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Succession Planning Strategies in Family Businesses

Vivian Akosua Dwumor Amanquah
Walden University

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Walden University

College of Management and Technology

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Vivian Akosua D. Amanquah

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Review Committee

Dr. Jill Murray, Committee Chairperson, Doctor of Business Administration Faculty

Dr. Patsy Kasen, Committee Member, Doctor of Business Administration Faculty

Dr. Gwendolyn Dooley, University Reviewer, Doctor of Business Administration Faculty

Chief Academic Officer and Provost
Sue Subocz, Ph.D.

Walden University
2021

Abstract

Succession Planning Strategies in Family Businesses

by

Vivian Akosua D. Amanquah

MBA, University of Ghana, 2007

BSC, University of Cape Coast, 2002

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Business Administration

Walden University

November 2021

Abstract

Only one-third of family businesses remain operational into the second generation and approximately one-eighth into the third generation. Succession planning is critical to family-owned businesses, as most businesses will collapse moving to the fourth generation and beyond. Grounded in the family systems theory, the purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore strategies family business leaders use to implement a succession plan. The participants included six senior executives from three family businesses in Ghana who implemented successful strategies for succession planning. The data sources were semistructured interviews and a review of organizational documents, including statutes; articles of incorporation, history, and background; and press releases from company websites. The five emerging themes from using the thematic analysis were (a) preservation of family legacy, (b) succession planning purpose, (c) training and mentoring, (d) entrepreneurial learning, and (e) cultural embeddedness. A primary recommendation for family-owned business leaders is to encourage children to get a higher education and specialized business training. The implications for positive social change include the potential to enhance family business continuity to reduce unemployment in the communities served by the family businesses.

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Dedication

I dedicate this immense achievement to the glory of the Most High God Almighty
in whom I live, move, and have my being.

Acknowledgments

A special thank you to my committee chair, Dr. Jill Murray, for your excellent mentorship, wisdom, expertise, time, advice, and guidance throughout this doctoral journey. To my second committee members, Dr. Karin Akosua Mae and Dr. Patsy Kasen, and my URRs, Dr. Mary I. Dereshiwsky and Dr. Gwen C. Dooley, I say a very big thank you for your fantastic support in reviewing and offering excellent feedback that has contributed immensely to the success of my study. Thank you to all the firms that participated in my research. And to all my research participants, I say a big thank you for the opportunity to learn from your experiences in succession planning. The knowledge you shared enhanced my understanding and broadened my knowledge of succession planning in Ghanaian family businesses.

To my husband, Samuel Amanquah, thank you for being patient and supportive as I pursued this doctoral degree while working full time and being a mom of four children. Thank you to my children, Jaden, Benyta, Jason, and Gracelyn for giving me the motivation to finish my doctoral degree. I pushed myself to finish because I know how much you all look up to me, and I was not about to let you down despite the many obstacles along the way.

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Section 1: Foundation of the Study

Background of the Problem

Family businesses play a significant role in Western civilization and comprise the backbone of many countries' economies based on their contributions to gross domestic product (Ljubotina et al., 2018). But the long-term survival of businesses hinges on how leaders manage the succession planning process (Judd, 2017), and long-term survival is one of the most critical concerns for family businesses. Researchers have found a link between effective succession planning, business sustainability, and survival amid the challenging demands of a turbulent and changing business terrain (Alvani et al., 2016; McKee & Froelich, 2016; Patidar et al., 2016). A succession plan is essential to serve as a roadmap for preserving valuable knowledge during leadership transitions (Stephens, 2016).

Despite widespread knowledge of the importance of succession planning and the added cost to businesses when missing, many boards of directors do not plan for leader turnover (Hooijberg & Lane, 2016). Family business owners similarly do not establish formal succession plans despite understanding the importance and need (Bozer et al., 2017). There is a demand for research to understand the link between family and business ownership (Payne, 2019). The purpose of this study was to explore effective succession planning strategies that family businesses employ when preparing for the next generation of family leaders.

Problem Statement

Only one-third of family businesses survive into the second generation and approximately one-eighth into the third generation (Wang & Jiang, 2018). By the time they have transitioned to the fourth generation or beyond, about 97% of family-owned businesses would collapse (Mokhber et al., 2017). The general business problem is the lack of effective succession planning strategies in family businesses. The specific business problem is that some leaders in family businesses lack strategies to implement an effective succession plan.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore the strategies leaders in family businesses use to implement an effective succession plan. The targeted population consisted of six senior executives from three family businesses in Ghana who have successfully developed and executed strategies for succession plans for future leaders. The social impact includes increased awareness of the need to plan effectively for leadership succession, which could contribute to helping solve the challenges associated with the lack of viability and sustainability of family businesses. Economies experience growth in the number of family businesses when such organizations continue to remain viable, which may increase economic activities. The social impact also includes the opportunity to help reduce unemployment in the communities served by the family businesses.

Nature of the Study

I used a qualitative research methodology for this study. Qualitative researchers focus on continuous exploration and description of the context of a phenomenon to gain an in-depth understanding of subjective and socially constructed meanings (Levitt et al., 2018; Saunders et al., 2016). The qualitative research method was appropriate for this study because I intended to gain a more in-depth insight into succession planning strategies within family businesses. A quantitative analysis helps the researcher to examine potential causal relationships (Taguchi, 2018). A quantitative methodology was inappropriate for this study because the focus was not on reviewing the relationship between variables. Elements of both qualitative and quantitative methods are characteristic of mixed methods study used for examining a common phenomenon along with statistical data analysis (Abutabenjeh & Jaradat, 2018; Doucerain et al., 2016). The mixed-methods approach was also unsuitable for this study because I did not conduct statistical data analysis to determine variables, relationships, or group differences.

Different qualitative research design approaches exist, including case study, ethnography, phenomenology, and narrative design (Korstjens & Moser, 2017). Researchers can identify and explore issues related to a phenomenon in a real-world context by adopting a case study design (Yin, 2017). I applied a multiple case study design involving three unique family businesses in Ghana. Ethnography involves studying human cultures within a society (Korstjens & Moser, 2017; Spradley, 2016), but I was not interested in studying business cultures. The phenomenological design emphasizes the meanings of participants' experiences and ideological processing (Yan et

al., 2017). Phenomenology was also not suitable for this study because the study was not about exploring the meanings of human experiences. Finally, using the narrative design, researchers can collect stories used to define conduct in a social context because an individual's life story builds on previous chapters and is related to future chapters (Maree et al., 2018). The narrative design did not align with my study because I was interested in career studies of participants' stories.

Research Question

The overarching research question for the study was “What strategies do leaders in family businesses use to implement effective succession plans?”

Interview Questions

I conducted semistructured interviews to collect information on the succession planning strategies in family business using the following interview questions:

1. What are the succession planning strategies included in your organization's strategic plan?
2. What effective processes do you use in your organization for leadership development?
3. What key competencies do you use to select future leaders as part of the succession planning process in your organization?
4. What are the knowledge transfer practices in your organization?
5. What are the factors impacting success and barriers to effective succession planning?

6. Would you like to add any additional information about succession planning strategies?

Conceptual Framework

The family systems theory (FST) was the conceptual framework for this study. Bowen (1978) introduced the FST, an approach that allows for a view of the family as a complex, interacting social system that is open, ongoing, goal-focused, and mechanical (Pratt & Skelton, 2018). FST enhances the understanding of family members' role in the circumstances explained by generational adaptations over time and across generations (Palombi, 2016). The FST offers a solid basis for comprehending issues related to family communication, goal setting, complex relationships, and maintaining boundaries (Jaccard & Jacoby, 2010). The FST can provide a valuable framework for success to capitalize on the family dynamics that foster growth and sustainability (Pratt & Skelton, 2018). The objective of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore the strategies leaders in family businesses use to implement an effective succession plan. The FST helped understand the complex dynamics involved in family business succession planning in Ghana.

Operational Definitions

The definitions of terms in this section are associated with succession planning and related to the subject matter of this proposed study:

Family business: A business founded or controlled by family members related either by blood or marriage (Kudlats et al., 2019).

Knowledge management: A process by which organizations or individuals can locate, store, retrieve, share, adapt, and use company knowledge to support the achievement of organizational or individual objectives (Centobelli et al., 2017; Karamitri et al., 2017).

Performance management: A combination of systems and policies established to make managers more strategic, effective, and accountable for programs and organizations (Birdsall, 2018).

Succession planning: Refers to a process where the organization creates a constant pool of high potential talent for future use by strategically planning for, developing, replacing, and applying the workforce for sustainment and continuity (Pandiyani & Jayalashmi, 2016).

