes at some instances, being allowed by the founder to go through the process built their confidence and enhanced their leadership development. From their comments, it was apparent that the participants enjoyed the trust and confidence of their respective fathers to exercise their judgment, make decisions, and to learn from their mistakes. Yao et al. (2014) posited that by building relationships based on trust, transformational leaders enhance the development and commitment of their followers. In the same vein, Vito et al. (2014) asserted that transformational leaders motivate their followers through emotional connection and trust building processes that result in mentoring relationships. According to PT3,

> When I went to report one of such mistakes that led to a significant loss to my father, he just leaned back and said that he knew that I was going to lose some money in the transaction and that he just wanted me to go through the process and not break my spirit.

PT1 added “My father trusted my ability. Also, I had credibility from what I had achieved in the past as an investment banker with a huge experience from my fair share of successes and failure.” PT2 reiterated that “I had shown the ability to run a business independently, earned my stripes and with the support of the founder, acquired the credibility to lead.” The participants’ comments aligned with the assertions of Ghadi and Fernando (2013) that transformational leaders enhance the motivation, confidence and positive attitude of their followers through mutually supportive and trust relationships.

The trust and credibility theme confirms the findings of Simon et al. (2014) that the trust building actions of transformational leaders result in increased sense of pride, confidence, and organizational commitment in their followers. In addition, transformational leaders engender creativity and resourcefulness in their followers, which enables them to overcome workplace challenges and achieve organizational goals (De Clercq & Belausteguigoitia, 2016). Furthermore, by providing employees with conducive learning environment, transformational leaders equip their followers to question existing procedure to generate new solutions for business challenges and that the existence of a learning culture in an organization enhances the capacity of the followers to develop under the guidance of a transformational leader (Jyoti & Dev, 2015). The theme underscores the importance of trust and credibility of the successors to the success of intrafamily leadership transition, thus aligns with the conceptual framework of the transformational leadership theory.

Theme 4: Clarity of Vision

The fourth theme that emerged from the data analysis was the clarity of vision for both the founders and the successors. A compelling and credible vision leads to motivation and generates enthusiasm for both the leaders and the followers. All the participants believed that clarity of the vision for the business was central to the success of their transition process and the sustainability of the business after transition. Transformational leaders communicate clear visions and goals of their organizations and provide supportive frameworks, which encourage followers to put their best effort in the overall interest of the organization (Simon et al., 2014).

The participants reiterated that though they had to modify the visions for the businesses upon transition, their fathers' visions for their respective businesses played significant roles in getting them interested in the family businesses. PT3 commented "My father always knew the type of business he wanted. He made sure the extended family did not have any ownership stakes to avoid future problems. He got me interested in the business at very early stage and monitored my development." PT1 added that "though my father had a good idea of the type of firm he wanted, when I came in, I diversified the firm based on my own vision." In the same vein, PT2 stated that "I had a clear idea of what to do - that I needed to diversify the business. My father made me always feel motivated to drive the business further than where I met it.” The participants’ comments align with the findings of previous literature sources on the subject. McKnight (2013) posited that through effective communication of shared visions and strategies, transformational leaders extract commitments from followers that enable organizations to respond quickly to changes that suddenly threaten their survival. This theme also confirms the findings of De Clercq and Belausteguigoitia (2016) that with their perception as role models, transformational leaders enable employees to key into the future visions of the business and to work diligently towards the organizational goals irrespective of short-term challenges.

The analysis of the participating companies’ artifacts such as the websites and periodic journal publications, which I reviewed also underscored the clearly articulated visions that underpinned the operations of the respective businesses. I identified from the website of Business 3, statements such as “as a trading company, the core area of our business is importation and supply of various steel products throughout the country”, “we are a global firm of choice”, and “we are a world-class professional organization.” The existence of a mutually agreed vision for family businesses gives an impression of effectiveness as employees and family members perceive leaders of family firms who took the time to articulate and communicate their visions of the business as being effective (Miller, 2014). All the participants agreed that the continued communication and implementation of steps in line with the agreed visions formed a strong foundation for their ability to manage the transition challenges. To enhance the chances of success in change situations, leaders need to communicate efficiently and secure buy-ins of employees and other stakeholders (Rao, 2015).

Articulation of clear and mutually agreed vision enhances intrafamily communication and enables family members to have common objectives, which shapes governance and culture among the different generations (Lansberg & Gersick, 2015). Transformational leaders enhance employees' motivation and productivity through empowerment and focus on shared visions and values (Yahaya & Ebrahim, 2016). Soken and Barnes (2014) also asserted that to enhance the chances of success, leaders need to send out clear communication on all aspects of change initiatives, which removes any ambiguities and creates a common purpose between the leader and the workforce. The clarity of vision theme, therefore, ties with the transformational leadership theory, which is one of the conceptual frameworks for the study.

Applications to Professional Practice

The results of this study provided strategies that leaders of medium-sized family businesses could use to sustain their businesses after leadership transition from their founders. Family businesses contribute significantly to the economic activities of most countries, however, most of them appear to have significant challenges with transitions in management control from one generation of family members to another and a large number struggle to survive (Dalpiaz et al., 2014; Poza & Daugherty, 2014). As such, the strategies identified in the study could be applied by business leaders to enhance the chances of continued success and reduce the failure rates of their family businesses post transition. The findings of the study consist of four underlying themes (a) founders' desire and support for transition, (b) preparation of successors, (c) trust and credibility of successors, and (d) clarity of vision for both the founders and successors for the business. The findings from the study could potentially aid business leaders to improve business practice through the education of current and future leaders of family businesses. The factors that constrained the performance of Nigerian family businesses include inadequate or poor implementation of succession plans, different mindsets by incumbents and potential successors about the business, and weak management capabilities (Oguonu, 2015).

The founders or incumbent leaders that understand the critical impact of their active support for both the transition process and for the successor might contribute to the success of the leadership in their family businesses. The motive and actions of the incumbent who initiates the succession process is a key determinant of the outcome of the process and the continuity of the business after a transition (Gilding et al., 2013). Furthermore, leadership successions happened more smoothly in family businesses when there is a friendly intrafamily relationship and successors are prepared, trusted, and supported by the incumbent and other members of the family (Ghee et al., 2015). Incumbent leaders of family businesses that desire successful leadership transition should show active commitment to the transition, prepare identified successors for leadership, demonstrate trust and support for the successor to enhance their credibility, and ensure a shared vision of the business with such successors.