Talent management: A continuous process that involves sourcing, hiring, developing, retaining, and promoting employees while simultaneously meeting the organization's requirements (Savanevičienė & Vilčiauskaitė, 2017).

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

Research assumptions, limitations, and delimitations can help the researcher identify their assumptions, establish boundaries to conduct the study, and avoid making inferences (Leedy & Ormrod, 2016). Assumptions, limitations, and delimitations are important to identify relevance, presumptions, weaknesses, and boundaries that could negatively impact the research outcomes (Bryman, 2016).

Assumptions

Assumptions are conditions that the researcher cannot be sure about but appear to be valid and pending verification (Niven & Boorman, 2016). A researcher might formulate certain assumptions about what to expect from the study based on their previous knowledge or expectations of theory and practice (Cerniglia et al., 2016). The first assumption in this study was that I would have access to the information concerning effective succession planning strategies in Ghana. The second assumption was that participants would respond honestly, voluntarily share their experiences, and provide adequate responses to the interview questions. The final assumption relevant to this study was that all secondary data collection would give accurate information about firms selected for this multiple case study.

Limitations

Limitations are potential weaknesses threatening a study due to factors the researcher cannot control (Yin, 2017). The limitations of a research study are factors or challenges that affect the study's outcome or how we interpret the results (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016). All studies have their limitations (Green et al., 2016). Potential discrepancies between company documents on succession planning and managers' perception of succession planning strategies could have been a critical possible limiting factor in this study. A second limitation could have been limiting the semistructured interviews to six senior executives and omitting other employees or stakeholders in the family businesses.

Delimitations

Delimitations are certain boundaries in which the researcher may confine the study to narrow the scope of the study (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016). Delimitations are the boundaries that researchers establish to define the scope of the study (Stenson, 2016). In this study, multiple boundaries determined the location and caliber of the participants involved. A delimitation of the study was the restriction of the geographical area to Ghana.

Significance of the Study

Effective succession planning is crucial to organizational performance in bringing about strong leadership, motivated employees, compelling work, and extended continuity (Smith, 2015). Effective succession planning strategies may benefit family business managers in helping them gain more awareness and information about planning successful transitions. The social impact may create awareness by providing advisory services to executive leaders of family businesses to prepare for leadership succession. The social impact may contribute to helping solve the challenges associated with a lack of viability and sustainability of family businesses.

Contribution to Business Practice

The leading cause of failure in family-owned businesses is the lack of a viable succession plan, a critical element for continuity that contributes to the long-term viability of family businesses (Vincent, 2017). During leadership transitions, the expectation is for successors to bring onboard innovative, sustainable, and succession-oriented strategies that enhance sustainability (Perrenoud & Sullivan, 2017). The findings

from this study could be beneficial for management practice by elucidating various strategies for effective succession planning practices in family businesses that managers may find helpful. Managers of family businesses may benefit from more information about effective techniques necessary for ensuring smooth leadership transitions for business sustainability.

Implications for Social Change

A study on succession planning may produce more insight into effective leadership transition strategies, which may help executive leaders in family businesses in the communities. The potential for positive social change from the findings of this study could result in far-reaching social benefits by guiding advisory services to executive leaders of family businesses on effective succession planning strategies. The awareness created may positively impact beneficiary communities served by the family businesses due to senior executive leaders of family businesses planning effectively for leadership succession. Additionally, more awareness may help solve the challenges associated with the lack of viability and sustainability of family businesses. When family businesses remain viable, communities can benefit by increasing numbers of family businesses and increasing economic activities to potentially reduce unemployment in the communities served by the companies.

A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore the strategies that leaders in family businesses use for effective succession planning. The literature review process allows the researcher to critically read, extract, and synthesize text from

relevant sources (Badenhorst, 2018). The literature review on succession planning strategies in family businesses involved peer-reviewed scholarly articles and seminal works to help answer the research question. The literature review may provide critical insight into existing succession planning and knowledge management strategies in family businesses. I conducted a thorough review of previous succession planning studies, which provided a solid foundation for understanding succession planning. I further reviewed the literature on family business succession planning, including research on relevant strategies applicable in such family businesses from different scholarly sources.

The review of the existing literature provided a sound understanding of succession planning, knowledge management, and talent management (TM) practices applicable to family businesses. Within the literature review, broad topics on succession planning will include managerial succession, knowledge transfer, strategic planning, performance management, and TM. The primary sources of articles were from the Walden University online library using the Emerald Insight, ABI/Inform Complete, ProQuest, Business Source Complete, EBSCO Host, ERIC, IEEE Explore, and ScienceDirect databases. I used keywords such as *succession planning*, *family business*, *familiness*, *performance management*, *strategic planning*, *talent management*, *business continuity*, *knowledge management*, *knowledge transfer*, *coaching*, and *mentoring*. I ensured that I attained 85% of the references in the literature review from peer-reviewed sources published within 5 years of my anticipated completion date. I kept more than 85% of the references published within the past 5 years. I reviewed 254 articles, including 227 peer-reviewed articles published between 2020 and 2016 and not more

than 27 published in 2015 or earlier.

Family Systems Theory

The author of the FST is Bowen (1966), who set out to explore individual interdependent family systems. The fundamental tenets of the FST within family studies include the determination of membership, the existence of subsystems, families striving to maintain equilibrium, need for resources, adaptation, change, the existence of family rules, and the presence of unique behaviors (Pratt & Skelton, 2018). These tenets allow clinical psychologists to support patients better based on knowledge of certain behaviors due to the underlining patterns of family traits (Williams-Reade et al., 2018). Underlying family traits in individuals can be the reason for the complex system of characteristics observed among immediate family members (Scott et al., 2018).

Bowen (1966) suggested that the FST is an appropriate framework for studying individual interdependent systems. Human social systems are complex and adaptive systems like all living systems (Missimer et al., 2017). The complex system of interrelated family-level interdependence among the immediate family members reflects how individuals develop within families (Scott et al., 2018). The family is a complex system with subsystems and mutual and interdependent social influence where members interact to influence each other reciprocally (Vedanthan et al., 2016). Social systems, such as the family, can play a significant role in communication and transfer of resources between members (Neagoe, 2018). There is a direct link between the nature of the family system and how the family turns out, either positively or negatively (Padilla-Walker et al., 2019). For example, the decline in parental monitoring or involvement with

adolescents contributes to adolescent problem behavior, substance use, and internalizing problems (Brinberg et al., 2017). Factors such as parents' mental health, co-parenting relations, and parenting quality can also play a significant role in how well a child adjusts (Feinberg & Jones, 2018).

The FST presents the family as a complex, interacting social system that is open and continuously pursuing a common goal (Padilla-Walker et al., 2019; Pratt & Skelton, 2018). But although family characteristics and family traits can influence the features of the next generation's families (Padilla-Walker et al., 2019), parents who have the will and intention may be able to improve the aspects of their children through higher levels of connection, individuation, and minimizing conflict (Bell, 2018). Unique family member behavior patterns and interactions lead to ongoing individual behavioral changes, repetitive habits, routines, rituals, and the creation of shared realities (Padilla-Walker et al., 2019). The unique developments influence the complex interactions among the behaviors of family members over time (Scott et al., 2018).

The FST applied to the complex dynamics involved in family business succession planning in Ghana. The FST provides a valuable framework for studying group behavior because of the focus on a systems approach (Bowen, 1978). Researchers can identify mechanisms through which parents train other generations, broadening understanding of how families evolve in behavior through longitudinal, whole-family designs (Scott et al., 2018). Family businesses make a significant contribution to economic growth; therefore, it is paramount to further study creating a shared cognitive map and the associated consequences (Nandi et al., 2019). Family business leaders can develop well-informed

succession planning strategies with defined means of dealing with family conflicts that could arise during leadership transitions.

Application of Family Systems Theory to Family Business Research

Researchers using the FST go beyond biological observations to include thinking around family systems and engaging the family of origin (Pratt & Skelton, 2018). Family systems thinking can be used to train clinicians to understand family behavior patterns better (Fogarty & Mauksch, 2018). Family psychologists have made meaningful recommendations for appropriate remedies using the family systems approach to establish a systems-based psychosocial understanding of relevant family cycle patterns and transitions (Rolland, 2019). Consistent with family systems psychology, problems are rooted in a complex matrix of culture, economics, history, politics, psychology, and religion (Thoburn et al., 2019).

Adopting family interactions using family systems thinking helped in this study to appreciate the family patterns. For instance, members of family businesses may select the best leaders when they understand the development patterns of individual family members. The family business is often the manifestation of the family system and the nature of family structures, parenting styles, and communication patterns that influence the entrepreneurial abilities of family members (Soleimanof et al., 2019). A relaxed parenting style nurtures entrepreneurial ability where family members are open to democratic leadership, comfortable with delegation, and supportive of collaborative cultures (Jaskiewicz et al., 2017). A more rigid inflexible parenting style promotes entrepreneurial capabilities because family members have mindsets that do not appreciate

adaptability, change, and decentralization (Soleimanof et al., 2019). The nature of the home environment also impacts what happens in the family business (Combs et al., 2018).

Benefits of Family Systems Research

Family system studies can help form a foundation for understanding and determining strategies for dealing with unique and complex family business problems (Combs et al., 2018). Studying a family in-depth may help understand how to deal with challenges that may arise in family businesses. Knowledge of diverse family structures, family member relationships, goals, and emotions affect family firm management practices, which can illuminate the consequences of negative behaviors (Combs et al., 2018). Delays often occur in succession planning when family problems arise and communication and relationships among family members (Reardon, 2018). Family business leaders can better understand and mitigate any issues based on an understanding of the genesis in the family firm, how the firm has evolved, imprinting, and learning practices (Combs et al., 2018). Family business scholars may also benefit from using FST as the theoretical framework to understand development patterns in the family businesses and relevant developmental plans to groom potential successors.

Alternative Conceptual Framework: Transformational Leadership Theory

The transformational leadership theory is an alternative conceptual framework for this study. Downton (1973) introduced the term *transformational leadership* (Safonov et al., 2018), and James MacGregor Burns (1978) introduced the concept of transformational leadership with four main components including charisma and idealized

influence, inspiring motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual approach (Avolio & Bass, 1988). Bass then introduced a new multifactor leadership theory model, including the transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership types (Samanta & Lamprakis, 2018).

A transformational leader is a person who drives processes of transformational change and unites followers to realize higher shared goals (Fourie & Höhne, 2019). Transformational leaders contribute at a higher level to organizational outcomes because of their ability to lead and impact the job satisfaction of their followers (Samanta & Lamprakis, 2018). Transformational leadership styles relate to leaders' vast experiences and high decision-making abilities (Grossman & Sharf, 2018). Transformational leadership is related to the quality of exchanges between leaders and their followers, supporting interactions that foster healthy working environments (Wong & Berntzen, 2019). During a crisis, leaders can harness their social influence to elicit their social circles' cognitive, social, and emotional capacity to generate leadership and relational connections that could impact the team's resilience (Teo et al., 2017). The transformational leadership style thus enhances employees' competency, leading to increased productivity and high organizational performance (bin Atan & Mahmood, 2019).

There are three critical assumptions involved in transformation leadership, including (a) leaders transform followers, (b) followers transform in specific ways, and (c) followers' transformation is responsible for the effectiveness of transformational leadership (Siangchokyoo et al., 2019). Further, transformational leader behaviors are

associated with an increase in a leader's emotional exhaustion due to how transformational leadership behaviors have often appeared as beneficial (Lin et al., 2019). Additionally, acknowledging that a leader is not perfect may lead to curbing unrealistic expectations placed on transformational leaders and empowering followers (Fourie & Höhne, 2019). Although both transformational and transactional leadership styles contribute to practical organizational commitment, the transformational leadership style has a more substantial impact compared to the transactional style of leadership (Choi-Sang et al., 2016).

Family Businesses and Economic Development

Family firms are dynamic players in the global world economy, accounting for two-thirds of all businesses around the world and 70 to 95% of all business entities in most countries and ranging in size from small partnerships to Fortune 500 firms such as Ford and Wal-Mart (Sharma & Sharma, 2019). Further, family businesses contribute 70% to 90% of the global gross domestic product and create more than half of the total employment in the developed countries (Oudah et al., 2018; see also Mosbah et al., 2018). Family businesses thus play a crucial role in national economies (Horčíčková & Stasiulis, 2019; Ljubotina et al., 2018), acting as an economic bedrock and entrepreneurial business base in most economies (Kudrats et al., 2019). There is a growing attention on family firms (Michiels & Molly, 2017), as they contribute to the economic and social well-being of countries (Welsh et al., 2018).

The market systems are continually expanding with business opportunities, and there is an increased demand for participation from family members (Nandi et al., 2019).

The survival of family businesses benefits both the family firms and the entire community (Alonso-Dos-Santos & Llanos-Contreras, 2019). Despite the vital role, family firm research within the management discipline and closest link to entrepreneurship is still an emerging field of study (Debicki et al., 2017). Family business succession studies may help in guiding the crucial economic role that such businesses play.

Challenges of Family Business Succession

Importance of succession planning. The transition of a CEO marks a crucial turning point often characterized by strategic change, market entry, and investments (Berns & Klarner, 2017). The succession process is among the essential issues for assuring the long-term growth and sustainability of ongoing business (Ljubotina & Vadjal, 2018). There is a link between chief executive succession and strategic change, emphasizing the role that succession planning plays in the strategic management process (Berns & Klarner, 2017; Easter & Brooks, 2017). An effective succession plan could be a lifesaver for the organization during emergencies (Pandiyan & Jayalashmi, 2016). A business can ensure a smooth leadership transition without setbacks through effective succession planning, allowing the company to run seamlessly in fulfilling its mandate (McKee & Froelich, 2016). On the other hand, when leaders fail to manage or guide a transition the right way using an effective succession plan, it could result in high transactional costs (Berns & Klarner, 2017).

Need for succession planning in family business and challenges related to family structure Family business failures can lead to the selling of the business, highlighting the need for business continuity (Budhiraja & Pathak, 2018; Perrenoud & Sullivan, 2017;

Suess-Reyes & Fuetsch, 2016). But succession planning in family businesses may be more challenging compared to other business types. As family firms move from one generation to another, a natural tension occurs concerning preserving traditions and innovating to meet the evolving needs of the marketplace (Erdogan et al., 2020). The next generation finds it challenging to maintain a past family heritage (Jameson, 2018). The involvement of family members in family business succession could also lead to a loss in shareholder value because of nepotism, intra-family conflict, and incompetent successors (Kudrats et al., 2019). Additionally, there may be challenged with keeping the next generation of younger family members motivated for family business continuation (Ljubotina et al., 2018). Although the intra-family succession of incumbent family members is significant, less than 7% of the next generation of family members may be willing to work in the parent's business (Zellweger, 2017). Family firm parents also face the dilemma of finding the balance of instilling in their children a sense of belonging and the confidence to be independent (Garcia et al., 2019). Limited availability of talent within the family, emotional factors associated with incumbent successor relationships, and other complex dynamics in family social structure make family business succession challenging and difficult (DeNoble et al., 2007). Therefore, an effective succession plan must include measures to effectively align the expectations of both generations (Van Skiver, 2015).

More challenges to succession—finances. Family business succession may also be more difficult because of succession financing issues, threatening the successful intergenerational transfer of family firms (Koropp et al., 2013). Well-planned successions

are critical to the life of family businesses, yet the financial management aspect of succession planning in family businesses can be complicated, requiring a reflective and planned succession strategy (Csákné Filep & Karmazin, 2016). Family business financial management is different from that of other businesses (Csákné Filep & Karmazin, 2016). Family business leaders may have to contend with the difficult decision of keeping things in the family versus using external support during a financial crisis. The family culture and nonfamily members have a role to play in family succession planning because they shape the business culture from which the incumbent obtains their professional identity (Bozer et al., 2017). Family businesses may be more resilient to economic crises due to the willingness to support the business with family savings and family resources; however, the preference to not use external financing for a financial crisis can sometimes lead to loss of growth opportunities, which can be detrimental to the business's future performance (Koropp et al., 2013).

Businesses may deal with the challenge of family business succession when they adopt a social planning strategy with stakeholder engagement (Devins & Jones, 2016). Family business owners view their business as assets and investments relevant when transferring ownership (Csákné Filep & Karmazin, 2016). The succession strategy must emphasize an understanding of hidden assumptions, a shared understanding of the problem, and reconciling different family business interests, leading to a consensus on the next steps (Devins & Jones, 2016). The evolution of family structures is leading to many different types of structures such as dual-earner families, single families, and single-

parent families, so business strategies must include family situations for creating policies, practices, organizational culture, and support systems (Powell et al., 2018).