Implications for Social Change

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore the strategies that owners of medium-sized family businesses use to sustain the businesses after leadership transition from the founders. Family businesses and other SMEs are of critical importance in developing countries like Nigeria, with high poverty and unemployment rates (Garba et al., 2013). However, most family businesses in Nigeria have challenges with leadership transition from their founders to the next generation (Leap Africa, 2011; Ogundele et al., 2012). The findings of the study (a) founders' active desire and support for transition, (b) effective leadership preparation process for the successors, (c) trusting and conferring credibility to successors, and (d) clarity of vision for both the founders and successors for the business provide insights for leaders of other family businesses on strategies to achieve successful transitions and to manage issues that arise from leadership transitions.

The high failure rates of family businesses in Nigeria negatively affect the incomes of families and contribute to the increasing rates of unemployment in the country (Oguonu, 2015). Successful management of transitions by Nigerian family business leaders with the aid of the findings from this study, could contribute to positive social change as more business leaders will be able to sustain their business operations after transitions from their founders, which could enhance the incomes of the members of the families and the communities. Stability of incomes enhances the welfare of families (Oni & Adepoju, 2014). Providing family businesses owners with strategies for managing leadership transitions may also lead to a reduction in unemployment and poverty in Nigerian communities.

Recommendations for Action

Based on the findings of the study, I make some proposals for actions that current and future family business leaders can implement to sustain their businesses after leadership transition. First, it is very important for the founders (incumbents) of family businesses to demonstrate their desire to retire at some future date with a support and firm commitment towards the leadership transition process. The incumbent leaders should set the tone for the transition process by openly communicating their intention to retire and the identity of their intended successors within the family and the business, which lends credibility to the transition process. A favorable disposition of the incumbents and support for the succession process enhances the success of leadership transitions in family businesses (Hauck & Prugl, 2015). Second, leaders should ensure that the identified potential successors are prepared adequately for future leadership of the business. Preparation of successors should include both formal education and a mentoring process (formal or informal) by the incumbent, which is critical for character building and leadership development. Preparation of the potential successor is a critical component of succession planning (Sharma et al., 2003).

Third, the incumbent leaders of family businesses should take actions that confer credibility to the identified successor to enhance acceptance by other employees and family members. A demonstration of leadership experience from past accomplishments by the successor and proof of trust and confidence of the incumbent, enhance the credibility of a successor. Founders of family businesses should give opportunities to their identified successors to acquire leadership experience either within the family business by allowing them room to make decisions, or to work in a non-family business before assumption of leadership. It important for the incumbents to facilitate the acceptance of their successors, through mentoring, delegation of authority, and communication of the successors' legitimacy to other members and stakeholders in the firm (Koffi et al., 2014). Fourth, clarity of vision by both the incumbent and the successor enhances the chances of success in intrafamily leadership transition. Incumbent leaders should ensure that they share and agree their visions of the future state of the business with their identified successors, which serves motivates and enhances the commitment of the successor towards business continuity. Through effective communication of shared visions and strategies, transformational leaders extract an optimum commitment from followers that enable organizations to respond quickly to disruptive and revolutionary changes that suddenly threaten their survival (McKnight, 2013).

I recommend to the Lagos and Port Harcourt Chambers of Commerce to share the study findings with current and future leaders of family businesses. I will also provide the overview of the results and outcome of the study to the participants. Furthermore, I intend to publish the study to make the findings available not only to leaders of family businesses in Lagos and Port Harcourt but to family business leaders in other states of Nigeria.

Recommendations for Further Research

I used a qualitative multiple case study to explore the strategies that owners of medium-sized family businesses use to sustain the businesses after leadership transition from the founders. The sample size for the study, which consisted of three business leaders in Lagos and Port Harcourt in Nigeria, was the primary limitations of the study. Recommendation for further study would be for a study to include an increased number of participants. Additional recommendation would be for a study to be based in different cities and geographical regions rather than Lagos and Port Harcourt cities in Nigeria. Furthermore, researchers should consider conducting a study with different sizes of family businesses such as micro, small, or large size family businesses other than medium-sized family businesses that formed the basis of the current study. As this study was based on qualitative method and case study design, future researchers could adopt other methodologies such as quantitative or mixed method and other study designs with a larger sample size of participants, which would enhance the generalizability of the findings.

Reflections

I have enjoyed my experience and academic journey through this Walden University Doctorate of Business Administration (DBA) program. I explored the strategies that owners of medium-sized family businesses use to sustain the businesses after leadership transition from the founders. In the course of the study, I gained significant skills experience from interactions with business leaders on the challenges of running successful family businesses in Nigeria.

I have also acquired experience on how to conduct research for the purpose of solving business problems. I was challenged but excited with the significant efforts that it took to secure appointments with business leaders for the interviews. I learnt the tact of how to follow up actively without appearing to be aggressive, to win the confidence of the business leaders that eventually agreed to participate in the study.

My interactions with the business leaders during the interviews, follow up, and member checking sessions changed my perspectives towards family businesses that operate in Nigeria. I now realize the significant efforts that the leaders of the businesses face with the challenging operating environment especially with the infrastructural deficiencies that increase their operating costs. I have now come to appreciate that it takes significant will and passion from the leaders for family businesses to operate successfully on a continuous basis in Nigeria. Based on my experience, therefore, I am now favorably disposed towards family businesses and would propagate the findings of this study with a view to assisting future leaders of family businesses on the strategies that might assist them to sustain their businesses beyond the lifetime of their founders.

Conclusion

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore the strategies that owners of medium-sized family businesses use to sustain the businesses after leadership transition from the founders. Over 50% of family businesses fail due to their inability to manage the challenges of intergenerational leadership transition (Chaimahawong & Sakulsriprasert, 2013). I conducted semistructured interviews with three business leaders who have been able to sustain their family businesses after leadership transition from their founders. I also collected information from the companies' documents (artifacts such as information from the websites and periodic journal publications) and used methodological triangulation to combine and make meaning from the different sources of data.

Upon coding and analysis of the data with the aid of Nvivo software, four main themes emerged. I tied the themes to the literature sources as well as the transformational leadership theory and the theory of planned behavior that constitute the conceptual framework of the study. The findings of the study were that (a) founders' desire and support for transition, (b) preparation of successors, (c) trust and credibility of successors, and (d) clarity of vision for both the founders and successors for the business might enable leaders of family businesses to sustain their businesses after transition from their founders.

References

Abrell-Vogel, C., & Rowold, J. (2014). Leaders' commitment to change and their effectiveness in change: A multilevel investigation. *Journal of Organizational Change Management, 27,* 900-921. doi:10.1108/jocm-07-2012-0111

Ajayi, B. (2016). The impact of entrepreneurial orientation and networking capabilities on the export performance of Nigerian agricultural SMEs. *Journal of Entrepreneurship and Innovation in Emerging Economies, 2*(1), 1-23. doi:10.1177/2393957515619720

Ajayi, O. M., & Morton, S. C. (2015). Exploring the enablers of organizational and marketing innovations in SMEs. *Sage Open, 5*(1)*,* 1-13. doi:10.1177/2158244015571487

Akhavan, P., Ramezan, M., & Moghaddam, J. Y. (2013). Examining the role of ethics in knowledge management process: Case study: An industrial organization. *Journal of Knowledge-Based Innovation in China, 5,* 129-145.doi:10.1108/jkic-04-2013-0008

Ajzen, I. (1991). The theory of planned behavior. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Process, 50,* 179-211. doi:10.1016/0749-5978(91)90020-t

Ajzen, I. (2015). Consumer attitudes and behavior: The theory of planned behavior applied to food consumption decisions. *Rivista di Economia Agraria, 70,* 121-138. doi:10.13128/rea-18003

Alarape, A. A. (2014). Entrepreneurial orientation and the growth performance of small and medium enterprises in Southwestern Nigeria. *Journal of Small Business & Entrepreneurship, 26,* 553-577. doi:10.1080/08276331.2014.892308

Almutairi, A. F., Gardner, G. E., & MaCarthy, A. (2014). Practical guidance for the use of a pattern-matching technique in case-study research: A case presentation. *Nursing & Health Sciences, 16,* 239-244. doi:10.1111/nhs.12096

Alonso, A. D., & Krajsic, V. (2015). The theory of planned behaviour, mico-growers and diversification: An exploratory study. *Journal of Enterprising Communities, Peoples and Places in the Global Economy, 9,* 94-113.doi:10.1108/jec-09-2014-0018

Anney, V. N. (2014). Ensuring the quality of the findings of qualitative research: Looking at trustworthiness criteria. *Journal of Emerging Trends in Educational Research and Policy Studies, 5,* 272-281. Retrieved from http://jeteraps.scholarlinkresearch.com

Anyan, F. (2013). The influence of power shifts in data collection and analysis stages: A focus on qualitative research interview. *The Qualitative Report, 18*(36), 1-9. Retrieved from http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/index/html

Arasti, Z., Zandi, F., & Bahmani, N. (2014). Business failure factors in Iranian SMEs: Do successful and unsuccessful entrepreneurs have different viewpoints? *Journal of Global Entrepreneurship Research, 4,* 1-14. doi:10.1186/s40497-014-0010-7

Banki, M. B., & Ismail, H. N. (2015). Understanding the characteristics of family owned tourism micro businesses in mountain destinations in developing countries:

Evidence from Nigeria. *Tourism Management Perspectives, 13,* 18-32. doi:10.1016/j.tmp.2014.11.001

Basco, R. (2014). Exploring the influence of the family upon firm performance: Does strategic behaviour matter? *International Small Business Journal, 32,* 967-995. doi:10.1177/0266242613484946

Bass, B. M. (1985). Leadership: Good, better, best. *Organizational Dynamics, 13*(3), 26-40. doi:10.1016/0090-2616(85)90028-2

Boblin, S. L., Ireland, S., Kirkpartrick, H., & Robertson, K. (2013). Using Stake's qualitative case study approach to explore implementation of evidence-based practice. *Qualitative Health Research, 23,* 1267-1275. doi:10.1177/1049732313502128

Boyd, B., Botero, I. C., & Fediuk, T. A. (2014). Incumbent decisions about succession transitions in family firms: A conceptual model. *International Journal of Financial Studies, 2,* 335-358. doi:10.3390/ijfs2040335

Brakewood, B., & Poldrack, R. A. (2013). The ethics of secondary data analysis: Considering the application of Belmont principles to the sharing of neuroimaging data. *NeuroImage, 82,* 671-676. doi:10.1016/j.neuroimage.2013.02.040

Brundin, E., Samuelsson, E. F., & Melin, L. (2014). Family ownership logic: Family ownership logic: Framing the core characteristics of family businesses. *Journal of Management and Organization, 20,* 6-37. doi:10.1017/jmo.2014.15

Buang, N. A., Sidek, G., & Sidek, S. (2013). Family business succession of SMEs and post-transition business performance. *Asian Social Science, 8*(12), 79-92. doi:10.5339/ass.v9n12p79

Burns, J. M. (1978). *Leadership.* New York, NY: HarperCollins.

Cant, M. C., & Hefer, Y. (2014). Visual merchandising displays effect – or not – on consumers: The predicament faced by apparel retailers. *Journal of Business and Retail Management Research, 8,* 95-104. Retrieved from http://www.ijbrmr.com/

Carney, M., Gedajlovic, E., & Strike, V. M. (2014). Dead money: Inheritance law and the longevity of family firms. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice, 38,* 261-1283. doi:10.1111/etap.12123

Central Bank of Nigeria. (2014). *Small and medium enterprises equity investment scheme: Revised guidelines.* Lagos, Nigeria: Author.