Family Businesses Approach to Leadership Succession

Leadership succession is a crucial issue for family business continuity (Horčíčková & Stasiulis, 2019). Commitment to the family business as the psychological state of mind compels a next-generation member toward their family business (Garcia et al., 2019). The management of succession needs must be prioritized and supported by a database of retirement wave of staff, talent pipelines, talent assessments, formalized talent pools, diversity initiatives, and a record of the return on investment (Bleich, 2019). It is essential to identify essential leadership skills and competencies for success, attract and motivate leaders, create a sense of responsibility, align succession plans with the corporate culture, measure results, and reinforce desired behavior (Pandiyan & Jayalashmi, 2016). The succession planning process can be pinned to three simple steps: successor identification, developing and documenting a transfer plan (Earls & Hall, 2018). Belief in the successor's diplomacy, conflict resolution, and negotiation abilities is even more relevant and salient in family firms than in other firms (Garcia et al., 2019).

Strategies for Long-Term Sustainability

Researchers may examine financial performance and noneconomic outcomes when reviewing performance outcomes (De Massis et al., 2018). Family firms do not only focus on economic benefits but may be more concerned about long-term sustainability (Alessandri et al., 2017). Family firms are heterogeneous and pursue simultaneously financial and nonfinancial goals (Sharma et al., 2020). Family businesses

are concerned about the long-term survival, trans-generational growth of the family, and wealth (Ljubotina & Vadnjaj, 2018). Family firms have a unique bundle of resources and challenges that shape their transactions and helps them to adapt compared to nonfamily businesses (Miller et al., 2020). Long-term survival strategies of German family firm – Mittelstand involve; (a) family ownership and control; (b) niche focus globalization strategy; (c) relying more on internal funds; (d) long-term strategies over short ones; (e) bonding with employees and involving them in decision-making; and (f) embeddedness in local communities (De Massis et al., 2018).

Family firms may not be quick to internationalize compared to nonfamily counterparts because of the fear of the danger this may pose to loss of socioeconomic wealth, financial wealth, the risk of losing family control, and the belief that such risks might not be worth it (Alessandri et al., 2017). Family firm succession planning processes inevitably lead to different emotions that need to re-surface and be subject to alleviating to ensure satisfaction at the individual level, move the process along quickly, and prevent an impasse from occurring in the process (Bertschi-Michel et al., 2020).

Family Firms Succession Strategies

Family businesses prepare heirs to perform the most critical traditions as a part of long-term survival and continuity strategies (di Belmonte et al., 2016). It is importance to select the right chief executive, emphasizing that leaders play a crucial role in managing the organization's internal goals and ensuring the company meets external expectations (McKee & Froelich, 2016). The planning for succession is a great opportunity for changing organizational strategy (Judd, 2017). In most cases, family members occupy

leadership positions in family firms (Bøhren et al., 2019). Owners usually invest significant funds into these businesses, sometimes having over 50% ownership; therefore, failure during the transition can be chaotic and could lead to disastrous consequences for the owners and the business (Perrenoud & Sullivan, 2017; Suess-Reyes & Fuetsch, 2016; Vincent, 2017). A family firm chief executive officer (CEO) may be more risk-averse, more likely to be concerned about long-term survival, and interested in reinvesting profits back into the business compared to nonfamily counterparts (Sánchez et al., Luis Gallizo, & Moreno, 2019).

Succession planning constitutes a critical success factor in the performance of family businesses and affects firms' financial performance (Judd, 2017). Business leaders must develop strategies to have an exit strategy in place to deal with eventful occurrences (Lane, 2018). Even though succession strategies and continuity are crucial in family-owned businesses, researchers have identified the lack of adequate understanding of succession planning as one of the most crucial issues family businesses face (Vincent, 2017). A well-executed, well-created succession planning strategy may be beneficial for continuity and for dealing with complexities associated with leadership transitions.

The absence of a succession plan may pose severe challenges to the business. Without a succession plan, a business will encounter delays in replacing a departed CEO (Rivolta, 2018). Long delays in naming a successor may impact shareholder reaction and firm performance when the new CEO is appointed (Rivolta, 2018). Successors could fail when the transition occurs if they cannot restore control of the political and cultural changes that manifested during a leadership transition (Tichy, 2015). Successors who

disrupt their organization's strategic goals can also contribute to the loss of financial stability or competitive advantage (Soebbing et al., 2015). New leaders may use repressive strategies to try and gain some domestic reputation when the transition process is not smooth (Licht & Allen, 2018). Although family succession planning is vital to family businesses, 47% of the time, such businesses fail to have a succession plan due to factors such as context, relationships, process, and governance (Lockamy et al., 2016). The failure of successors to understand the expectations of their board members and subordinate employees could play a crucial role in the decline of an organization during succession (Soebbing et al., 2015). Failure to engage the next generation could put family business continuity at risk (Garcia et al., 2019).

There is a strong relationship between succession planning and financial performance in competitive markets (Patidar et al., 2016). When leaders manage a CEO transition well, it may improve organizational performance (Berns & Klarner, 2017). The chance of a successor coming from the family could be enhanced by having: (a) board of directors that includes family members, (b) formalized succession process, (c) family business work experience, (d) potential successors develop relationships with significant customers and suppliers, and (e) financial resources to support effective succession (Lockamy et al., 2016). The active participation of family members in the governance of the family firm leads to increased firm performance (Bøhren et al., 2019). The family belief systems underpin the management's value system, which informs the organization's strategic behavior (Oro & Lavarda, 2019).

When it comes to succession planning, a blend of appropriate strategies is advisable (Stephens, 2016). The early stage of the succession planning process is vital because family or nonfamily conflicts of interest arise early in the process (Meier & Schier, 2016). A good succession plan must be well-timed, communicated, involve the board of directors, flexible, and ensure the new CEO receives respect from others (Judd, 2017). Family business succession plans can involve activities such as identifying future leaders, change of ownership, the transition of control and management, and the development of leaders (Budhiraja & Pathak, 2018). It is importance of this early stage due to the impact of the team's behavioral response to the new leader (Lam et al., 2018). An effective succession plan must include technical, political, and cultural components to attract an executive who can influence all the dynamics needed to achieve successful organizational performance (Tichy, 2015).

The selection process of a family business successor is somewhat different from that of other businesses. Family members have a strong influence on the operations of micro-family businesses (Agyapong et al., 2016). Family governance mechanisms such as family councils, assemblies, offices, meetings, committees, and family constitutions are necessary to regulate the relationship between the family and the business (Adams & Quagraine, 2018). A study into how nonfamily members are involved in family firms indicated that family members would undermine nonfamily members who work in the firm from being integrated successfully into the family firm (Tabor et al., 2018). Restricted family relationships are rare but may be helpful to enhance the formalization

of roles and responsibilities of family members throughout the succession process (Daspit et al., 2016).

The succession planning process in family businesses is often unstructured and begins with assessing the organizational size, vision, and overall performance in the recent past (Budhiraja & Pathak, 2018). Selecting the right candidate is what matters most to management (Suess-Reyes & Fuetsch, 2016). Leaders of family businesses who use formalized and informal knowledge transfer strategies during succession over generations benefit from sustaining their competitive advantage (Boyd et al., 2015). The succession planning process involves assessing leadership competencies in areas such as trust, hard work, accountability, mentoring, and leadership development (Budhiraja & Pathak, 2018).

The successor must have the ability to carry on the cherished and priced family heritage to the next generation (Suess-Reyes & Fuetsch, 2016). Zellweger (2017) defined next-generation engagement as their intention to actively contribute to the leadership and sustainability of their family business through ownership, managerial, or governance roles. The family influences the choice of successor; however, the family head has ultimate authority and must choose carefully to avoid generational conflicts (Budhiraja & Pathak, 2018). The low family influence could be detrimental to high organizational performance (Hughes et al., 2018). Zhou et al. (2016) noted that family structures, intrafamily regulation, and family control significantly impact succession in family businesses. For example, the father plays different roles at different stages of the son's

business knowledge development process by acting as an example, a supporter, a mentor, and an advisor (Pham et al., 2019).

Various models proposed for succession planning include structured leadership and mentoring training programs, forums, courses, motivation, a formal succession plan, continuity policies, and family integration plans (Stephens, 2016). To ensure continuity and transfer of knowledge, some family business leaders rely on trusted advisors as to the most reliable external source of advice and knowledge. Trusted advisors can influence the outcome of the succession process in either a positive or a negative manner, depending on potential agency conflicts (Michel & Kammerlander, 2015). The leader having the relevant higher education makes a positive contribution to effective succession planning. Bozer et al. (2017) noted that family culture, spousal support, and sibling rivalry are factors that could impact family business succession.