Cha, J., Kim, Y., Lee, J., & Bachrach, D. G. (2015). Transformational leadership and inter-team collaboration: Exploring the mediating role of teamwork quality and moderating role of team size. *Group & Organization Management, 40,* 715-743. doi:10.1177/1059601114568244

Chaimahawong, V., & Sakulsriprasert, A. (2013). Family business succession and post succession performance: Evidence from Thai SMEs. *International Journal of Business and Management, 8,* 19-28. doi:10.5539/ijbm.v8n2p19

Chi, N., & Huang, J. (2014). Mechanisms linking transformational leadership and team performance: The mediating roles of team goal orientation and group affective tone. *Group & Organization Management, 39,* 300-325.

doi:10.1177/1059601114522321

Chou, S. Y., & Pearson, J. M. (2012). Organizational citizenship behavior in IT professionals: An expectancy theory approach. *Management Research Review, 35,* 1170-1186. doi:10.1108/01409171211281282

Christiano, E. (2014). Analysis of the critical aspects of the generational turnover in family SMEs. *Global Conference on Business Proceedings, 9,* 347-246. Retrieved from http://www.theibfr.com/proceedings.htm

Chung, C., & Luo. X. R. (2013). Leadership succession and firm performance in an emerging economy: Successor origin, relational embeddedness, and legitimacy. *Strategic Management Journal, 34,* 338-357. doi:10.1002/smj.2011

Collins, J. D., Worthington, W. J., & Schoen, J. E. (2016). Family business CEO succession: Examining personal retirement expectations. *Journal of Small Business Strategy, 26,* 51-70. Retrieved from http://www.jsbs.org/

Collins, C. S., & Cooper, J. E. (2014). Emotional intelligence and the qualitative researcher. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods, 13,* 88-103. Retrieved from http://ejournals.library.ualberta.ca/index.php/IJQM

Cristiano, E. C. (2014). Analysis of the critical aspects of the generational turnover in family SMEs. *Global Conference on Business and Finance Proceedings, 9*(2), 237-246. Retrieved from http://www.theibfr.com/proceedings.htm

Dalpiaz, E., Tracey, P., & Phillips, N. (2014). Succession narratives in family business: The case of Alessi. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice, 38,* 1375-1394. doi:10.1111/etap.12129

Dasgupta, M. (2015). Exploring the relevance of case study research. *Vision, 19,* 147-160. doi:10.1177/0972262915575661

Davis, E., Demby, H., Jenner, L. W., & Gregory, A. (2016). Adapting an evidence-based model to retain adolescent study participants in longitudinal research. *Evaluation and Program Planning, 54,* 102-111. doi:10.1016/j.evalprogplan.2015.10.003

De Clercq, D., & Belausteguigoitia, I. (2016). Overcoming the dark side of task conflict: Buffering roles of transformational leadership, tenacity, and passion for work. *European Management Journal, 35,* 78-90. doi:10.1016/j.emj.2016.06.008

Deakin, H., & Wakefield, K. (2014). Skype interviewing: Reflections of two PhD researchers. *Qualitative Research, 14,* 603-616. doi:10.1177/1468794113488126

Dean, J. (2014). Personal protective equipment: An antecedent to safe behavior? *Professional Safety, 59*, 41-46. Retrieved from http:// www.asse.org/professionalsafety/

Delmas, M. A., & Gergaud, O. (2014). Sustainable certification for future generations: The case of family business. *Family Business Review, 27,* 228-243. doi:10.1177/0894486514538651

De Massis, A., & Kotlar, J. (2014). The case study method in family business research: Guidelines for qualitative scholarship. *Journal of Family Business Strategy, 5,* 15-29. doi:10.1015/j.jfbs.2014.01.007

De Massis, A., Sieger, P., Chua, J. H., & Vismara, S. (2016). Incumbents' attitude towards intrafamily succession: An investigation of its antecedents. *Family Business Review, 29,* 278-300. doi:10.1177/0894486516656276

Duh, M. (2014). Succession process: A chance for rebirth or failure of a family business. *International Journal of Social Sciences, 10*, 45-56. doi:10.5359/ijbm.v10n3p45

El-Chaarani, H. (2013). The success keys for family firms: A comparison between Lebanese and French firms. *Journal of Business and Retail Management Research, 8,* 1-14. Retrieved from http://www.jmbr.com/

El Hussein, M., Jakubec, S. L., & Osuji, J. (2015). Assessing the FACTS: A mnemonic for teaching and learning the rapid assessment of rigor in qualitative research studies. *The Qualitative Report, 20,* 1182-1184. Retrieved from http://nsuworks.nova.edu/tqr/vol20/iss8/3

Elo, S., Kaariainen, M., Kanste, O., Polkki, T., Utriainen, K., & Kyngas, H. (2014). Qualitative content analysis: A focus on trustworthiness. *SAGE Open, 4*(1), 1-10. doi:1177/2158244014522633

Eniola, A. A., & Entebang, H. (2015). SME firm performance: Financial innovation and challenges. *Procedia: Social and Behavioral Sciences, 195,* 334-342. doi:10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.06.361

Forster-Holt, N. (2013). Entrepreneur as "end"repreneur: The intention to retire. *Small Business Institute Journal, 9*(2), 29-42. Retrieved from http://www.sbij.org/index.php/SBIJ

Fusch, P., & Ness, L. (2015). Are we there yet? Data saturation in qualitative research. *The Qualitatitive Report, 20,* 1408-1416. Retrieved from www.tqr.nova.edu

Gandy, D. L. (2015). *Small business strategies for company profitability and sustainability* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations &

Theses Full Text database. (UMI No. 3700959)

Garba, A. S., Mansor, S. A., & Djafar, F. (2013). An exploratory study on the constraints for entrepreneurial activity: A case of micro and small enterprises in Kano, Nigeria. *The Journal of Applied Management and Entrepreneurship, 18,* 79-93. Retrieved from http://www.business.nova.edu/JAME/

Garcia, D., & Gluesing, J. C. (2013). Qualitative research methods in international organizational change research. *Journal of Organizational Change Management, 26,* 423-444. doi:10.1108/0953481131328416

Ghadi, M. Y., & Fernando, M. (2013). Transformational leadership and work engagement: The mediating effect of meaning of work. *Leadership and Organizational Development Journal, 34,* 532-550. doi:1108/lodj-10-2011-0110

Ghee, W. Y., Ibrahim, M. D., & Abdul-Halim, H. (2015). Family business succession planning: Unleashing the key factors of business performance. *Asian Academy of Management Journal, 20,* 103-126. Retrieved from http://www.usm.my/aamj/