Developing a procedural approach for having succession conversations can be helpful for family succession planning, according to Helin and Jebril (2016). For the next generation to be successful, family businesses must ensure continuous growth and development, avoiding the risk of over-admiring and instead combining the heritage with how they want to run the company (Jameson, 2018). Families can control conflict through stewardship, control, monitoring mechanisms, collaborations between generations, a flexible approach, and a shared vision of future ownership and control (Meier & Schier, 2016). A good succession strategy goes beyond corporate succession to include handling finances to ensure business continuation (Kess & Mendlowitz, 2015). An essential tool that an incoming executive can utilize during the transition into a

leadership role is to evaluate the level of turmoil, assess the capabilities and hurdles to success, and seek support for the new vision through a transformational type of leadership style (Tichy, 2015).

The family business founder wields much power in making critical decisions relevant to ownership and beliefs in the business (Nandi et al., 2019). Horčíčková and Stasiulis (2019) asserted that a young person's intention to work in a family business increases if they engage in the business during their studies. Family members must generate and sustain the interest of young members in the business in the early stages of their lives, asserted Ljubotina and Vadnjaj (2018).

Family Routines

Family routines are part of family dynamics that can impact work-life differently (Jaskiewicz et al., 2017). Family firm outcomes and behaviors result from the collective psychological behaviors of individuals and family characteristics (Sharma et al., 2020). Family psychology helps to understand individual and family characteristics and behaviors that drive firm-level goals, strategies, resources, capabilities, behavior, and performance (Sharma et al., 2020). Attention to family routines and how these routines change (or not) over time can reveal additional insights regarding next-generation engagement in the family business (Reay, 2019). Therefore, it is essential to treat family traditions and innovations that occur because of processes developed and structures imprinted over generations of family ownership as strategic tools (Sharma et al., 2020).

Corporate Governance in Family Firms

Governance mechanisms may be in the form of formal and informal processes, both of whom may be equally important and profoundly influence the behavior and performance of family firms, as is external governance mechanisms. (Chrisman et al., 2018). Family firms could benefit from women directors who could be good forces for change in the family firms because women can apply feminine values that humanize the workplace to positively impact employee morale and retention of future women leaders (Cruz et al., 2019). It is important not to include all family businesses in the same category but rather consider the heterogeneity of family businesses and how this influences their decisions (Michiels & Molly, 2017).

Knowledge Management in Leadership Transitions

The ability of organizations to realize the economic value from their collection of knowledge assets and their assets of information, production distribution, and affiliation is a significant source of competitive advantage (Ellard et al., 2018). Knowledge management is pertinent to sustaining strategic competitive advantage and perhaps enhanced through a vibrant business transactional atmosphere of a highly cohesive family culture (Boyd et al., 2015). When knowledge management aligns with business strategy, a business could have success and competitive advantage (Karamat et al., 2018).

A succession strategy in the acquisition and management of social capital can be through building internal and external relationships and human capital with both industry and tacit business knowledge (DeNoble et al., 2007). Even though being a knowledge-based organization offers a competitive advantage, knowledge management remains a

challenge for senior managers (Ellard et al., 2018). Leaders wield knowledge about the organization, such as regulatory and financial issues; therefore, it is crucial to preserve such knowledge during leadership transitions through succession planning (Stephens, 2016). Appropriate knowledge management could improve organizational competitiveness, performance, and productivity and facilitate the efficient use of resources (Karamat et al., 2018).

Family businesses may be better at knowledge management compared to other firms. Idiosyncratic knowledge transfer strategies, such as internal exposure and early exposure of successors to the family business, can lead to increased interest in their commitment to driving the business, maintaining a cohesive family business, creating an adaptable family culture and fostering familiness (Bozer et al., 2017). Families could exchange knowledge through shared family interests such as creative gift-giving, or a beach vacation could be a great way to reinforce new patterns of interaction (Walsh & Harrigan, 2003). Relationships among family members built on trust, loyalty, and respect are vital in enhancing knowledge and skills (Daspit et al., 2016).

Knowledge management must be associated with a change in organizational culture; therefore, the environment can be conducive to accumulating experiences necessary for grooming the next generation of leaders (Mehrtak et al., 2017). Individual components such as family business socialization and external experience play a crucial role in ensuring the successful transfer of knowledge (Bozer et al., 2017). Also, family firms are more effective with knowledge preservation than non-family firms (Werner et al., 2018). Ghanaian family-owned businesses recognize knowledge and capabilities as a

valuable resource to be passed on during the succession planning process and the need for a systematic approach that makes easy retrieval when collecting, storing, and using the knowledge (Buckman et al., 2019).

Talent Management Strategies

Human resources can be a source of competitive advantage if they include value, rare, inimitable, and unique qualities proposed in the business analysis framework (Pandita & Ray, 2018). Employees are the lifeblood of an organization, the currency that can lead a company to success (Crittenden, 2018). The quality of employees determines the success or failure of TM, which requires significant investment (Krishnan & Scullion, 2017). Poisat, Mey, and Sharp (2018) opined that the benefits of competitive advantage and long-term success hinge on TM as a vital part of the strategic process. Businesses may have a valuable, rare, inimitable, and unique workforce providing a business with a competitive edge when they manage talent proactively (Pandita & Ray, 2018). Talent management is vital to business continuity because loyal employees are derived when the workforce is qualified, committed, and equipped to perform their roles (Pandiyan & Jayalashmi, 2016).

Strategic TM is defined as having the right candidate in the right job (Cui et al., 2018). There is the need for every business strategy to include a good TM strategy for managing the human resources, who are the implementers of the strategy (Van Zyl et al., 2017). It is important to take attrition into account when planning the strategy to ensure recruitment will become a more deliberate exercise instead of just being about filling a gap (Crittenden, 2018). However, a succession planning strategy that focuses on

developing organizational capabilities through effective TM can lead to employee engagement and retention (Alvani et al., 2016; Mihalcea, 2017; Pandita & Ray, 2018).

Engaged, skilled, and motivated employees impact competitive advantage and business growth (Mahfoozi et al., 2018). Leavy (2018) opined that the eager, capable employees tackling new challenges are the ones who drive innovation within organizations. Savanevičienė and Vilčiauskaitė (2017) identified TM as the critical competency for any organization that is future-oriented. People skills are 50% inbuilt and 50% developed; therefore, there is a possibility to develop people skills half of the time (Eichinger, 2018). An effective TM system has the potential to help business owners deal with complex challenges regarding demographic changes, mobility, globalization, economic climate, competition, and business transformation (Savanevičienė & Vilčiauskaitė, 2017). Although TM has become one of the critical strategic issues for global organizations, much focus has been on the large multinational enterprise context (Krishnan & Scullion, 2017). Much consideration must be placed in the TM strategy because TM contributes to the fulfillment of business goals. Business leaders need to have robust TM strategies in place that can help prepare employees for future succession.

The focus of leadership succession planning includes social capital strategies for attracting and identifying potential leaders, measuring leadership competencies, learning, and mentoring (Pedersen et al., 2018). The best TM strategies involve a robust approach for attracting the right talent, a conducive work environment, career growth opportunities, an excellent compensation package, and the right image (Cui et al., 2018). Other forms of candidate potential include innovation, product and service creation, technical advances,

and individual excellence such as artificial intelligence, as well as the potential for international or global service (Eichinger, 2018).

A broader theoretical framework is necessary to consider individual talent and TM architecture by understanding the value to the organization, according to Sparrow and Makram (2015). Activities in TM include attraction, recruitment, deployment, transition, development, performance management, talent reviews, rewards, engagement, and retention (Van Zyl et al., 2017). A dynamic contextual approach based on the size and complexity of the business and the different organizational life stages can be a useful to describe talent characteristics, proposed by Krishnan and Scullion (2017). Managers should adopt a more comprehensive approach when planning for TM, integrating the different dimensions of TM such as talent attraction, development, deployment and retention strategies, and interventions (Erasmus et al., 2017). Leaders must balance individual needs and organizational context when identifying which TM strategies work best (Guérin-Marion et al., 2018). In the same vein, family business leaders may benefit from applying TM strategies that best suit their context.