Gibbins, J., Bhatia, R., Forbes, K., & Reid, C. M. (2014). What do patients with advanced incurable cancer want from the management of their pain? A qualitative study. *Palliative Medicine, 28,* 71-78. doi:10.1177/0269216313486310

Gilding, M., Gregory, S., & Cosson, B. (2013). Motives and outcomes in family business succession planning. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice, 5,* 197-210. doi:10.111/etap.12040

Gill, G., & Kaur, P. (2015). Family involvement in business and financial performance: A panel data analysis. *The Journal for Decision Makers, 40,* 395-420.

doi:10.1177/0256090915605756

Glover, L. J. (2014). Gender, power and succession in family farm businesses. *International Journal of Gender and Entrepreneurship, 6,* 276-295. doi:10.1108/IJGE-01-2012-0006

Glover, J. L., & Reay, T. (2015). Sustaining the family business with minimal financial rewards: How do family firms continue? *Family Business Review, 28,* 163-177. doi:10.1177/089448651351181

Goel, S., & Jones 111, R. J. (2016). Entrepreneurial exploration and exploitation in family business: A systematic review and future directions. *Family Business Review, 29,* 94-120. doi:10.1177/0894486515625541

Gundolf, K., Meier, O., & Missonier, A. (2013). Transmission of family business in France. *International Journal of Entrepreneurship Behavior & Research, 19,* 53-71. doi:10.1108/13552551311299251

Hammond, M., Cleveland, J. N., O'Neill, J. W., Stawski, R. S., & Tate, A. J. (2015). Mediators of transformational leadership and the work-family relationship. *Journal of Management Psychology, 30,* 454-469. doi:10.1108/jmp-10-2011-0090

Hamstra, M. R. W., Van Yperen, N. W., Wisse, B., & Sassenberg, K. (2014). Transformational and transactional leadership and followers' achievement goals. *Journal of Business Psychology, 29,* 413-425. doi:10.1007/s10869-013-9322-9

Hashim, H., Noordin, S. A., & Saifuddin, N. (2015). Content management system (CMS) for public health professionals in the Telehealth Department, Ministry of Health, Malaysia: A conceptual framework. *International Journal of innovation, Management and Technology, 6,* 57-62. doi:10.7763/ijimt.2015.v6.574

Hatak, I. R., & Roessl, D. (2015). Relational competence-based knowledge transfer within intrafamily succession: An experimental study. *Family Business Review, 28,* 10-25. doi:10.1177/0894486513480386

Hauck, J., & Prugl, R. (2015). Innovation activities during intra-family leadership succession in family firms: An empirical study from a socioemotional wealth perspective. *Journal of Family Business Strategy, 6,* 104-118. doi:10.1016/j.jfbs.2014.11.002

Heuer, A., & Kolvereid, L. (2014). Education in entrepreneurship and the theory of planned behavior. *European Journal of Training and Development, 38,* 506-523. doi:10.1108/ejtd-02-2013-0019

Hill, L., & Maitland, A. (2014). Research-based knowledge utilisation in a community sport evaluation: A case study. *International Study of Public Sector Management, 2,* 165-172. doi:10.1108/ijpsm-04-2013-0051

Holt, G. D., & Goulding, J. S. (2014). Conceptualisation of ambiguous-mixed-methods within building and construction research. *Journal of Engineering, Design and Technology, 12,* 244-262. doi:10.1108/jedt-02-2013-0020

Houghton, C., Casey, D., Shaw, D., & Murphy, K. (2013). Rigour in qualitative case-study research. *Nurse Researcher, 20*(4), 12-17. doi:10.7748/nr2013.03.20.4.12e326

Hunt, L. (2014). In defense of qualitative research. *The Journal of Dental Hygiene, 88,* 64-65. Retrieved from http://www.adha.org/jdh

Jacob, S. A., & Furgerson, S. P. (2012). Writing interview protocols and conducting interviews: Tips for students new to the field of qualitative research. *Qualitative Report, 17,* 1-10. Retrieved from http://tqr.nova.edu/

Jaskiewicz, P., Combs, J. C., & Rau, S. B. (2015). Entrepreneurial legacy: Towards a theory of how some family firms nurture transgenerational entrepreneurship. *Journal of Business Venturing, 31,* 29-49. doi:10.1016/j.jbusvent.2014.07.001

Joensuu-Salo, S., Varamaki, E., & Viljamaa, A. (2015). Beyond intentions – what makes a student start a firm? *Education + Training, 57,* 853-873. doi:10.1108/et-11-2014-0142

Jyoti, J., & Dev, M. (2015). The impact of transformational leadership on employee creativity: The role of learning orientation. *Journal of Asia Business Studies, 9,* 78-98. doi:10.1108/jabs-03-2014-0022

Kalla, S. M. (2016). Impulse buying: What instills this desire to indulge? Internal motivating factors of impulse buying: A qualitative study in the Indian context. *Journal of Business and Retail Management Research, 10,* 94-104. Retrieved from http://www.ijbrmr.com/

Kautonen, T., van Gelderen, M., & Fink, M. (2015). Robustness of the theory of planned behavior in predicting entrepreneurial intentions and actions. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice, 39*(3), 655-674. doi:10.1111/etap.12056

Kelly, R., Brien, E. O., & Stuart, R. (2015). A long-run survival analysis of corporate liquidations in Ireland. *Small Business Economics, 44,* 671-683. doi:10.1007/s11187-014-9605-1

Khalifa, B., & Ayoubi, R. M. (2015). Leadership styles at Syrian higher education: What matters for organizational learning at public and private universities? *The International Journal of Educational Management, 29,* 477-491. doi:10.1108/ijem-03-2014-0036

Kihn, L., & Ihantola, E. (2015). Approaches to validation and evaluation in qualitative studies of management accounting. *Qualitative Research in Accounting and Management, 12,* 230-255. doi:10.1108/qram-03-2013-0012

Koffi, V., Fillion, G., Ekionea, J. P., & Morris, T. (2014). Family business succession: What are the ways used by the men business managers to legitimize their successors? *Entrepreneurial Executive, 19,* 111-129. Retrieved from http://www.alliedacademies.org

Lach, D. (2014). Challenge of interdisciplinary research: Reconciling qualitative and quantitative methods for understanding human-landscape systems. *Environmental Management, 53,* 88-89. doi:10.1007/s00267-013-0115-8

Lamb, K. A., Backhouse, M. R., & Adderley, U. J. (2016). A qualitative study of factors impacting upon the recruitment of participants to research studies in wound care: The community nurses' perspective. *Journal of Tissue Viability, 25,* 185-188. doi:10.1016/j.jtv.2016.03.004

Lansberg, I., & Gersick, K. (2015). Educating family business owners: The fundamental intervention. *Academy of Management Learning & Education, 14,* 400-413. doi:10.5465/amle.2014.0254

Leap Africa. (2011). *Passing the baton: A guide to building sustainable businesses.* Lagos, Nigeria: Author.

LeBaron, V. T., Iribarren, S. J., Perri, S., & Beck, S. L. (2015). A practical field guide to conducting nursing research in low- and middle-income countries. *Nursing Outlook, 63,* 462-473. doi:10.1016/j.outlook.2015.02.003

Liboni, L. B., & Cezarino, L. O. (2014). Strategy for sustainability in a Brazilian sugarcane industry. *World Journal of Entrepreneurship, Management and Sustainable Development, 10,* 2-12. doi:10.1108/wjemsd-02-2013-0018

Ma, F. (2015). A review of research methods in EFL education. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies, 5,* 566-571. doi:10.17507/tpls.0503.16

Maes, J., Leroy, H., & Sels, L. (2014). Gender differences in entrepreneurial intentions: A TPB multi-group analysis at factor and indicator level. *European Management Journal, 32,* 784-794. doi:10.1016/j.emj.2014.01.001

Mahto, R. V., Davis, P. S., & Khanin, D. (2014). Continuation commitment: Family's commitment to continue the family business. *Journal of Family Economics, 35,* 278-289. doi:10.1007/s10834-013-9367-y

Makpotche, M., Logossah, K., Amewokunu, Y., Lawson-Body, A., & Sedzro, K. (2015). Impact of cultural beliefs on entrepreneurs' intention to use bank loans. *Applied Finance and Banking, 5,* 11-32. Retrieved from http://www.scienpress.com

Makrakis, V., & Kostoulos-Makrakis, N. (2016). Bridging the qualitative-quantitative divide: Experiences from conducting a mixed methods evaluation in the RUCAS program. *Evaluation and Program Planning, 54,* 144-151. doi:10.1016/j.evalprogplan.2015.07.008

Malebana, J. (2014). Entrepreneurial intentions of South African rural university students: A test of the theory of planned behaviour. *Journal of Economics and Behavioral Studies, 6,* 130-143. Retrieved from http://www.ifrnd.org/journals_jebs.htm

Manhart, M., & Thalmann, S. (2015). Protecting organizational knowledge: A structured literature review. *Journal of Knowledge Management, 19,* 190-211. doi:10.1108/jkm-05-2014-0198

Marcoux, G., Guihur, I., & Koffi, V. (2016). Employees' contribution to the succession process of family small and medium-sized businesses: Conceptual model and research agenda. *Management Review: An International Journal, 11,* 70-124. Retrieved from https://www.informs.org/Community/KINFORMS/Publication

Marshall, C., & Rossman, G. B. (2015). *Designing qualitative research* (6th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Maxwell, E., Baillie, L., Rickard, W., & McLaren, S. M. (2013). Exploring the relationship between social identity and workplace jurisdiction for new nursing roles: A case study approach. *International Journal of Nursing Studies, 50,* 622-631. doi:10.1016/j.ijnurstu.2012.10.015

McCleskey, J. A. (2014). Situational, transformational, and transactional leadership and leadership development. *Journal of Business Studies Quarterly, 5*(4)*,* 117-130.

Retrieved from http://jbsq.org/

McKnight, L. L. (2013). Transformational leadership in the context of punctuated change. *Journal of Leadership, Accountability and Ethics, 10,* 103-112. Retrieved from Retrieved from http://www.na-businesspress.com/jlaeopen.html

Mesu, J., Sanders, K., & van Riemsdijk, M. (2015). Transformational leadership and organizational commitment in manufacturing and service small to medium-sized enterprises: The moderating effects of directive and participative leadership. *Personnel Review, 44,* 970-990. doi:10.1108/pr01-2014-0020

Mihic, M. M., Arsic, S. M., & Arsic, M. Z. (2015). Impacts of entrepreneurs' stress and family members on SMEs' business success in Serbian family-owned firms. *Journal for East European Management Studies*, *20*, 452-483. doi:10.1688/jeems-2015-04-Mihic

Miller, S. P. (2014). Next-generation leadership development in family businesses: The critical roles of shared vision and family climate. *Frontiers in Psychology, 5,* 1-14. doi:10.5589/fpsyg.2014.0335

Mitchelmore, S., & Rowley, J. (2013). Growth and planning strategies within women-led SMEs. *Management Decision, 51,* 83-90. doi:10.1108/00251741311291328

Morse, J. M. (2015). Data were saturated. *Qualitative Health Research, 25,* 587-588. doi:10.1177/1049732315576699

Mussolino, D., & Calabro, A. (2014). Paternalistic leadership in family firms: Types and implications for intergenerational succession. *Journal of Family Business Strategy, 5,* 197-210. doi:10.1016/i.jfbs.2013.09.003

Nagasaka, K., Bocher, M., & Krott, M. (2016). Are forest researchers only scientists? Case studies on the roles of researchers in Japanese and Swedish forest policy processes. *Forest Policy and Economics, 70,* 147-154. doi:10.1016/j.forpol.2016.06.006

Naldi, L., Chirico, F., Kellermanns, F. W., & Campopiano, G. (2015). All in the family? An exploratory study of family member advisors and firm performance. *Family Business Review, 28,* 227-242. doi:10.1177/0894486515581951

Nelson, A. M. (2016). Methodology for examining attributes of African Americans in the Department of Defense senior executive service corp. *Journal of Economic Development, Management, IT, Finance and Marketing, 8,* 48-68. Retrieved from http://www.gsmi-ijgb.com/pages/journals.aspx