Effective TM practices must align with business strategy, values, and mechanisms to ensure internal consistency, cultural embeddedness, management involvement, the balance of global and local needs, and employer branding (Al Ariss et al., 2014). Effectively managing talent involves focusing on specific value processes, including creation, capture, leverage, and protection. These processes hinge on reflecting the functions of the talent, explaining the potential value of the activity, and contributing to the underlying strategic purpose of the organization (Sparrow & Makram, 2015). A

strong strategy is cyclical and not rigid, but flexible and tailored to the organization's culture, mission, and objectives (Pandita & Ray, 2018). Mihalcea (2017) opined that the modern-day TM helps develop the core skills needed for increased organizational performance regarding leadership, analytics, and advanced skills in problem-solving, decision-making, and design-thinking. Al Ariss et al. (2014) envisioned that technological innovation would significantly impact TM in helping companies find talent quickly throughout the world, more effectively matching talent supply with demand.

Businesses will benefit from harnessing technology to design strategies and models that can lead to a shared culture, engagement, construction of a new leadership model, and career development (Deloitte, 2016). A moral and ethical dimension must be a factor of the strategy to ensure a high degree of standards, credibility, fairness, justice, taking responsibility, and professionalism in TM-related activities (Hess & Jepsen, 2009). Sanders (2017) noted the difficulty in dealing with who will oversee creating and implementing TM strategy at a senior level. Leaders must plan strategies fairly and equitably, demonstrating to employees that they are valuable through inclusion and equity in practice (Hughes et al., 2018). Erasmus et al. (2017) advocated for the differentiation and segmentation of talent to ensure fair and equitable investment. Leavy (2018) identified seven accelerants of personal learning and growth in organizational contexts, including identifying the suitable risks, playing to individuals' distinctive strengths, imposing thoughtful constraints, entitlement, and stepping backward to move forward. The ultimate strategy depends on the organization's size, mandate, culture, and resources (Guérin-Marion et al., 2018). Organizations can use TM to engage and retain

employees by developing specific competencies suitable for the workplace culture (Mahfoozi et al., 2018).

TM strategies must have an inclusive approach that responds to the principles of human potential and development-oriented expression (Savanevičienė & Vilčiauskaitė, 2017). Managers need to target employees' distinctive strengths, encourage them to play with others, and create momentum for climbing the learning curve (Leavy, 2018). Philpot and Monahan (2017) encouraged the use of data-driven assessment methods that measure talent at different levels. Neri and Wilkins (2019) viewed TM as a central strategic area; hence, organizations must invest more effort and money in developing and retaining talent who meet or exceed performance expectations. There is a strong correlation between TM strategies and generational cohort preferences (Poisat et al., 2018).

There is a need to formulate further insight into TM based on the use of internal potential. Exclusive TM strategies are for attraction and selection of employees of high potential and high efficiency (Savanevičienė & Vilčiauskaitė, 2017). Employee potential is related to performance and promotion, with the potential to be an agile strategist, people manager, and leader imperative during times of challenge and change (Eichinger, 2018). When organizations define the leadership potential of a potential leader, this may avoid bias, increase office diversity, and provide economic gains (Philpot & Monahan, 2017). The strategy needs to be evidence-based to ensure a strong business plan for sustained investment (Spofford, 2017). Other critical dimensions include engaging members of a new generation and encouraging their involvement in the business. Smalls-

Glover et al. (2019) showed that family members' level of engagement and involvement has a consequence on the behavioral engagement of the younger generation.

Leadership Competencies Development

The competency approach is a strategy that involves the identification of desirable leadership skills and attributes that are crucial and that directly contribute to performance and outcomes (Wong, 2019). Competent employees contribute to high productivity levels, which can lead to improved organizational performance (bin Atan & Mahmood, 2019). Some leadership competencies include the ability to establish and maintain vision, strategy, and communication and guide, influence, monitor, and evaluate the performance of their teams (da Silva et al., 2019). Successors need to have skills for managing the entrepreneurial processes that drive the business model of the family firm (Clinton et al., 2018). The successor should possess all necessary innovative ideas, excellent communication skills, and futuristic strategies that enhance sustainability (Perrenoud & Sullivan, 2017). Mansour et al. (2019) identified self-awareness as one of the critical competencies required for effectively preparing leaders and ultimately reducing burnout.

Various approaches could apply when dealing with leadership competency development with formal or non-formal programs on workplace learning, experience, networking, researching, professional writing, mentoring, and coaching (Wong, 2019). Wulf et al. (2018) noted that mentors could play a role in developing competency when offering appropriate training and assignments to develop skills. Graham (2019) supported mentoring as a strategy for building leadership competency in which the mentor can challenge an employee to accept more challenging assignments. Training is necessary to

enhance the ability of mentors to maintain effective communication, aligning expectations for the mentoring relationship, assessing mentees' understanding of research, addressing equity and diversity, fostering mentees' independence, and promoting mentees' professional development (Weber-Main et al., 2019). Ensuring appropriate educational opportunities for mentors and employees may impact TM.

Succession Planning in Ghanaian Businesses

The vital contribution that small businesses can experience with the economic growth of developing and developed economies is quite enormous (Agyapong et al., 2017). Small and medium businesses create employment and are instrumental in advancing economic development and reducing poverty rates (Abor & Quartey, 2010). Small and medium-scale businesses contribute to job creation, income generation, and poverty reduction in emerging economies such as Ghana (Kusi et al., 2015). Family businesses equate to a significant percentage of the business sectors in Africa and other developing economies (Acquaah, 2011). In Ghana, small and medium businesses make considerable contributions to the socio and economic development of the country, including the lower-middle-income status of \$1,000 per capita (Ghana, 2006). Small and medium enterprises in Ghana contribute about 85% of manufacturing employment in the country and around 57% of the country's GDP (Abor & Quartey, 2010). Subsistence agriculture accounts for 40% of GDP and forms the core of the domestic economy, with a considerable number of small and medium businesses creating employment opportunities in the country (Boeh-Ocansey, 1996; Tetteh & Burn, 1999).

The domestic business sector in Ghana contributes to Ghana's economy (Boohene, 2010). Typical domestic business activities in Ghana include tourism, detergents, fabrics, textiles, leather, blacksmithing, tin smithing, ceramics, timber, mining, bricks, cement, beverages, food processing, baking, furniture, electronics, agro-processing, chemical-based products, and engineering activities (Kayanula & Quartey, 2000). There is evidence of an increase in lower-rated accommodation providers; 68% belong to small family-operated establishments (Mensah-Ansah, 2014).

Family Businesses Contribution to Ghana's Export Industry

The export industry in Ghana includes a) traditional exports such as cocoa beans, gold, and other minerals, timber, and unprocessed electricity; and b) non-traditional exports comprising of other exports not included in the main traditional export category (Kyereboah-Coleman & Amidu, 2008). Between 2000 and 2003, the export of non-traditional commodities experienced massive growth yielding \$588.7 million – an increase of 16.8% over the year 2000 (Agrawal & Knoeber, 1996). 63% percent of non-traditional exports are from domestic Ghanaian owned-businesses (Kyereboah-Coleman & Amidu, 2008). In 1983, the economic recovery program, initiated growth in the non-traditional exports sector from \$1.91 million to \$62.34 million between 1984 and 1990, accounting for 6.9% of total exports and 1% of the country's gross domestic product (Abor & Hinson, 2004). The value of non-traditional Ghanaian exports increases by 16.8%, while the number of exporters increase by 3.2% and the number of products by 3.9% during the same year (Agrawal & Knoeber, 1996). Based on Ghana's Vision 2020,

the total revenue was estimated to be around \$60 billion with, non-traditional exports contributing about \$12 billion (Kyereboah-Coleman & Amidu, 2008).

SMEs contribute to the economic growth in Ghana (Abor & Biekpe, 2006). Small businesses in rural economies contribute to a country's economic stability and lower poverty rates (World Bank, 2014). A significant contribution that domestic business provides to the Ghanaian economy is the indigenous technology which requires local raw materials and equipment (Aryeetey et al., 1994). Domestic Ghanaian businesses contribute to entrepreneurial and managerial skills, which is foundational for local investment and sustained industrialization (Boohene, 2010). Family businesses contribute to creating employment, encourage entrepreneurship, develop communities, and support economic growth and development (Acquaah, 2011).

Ghanaian Women and Entrepreneurship

Women own most informal African businesses and are driven into this work by necessity (Ndemo & Mkalama, 2019). Ghanaian women entrepreneurs are risk-takers in terms of entrepreneurial activities (Quagraine, 2016). Frohmann (2018) asserted that about 70% of the informal traders in Africa are women. Kusi et al. (2015) opined that young female operators dominate most small and medium enterprises in Ghana with low levels of education. Like many women in developing economies, Ghanaian women engage in entrepreneurship because of necessity as there may not be many other job opportunities or other options for income generation (Adams et al., 2017). Although women's entrepreneurial activities are higher in Sub-Saharan Africa than in other

regions, male-owned businesses outperform women-owned (Campos & Gassier, 2017; OECD/European Union, 2017).