Nguyen, T. Q. T. (2014). Conducting semi-structured interviews with the Vietnamese. *Qualitative Research Journal, 15,* 35-46. doi:10.1108/qrj-04-2014-0012

Noble, H., & Smith, J. (2015). Issues of validity and reliability in qualitative research. *Evidence-Based Nursing, 18*(2), 34-35. doi:10.1136/eb-2015-102054

Nordqvist, M., Wennberg, K., Bau, M., & Hellerstedt, K. (2013). An entrepreneurial process perspective on succession in family firms. *Small Business Economics, 40,* 1087-1122. doi:10.1007/s11187-012-9466-4

Ogundele, O. J. K., Idris, A. A., & Ahmed-Ogundipe, K. A. (2012). Entrepreneurial succession and problems in Nigeria's family businesses: Threat to sustainability. *European Scientific Journal, 8*(7), 208-227. Retrieved from http://eujournal.org/

Oguonu, C. (2015). Business strategies for effective entrepreneurship: A panacea for sustainable development and livelihood in the family. *International Journal of Management and Sustainability, 4*, 10-19. doi:10.18488/journal.11/2015.4.1/11.1.10.19

Oni, O. A., & Adepoju, T. A. (2014). Analysis of rural households' wellbeing in Nigeria: A capability approach. *International Journal of Social Economics, 41,* 760-779. doi:10.1108/ijse-02-2013-0034

Padgett, B. C., Kim, H., Goh, B. K., & Huffman, L. (2013). The usefulness of the theory of planned behavior: Understanding the U.S. fast food consumption of generation Y Chinese consumers. *Journal of Foodservice Business Research, 16,* 486-505. doi:10.1080/15378020.2013.850382

Panwar, R., Nybakk, E., Pinkse, J., & Hansen, E. (2015). Being good when not doing well: Examining the effect of the economic downturn on small manufacturing firms' ongoing sustainability-oriented initiatives. *Organization & Environment, 28,* 2014-222. doi:10.1177/1086026615573842

Parker, L. (2014). Qualitative perspectives: Through a methodological lens. *Qualitative Research in Accounting and Management, 11,* 13-28. Retrieved from http://www.emeraldinsight.com

Petrulaitiene, V., & Jylha, T. (2015). The perceived value of workplace concepts for organizations. *Journal of Corporate Real Estate, 17,* 260-281. doi:10.1108/jcre-06-2015-0014

Poza, E. J., & Daugherty, M. S. (2014). *Family business* (4th ed.). Mason, Ohio: South-Western Cengage Learning.

Pradhan, S., & Pradhan, R. K. (2016). Transformational leadership and job outcomes: The mediating role of meaningful work. *Global Business Review, 17,* 173S-185S. doi:10.1177/0972150916631211

Puri, M., & Robinson, D. T. (2013). The economic psychology of entrepreneurship and family business. *Journal of Economics & Management Strategy, 22,* 423-444. doi:10.1111/jems.12013

Ragas, M. W., & Laskin, A. V. (2014). Mixed-methods: Measurement and evaluation among investor relation officers. *Corporate Communications: An International Journal, 19,* 166-181. doi:10.1108/ccij-10-2012-0071

Ram, A., Kurpad, A., & Swaminathan, S. (2014). Understanding the health behaviors of India's information technology and business process outsourcing employees. *International Journal of Workplace Health Management, 7,* 213-228. doi:10.1108/ijwhm-07-2013-0029

Rao, M. S. (2015). The tools and techniques of effective change management. *Human Resource Management International Digest, 23,* 35-37. doi:10.1108/hrmid-12-2014-0163

Reay, T., Jackiewicz, P., & Hinnings, C. R. (2015). How family business, and community logics shape family firm behavior and "rules of the game" in an organizational field. *Family Business Review, 28,* 292-311. doi:10.1177/0894486515577513

Rolleri, M., Nadim, A., & Lussier, R. (2016). Improving small business viability through strategic longevity and health maintenance evaluation. *Small Business Institute Journal, 12,* 10-20. Retrieved from http://www.sbij.org/index.php/SBIJ

Rosenthal, M. (2016). Qualitative research methods: Why? when, and how to conduct interviews and focus groups in pharmacy research. *Currents in Pharmacy Teaching & Learning, 8,* 509-516. doi:10.1016/j.eptl.2016.03.021

Sarma, S. K. (2015). Quantitative research: Examining the misconceptions. *South Asian Journal of Management, 22,* 176-191. Retrieved from http://www.sajm-amdisa.org/

Sharma, S., & Aniket, G. C. (2014). A qualitative study on evolution of relationships between third-party logistics providers and customers into strategic alliances. *Strategic Outsourcing: An International Journal, 7*, 2-17. doi:10.1108/so-08-2013-0015

Sharma, P., Chrisman, J. J., & Chua, J. H. (2003). Succession planning as planned behavior: Some empirical results. *Family Business Review, 16,* 1-15. doi:10.1111/j.1741-6248.2003.00001.x

Simon, C. H., Chan, C. H., & Mak, W. M. (2014). Transformational leadership, pride in being a follower of the leader and organizational commitment. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal, 35,* 674-690. doi:10.1108/lodj-12-09-0076

Singal, M., & Gerde, V. W. (2015). Is diversity management related to financial performance in family firms? *Family Business Review, 28,* 243-259. doi:10.1177/0894486514566012

Singh, A. S. (2013). Conducting case study research in non-profit organisations. *Qualitative Market Research: An International Journal, 17,* 77-84. doi:10.1107/qmr-04-2013-0024

Skiba, J. M., & Disch, W. B. (2014). A phenomenological study of the barriers and challenges facing insurance fraud investigators. *Journal of Insurance Regulation, 33,* 87-114. Retrieved from http://www.naic.org/store_jir.htm

Smith, D. W., Davies, E. W., Wissinger, E., Huelin, R., Matza, L. S., & Chung, K. (2013). A systematic literature review of cardiovascular event utilities. *Expert Review of Pharmacoeconomics & Outcomes Research, 13*, 767-790. doi:10.1586/14737167.2013.841545

Smith, R. (2014). Assessing the contribution of the 'theory of matriarchy' to the entrepreneurship and family business literatures. *Intercontinental Journal of Gender and Entrepreneurship, 6,* 255-275. doi:10.1108/ijgf-06-2011-0061