Because traditional women's roles involve balancing social and economic goals, women are more prone to intrinsic or noneconomic goals (Adams et al., 2017). Women may be predisposed to adopting informal business practices because of stereotypes and the adverse nature of the operating environments (African Union Commission, 2018). Adom and Asare-Yeboah (2016) noted that women who own businesses could increase their profitability and performance by enhancing the human capital of women entrepreneurs in the areas of the level of education, business training, and experience from previous employment. In addition, males are socialized to be aggressive, assertive, and innovative, while women are perceived to be more laid-back, calm, and take care of others (Adams et al., 2017).

Succession Strategies in Ghanaian Family Businesses

Family businesses create a competitive advantage by pursuing coherent competitive strategies that enhance firm performance (Acquaah, 2011). Ghanaian small business marketing activities may appear simple but are complex and sophisticated (Blankson et al., 2018). The lack of financial resources is a challenge to Ghanaian family businesses as they may not fully explore entrepreneurial competencies embedded within family members (Acheampong, 2018). Decision-making systems in family businesses in Ghana are flexible, informal, and dependent on one or more of the executives (Okello-Obura & Matovu, 2011). Family businesses operate a more flexible work environment based on clients' commitment, loyalty, and well-being (Acquaah, 2011). Local businesses

in Ghana harness their social networking skills and relationships with customers and staff for survival in a competitive subsistence marketplace (Blankson et al., 2018).

Ghanaian family businesses often give priority to family members for top management and other essential positions during succession planning (Bertrand & Schoar, 2006). Owners may manage their small and medium businesses themselves, often assisted by family members (Okello-Obura et al., 2009). Strong internal managerial capabilities are crucial for micro-family firms in Ghana irrespective of the strategic position (Agyapong et al., 2016). Ghana has a collectivist ethical culture that leads to kinship and traditional responsibilities of caring for the extended family, as family members automatically expect family business owners to employ from within the extended family (Mensah-Ansah, 2014). Ferrari (2019) explored the family relational aspects that affected women's succession family firms and noted that gender issues play a role during succession planning. Institutionalized social structures may lead to gender differences that could skew the distribution of males and females in domestic Ghanaian businesses (Boohene, 2010). Indigenous Ghanaian business strategies for competitive positioning may include elements of morality and religion (Blankson et al., 2018). Ghana has gained the reputation of being the only economy with more females than males in entrepreneurship, with tourism being the sector where women outnumber men (Kelley, 2013). Further studies on how cultural and social factors impact succession planning may be helpful.

The Role of Innovation Capabilities

Innovation is related to the performance of small businesses to increase firm performance and respond better to competitive pressure if they harness the positive social capital while utilizing the knowledge, bond, trust, and information generated from social capital to innovate (Agyapong et al., 2017). Ghanaian small and medium enterprises indulge in innovative practices; however, they need to increase the innovative capability to improve their financial performance (Donkor et al., 2018). A micro-family firm seeking to pursue a low-cost position or differentiation should build strong internal managerial capabilities. (Agyapong et al., 2016). The six critical facets identified as suitable measures of innovative capabilities include product, process, solution, behavioral, information technology capability, and training for managers (Agyapong et al., 2017). Innovative family firms looking to build on competitive strategies should consider differentiation strategy rather than cost leadership (Agyapong et al., 2016).

Transition

In Section 1, I discussed some essential foundational and background information about succession planning. I also presented the problem and purpose statements, research questions, interview questions, and the nature of the study. I further discussed Bowen's (1978) FST, which constitutes the conceptual framework for this study. I presented operational definitions, assumptions, limitations, and delimitations of the study. I concluded this section with a review of the professional and academic literature.

In Section 2, I presented the process for the research project by detailing the purpose of the study, the role of the researcher, research method, and design. I also

discussed population sampling, ethical impact, data collection, data analysis, reliability, and validity.

Section 2: The Project

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore the strategies leaders in family businesses use to implement an effective succession plan. The targeted population consisted of six senior executives from three family businesses in Ghana who have successfully developed and executed strategies for succession plans for future leaders. The social impact includes increased awareness of the need to plan effectively for leadership succession, which could contribute to helping solve the challenges associated with the lack of viability and sustainability of family businesses. Economies experience growth in the number of family businesses when such organizations continue to remain viable, which may increase economic activities. The social impact also includes the opportunity to help reduce unemployment in the communities served by the family businesses.

Role of the Researcher

The researcher's role is essential to bring more insight and understanding of the subject or phenomena in a study (Saidin & Yaacob, 2017). In qualitative research, data are collected through a human instrument (Ellinger & McWhorter, 2016; Yin, 2017). The researcher is the primary instrument for collecting data and plays a central role in generating and interpreting the data (Clark & Vealé, 2018; Xu & Storr, 2012). In this study, I was the primary data collection instrument. A qualitative researcher may collect data by listening to participants' stories and subsequently developing meaningful insights from the stories (Moon, 2015). The researcher depends on participants' knowledge and

willingness to share (Raheim et al., 2016). Further, researchers explain the topic under inquiry as they collect, code, and sort qualitative data through reflection (Forister & Blessing, 2016). My role was to collect, organize, analyze, and produce meaningful insight from relevant data regarding the best strategies leaders in family businesses adopt to establish seamless and effective leadership transitions.

Ethical conduct is also the responsibility of researchers (Cumyn et al., 2018). Case study researchers must ensure that they protect the participants and the participating organizations and adhere to the field study protocol (Stake, 1995). Case study researchers need to discipline themselves when undertaking field research (Yin, 2017). I protected the rights of participants as well as my rights as the researcher. The principles of the *Belmont Report* guided me while I conducted this research, which ensured compliance with ethical principles when conducting research based on human subjects, including respect for vulnerable populations, avoiding deception, and equal treatment of all research participants (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1979). The strategies I adopted to ensure beneficence and justice include conducting the interviews responsibly through autonomous interviews, and I ensured that each participant's engagement was objective and fair by asking the same interview questions of each participant. I also received permission from Walden University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) before gathering field data for this study by completing and submitting the IRB's questionnaires for review and clearance.

Further, I was sensitive to my participants, avoided judgment, treated them with respect, and established the trust to obtain the necessary information through

semistructured interviews. The nature of the interactions between the participants involved in a study may influence the outcome of the project and the means of crafting knowledge (Cumyn et al., 2018). Researchers view participants as co-researchers, demonstrating respect, and a nonjudgmental attitude in acquiring the necessary information from the participants (Karagiozis, 2018). The level to which participants are willing to allow a researcher into their world will depend on the ability of a researcher to build trust by demonstrating respect and sensitivity to the participants' feelings (Park et al., 2016).

Additionally, researchers' biases may influence the research process, as they view the information gathered through their lens (Fusch & Ness, 2015). Subjectivity is inevitable but could be valuable in qualitative research (Clark & Vealé, 2018). I did not conduct the study in the organization where I currently work to reduce any researcher bias. I also placed my personal biases aside as I collected data from participants and instead listened with an open mind to the responses and narrations from participants without judging. To further keep my self-bias in check during this doctoral research, I used other strategies, such as bracketing, an interview protocol, member checking, and epoché. Strategies such as bracketing, correct application of the interview protocol, and member checking can help reduce self-bias in research (Moustakas, 1994).

Semistructured interviews are a tool for collecting primary data (Kallio et al., 2016), and member checking ensures accuracy and correct interpretation of the interview data (Morse, 2015). Researchers can also use an interview protocol to gain profound, in-depth, and descriptive information from participants with open-ended questions and

follow-up questions (Yin, 2017). I applied an interview protocol with open-ended questions and follow-up questions to collect data from research participants. I used an interview protocol (Appendix B), including an approved interview questionnaire (Appendix A). I made sure I respected the time limit for each interview.

Participants

When recruiting participants, selection bias occurs when the study sample is not truly representative of the population of interest (El-Masri, 2017). Researchers can facilitate the effective selection of participants, ensure the data generated are relevant, and increase the trustworthiness of the study's findings by defining the appropriate eligibility criteria for the research participants (Sil & Das, 2017; Valerio et al., 2016). I avoided bias when choosing organizational and individual participants for the study using eligibility criteria for selecting study participants. The eligibility criteria for the study participants may include experience, competencies, and knowledge (Marks et al., 2017). Eligibility criteria for selecting participants for this study included board members, managers, and senior leadership team members with at least 1 year of employment with the family business and experience with the succession planning process. I verified that all participants met the eligibility criteria. Participants were managers or senior leadership team members in the family business with practical succession planning experience. Additionally, these managers or senior leadership team members played a role in implementing the succession planning process with relevant experience in successfully managing succession.