Soken, N. H., & Barnes, B. K. (2014). What kills innovation? Your role as a leader in supporting an innovative culture. *Industrial and Commercial Training, 46,* 7-15. doi:10.1108/ict-09-2013-0057

Stone, K. (2015). Burke-Litwin organizational assessment survey: Reliability and validity. *Organization Development Journal, 33,* 33-50. Retrieved from http://www.isodc.org/

Tolba, A., Seoudi, I., & Fahmy, K. (2016). Factors influencing intentions of Egyptian MNSE owners in taking commercial bank loans. *Journal of Small Business & Entrepreneurship, 27,* 497-518. doi:10.1080/08276331.2015.1102478

Tromp, D. M., & Blomme, R. J. (2014). Leadership style and negative work-home interference in the hospitality industry. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management, 26,* 85-106. doi:10.1108/ijchm.04.2012.0058

Trotter, R. T. (2012). Qualitative research sample design and sample size: Resolving and unresolved issues and inferential imperatives. *Preventative Medicine, 55,* 398-400. doi:10.1016/j.ypmed.2012.07.003

Tsagem, M. M., Aripin, N., & Ishak, R. (2015). Impact of working capital management, ownership structure and board size on the profitability of small and medium-sized entities in Nigeria. *International Journal of Economics and Financial Issues, 5*, 77-83. Retrieved from http://www.ecojournals.com/index.php/ijefi

Tyssen, A. K., Wald, A., & Heidenreich, S. (2014). Leadership in the context of temporary organizations: A study on the effects of transactional and transformational leadership on followers' commitment in projects. *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies, 21,* 376-393. doi:10.1177/1548051813502086

Van Dijk, J., Vervoort, S., Van Wijk, A., Kalkman, C., & Schuurmans, M. (2015). Postoperative patients' perspectives on rating pain: A qualitative study. *International Journal of Nursing, 53,* 260-269. doi:10.1016/j.ijnurstu.2015.08.007

Van der Westhuizen, J. P., & Garnett, A. (2014). The correlation of leadership practices of first and second generation family business owners to business performance. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences, 5*(1)*,* 27-38. doi:10.5901/mjss.2014.v5n21p27

Vito, G. F., Higgins, G. E., & Denney, D. S. (2014). Transactional and transformational leadership: An examination of the leadership challenge model. *Policing: An International Journal of Police Strategies & Management, 37,* 809-822.

doi:10.1108/pijpsm-01-2014-0008

Vohra, V. (2014). Using the multiple case study design to decipher contextual leadership behaviors in Indian organizations. *The Electronic Journal of Business Research Methods, 12,* 54-65. Retrieved from http://www.ejbrm.com

Walker, J. L. (2012). The use of saturation in qualitative research. *Canadian Journal of Cardiovascular Nursing, 22,* 37-41. Retrieved from http://pappin.com/journals/cjcn.php

Wao, H., Mhaskar, R., Kumar, A., Miladinovic, B., Guterbock, T., Hozo, I., Djulbegovic, B. (2014). Uncertainty about effects is a key factor influencing institutional review boards' approval of clinical studies. *Anals of Epidemiology, 24,* 734-740. doi:10.1016/j.annepidem.2014.06.100

Wiklund, J., Nordqvist, M., Hellerstedt, K., & Bird, M. (2013). Internal versus external ownership transition in family firms: An embeddedness perspective. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice, 37,* 1319-1340. doi:10.1111/etap.12068

Yahaya, R., & Ebrahim, F. (2016). Leadership styles and organizational commitment: Literature review. *Journal of Management Development, 35,* 190-216. doi:10.1108/jmd-01-2015-0004

Yao, Y., Fan, Y., Guo, Y., & Li, Y. (2014). Leadership, work stress and employee behavior. *Chinese Management Studies, 8,* 109-126. doi:10.1108/cms-04-2014-0089

Yin, R. K. (2014). *Case study research: Designs and methods* (5th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Yip, J. Y. T., Lee, R. W. B., & Tsui, E. (2015). Examining knowledge audit for structured and unstructured business processes: A comparative study in two Hong Kong companies. *Journal of Knowledge Management, 19,* 514-529. doi:10.1108/jkm-10-2014-0420

Zahrani, M. A., Nikmaram, S., & Iatifi, M. (July, 2014). Impact of family business characteristics on succession planning: A case study in Tehran industrial towns. *Iranian Journal of Management Studies, 7,* 229-243. Retrieved from http://www.ijms.ir

Zou, W., Chiu, Y., & Hsu, C. (2014). Performance appraisals between family businesses and non-family businesses. *Journal of Organizational Innovations, 7,* 36-45. Retrieved from http://www.ijoi-online.org/

.

Appendix A: Case Study Interview Protocol

A. I will introduce the interview, research topic over coffee or lunch and explain the purpose and scope of the study.

B. Assure the participants that I will keep all the collected information confidential, ask that I record the interview, and inform the participant of the right to stop the interview.

C. During the interview, I will watch out for non-verbal cues that might be communicating something that is important to the subject.

D. Try to paraphrase feedback from the participants as may be needed.

E. Ask follow-up probing questions to get more indepth understanding.

F. I will wrap up the interview by thanking the participants and then schedule the follow-up member checking interviews.

Follow-up and Member Checking Interview

During the member checking interviews, I will:

- Introduce follow-up interview and set the stage over coffee.
- Share a copy of the succinct synthesis for each question and interpretation.
- Ask a probing question related to any information that I found during the interview and related to the research topic.
- Walkthrough each question, read the interpretation and ask: Did I miss anything? Or, what would you like to add?
- Wrap up the follow-up interview by thanking the participant.

Appendix B: Interview Questions

1. What strategies did you use to sustain the family business after leadership transition from the founders?
2. What influenced the transition and what roles did you and the founder play in the transition process?
3. How do you assess the effectiveness of the transition strategies?
4. What strategies did you adopt in the management of the relationship between the family and the business, and how did this impact the transition?
5. What challenges did you face during the transition and what strategies did you adopt to overcome them?
6. What strategies did you use to manage employees and other stakeholders after the transition?
7. What else would you like to share about your experience on leadership transition strategies in your family business?