Researchers can gain more access to participants by building relationships and helping participants understand the benefit of the research (Singer et al., 2019). I negotiated access to the participants through my professional and personal networks who currently work or have affiliations in family-owned businesses in Ghana. Due to the travel restrictions because of COVID-19, I could not be physically present and on the ground in Ghana to contact the firms; hence, I sent representatives to physically pay visits to some of the firms and negotiate access on my behalf. I also relied on referrals from current and previous colleagues. Once initial access had been established and having all necessary e-mail, telephone, Skype, and social media contacts, I contacted potential participating firms by email, Skype, telephone, WhatsApp, and Facebook messenger calls.

Research Method and Design

The primary goal of both qualitative and quantitative methods is to enable researchers to generalize the findings from the research, making it possible to extend the study findings and lead to broader conclusions (Weis & Willems, 2017). I used the qualitative research method to explore strategies that leaders in family-owned businesses use for succession planning. I applied a multiple case study design to explore different succession planning strategies.

Research Method

There are three research methods to consider: quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods (Abutabenjeh & Jaradat, 2018). Qualitative research is a naturalistic paradigm in which emphasis is placed on the role of the researcher in constructing meaningful

knowledge (Farghaly, 2018). In naturalistic inquiries, planning and implementation happen simultaneously, and the research design can change (Cypress, 2017). Qualitative researchers focus on continuous exploration and description of the context of a phenomenon to gain an in-depth understanding of the subjective and socially constructed meanings (Levitt et al., 2018; Saunders et al., 2016). The qualitative research method allows researchers the opportunity to document the subjective views and experiences of individuals (Weis & Willems, 2017).

In contrast, researchers can use the quantitative method to obtain an objective view of the phenomenon through empirical data and statistical techniques (Weis & Willems, 2017). The positivist paradigm is the basis of quantitative research where the hypothesis is either accepted or rejected and gives room for the generalization of results (Farghaly, 2018). A researcher can examine potential causal relationships by using a quantitative study method (Taguchi, 2018). A quantitative methodology was not appropriate because the focus was not on examining causal relationships between the variables.

Both qualitative and quantitative methods are characteristic of a mixed-methods study that allows researchers to study a common phenomenon, including statistical data analysis (Abutabenjeh & Jaradat, 2018; Doucerain et al., 2016). The mixed-methods approach was also not appropriate for this study because of the quantitative methods of analysis involved, such as statistics. I did not intend to conduct statistical analysis, but instead I gathered participants' experiences on effective succession planning strategies in family businesses.

I used a qualitative research methodology for this study to explore effective succession planning strategies that leaders use in family-owned businesses. In qualitative research, the same elements are essential and inevitable as they add extra dimensions and colors to enrich the findings (Leung, 2015). The strength of the qualitative approach lies in the open format for gathering data, which could provide more room for participants to share their perspectives (Weis & Willems, 2017). The qualitative research method was appropriate for this study because I intended to gain in-depth insight into succession planning strategies within family businesses.

Research Design

The research design details the road map for conducting the study by ensuring alignment with the purpose of the study and the methodology for responding to the research questions (Alpi & Evans, 2019). Qualitative research follows the inductive approach to theory building (Bensal et al., 2018). Qualitative researchers may follow a series of designs, such as narrative research, phenomenology, ethnography, and case studies (Abutabenjeh & Jaradat, 2018; Korstjens & Moser, 2017). Researchers use a phenomenological design to summarize the meanings of participants' experiences and ideological processing to reach conclusions (Yan et al., 2017). Phenomenology was not suitable for this study because the study was not about exploring the meanings of human experiences. Ethnography involves studying human cultures within a society (Korstjens & Moser, 2017; Spradley, 2016), which was also not suitable since I was not interested in studying businesses' cultures. Finally, researchers can obtain sophisticated, in-depth descriptions of the situation under study by adopting a case study design (Alpi & Evans,

2019). Researchers can identify and explore issues related to a complex phenomenon in a real-world context by adopting a case study design (Yin, 2017). I used a multiple case study design to meet my research objectives.

Population and Sampling

The qualitative research method can apply purposive sampling to collect data from different sources about a social phenomenon (Farghaly, 2018). I used purposive sampling to select the appropriate sample of participating family businesses to match the criteria. The targeted population comprised six senior executives from three family businesses in Ghana who successfully developed and executed succession plans for future leaders. The participating family firms have demonstrated successful leadership transitions for at least one generation. Additionally, the senior executives worked with the firms for a minimum of 1 year and a part of at least one successfully executed succession plan.

Access to participants and information in research requires continuous, simultaneous, or iterative negotiation (Karjalainen et al., 2015). Research participation may be done by (a) traditional forms such as face-to-face interactions, telephone conversations, correspondence, or data archives; (b) internet-mediated forms including email, the internet, messaging, and webcams; or (c) intranet-mediated forms and hybrid access, which combines traditional with intranet-mediated approaches (Saunders et al., 2016). Access may also be at multiple organizational levels, such as general access, access to documents, access to selected members, and access to individuals (Karjalainen et al., 2015). I identified three family businesses from the Association of Ghana

Industries that registers most family businesses. I first contacted the firms by sending an email to the respective human resource managers. I obtained cooperation from the firms to research their institutions by obtaining a signed letter of cooperation from an authorized official. Once the letters of cooperation were signed, I invited volunteers that met the criteria and who expressed interest to participate in the interview to physically sign-off on written informed consent forms. I then shared a schedule for the interviews with each participant to ensure that they know what time slots are available to select based on their availability. Before each interview, I shared an interview protocol (Appendix B) that explained the process involved and how I would be recording the interview with a voice recorder and taking notes.

Ethical Research

The qualitative research process involves interactions with humans, which affects both researcher and participant (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2017). Researchers must consider ethical research issues, including the impact of the study on the participants, obtaining informed consent, protecting the anonymity of participants, and assessing the potential impact of the researcher's action on the outcome of the process participant (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2017). IRB approval is necessary to ensure compliance with ethical standards compliance with the United States federal regulations regarding ethical practice in research (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1979). Ethical practice refers to the standards of behavior that guide a researcher's conduct about the rights of those who serve as subjects of the work or are affected by the research (Saunders et al., 2016; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2016). Consequently, I focused on

protecting the rights of my participants during data collection and analysis by storing the information in both hard and soft confidential files, which I will keep for at least 5 years. After the mandatory 5 years, I will use a shredder and incineration to destroy all paper-based data. I will also completely delete all electronic data after 5 years. Further, the study was voluntary, and participants had the choice to withdraw from the study at any time.

Impact of the Study on Participants

It is important to incorporate ethical issues and make moral judgments when collecting data about social processes (Carter, 2019). Ethical consideration is to protect people, communities, and environments and contribute to good in the world (Israel, 2015). I sought approval from the Walden University IRB before contacting participating institutions and potential research participants. Ethical research also enables the establishment of trust and integrity and enhances the opportunity to conduct sophisticated research leading to a significant contribution to society (Israel, 2015). I ensured that I established trust with the participants by following the necessary steps to integrate ethical concerns, which also increased the integrity of the study and the opportunity to make a positive contribution to society.

It is necessary to obtain informed consent before engaging research participants (Yin, 2017). Informed consent is to obtain the participants' permission to voluntarily participate in the study and inform them of their rights to withdraw from the process at any time (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2017). The process of informed consent includes a requirement for study participants to review relevant information about the research

before obtaining their agreement to participate (Cooper & McNair, 2018). I obtained informed consent from all participants and instructed them about any potential harm such as fatigue or stress. I also protected participants from harm, protected the confidentiality of participants, promoted vulnerable groups, and ensured a fair selection of participants. Participants must be capable of sharing information of their own volition. Failure to take these concerns seriously may impact the overall findings of the research.

Most participants who participate in research seek anonymity (Israel, 2015). I considered issues related to sensitivity and confidentiality. While recording and presenting the data, I used pseudonyms to protect the identity of participants. I avoided referring to participants' and organizations' names and assigning alphanumeric codes such as C1, C2, C3 representing companies 1, 2, and 3 respectively, and P1-P6 representing participants 1-6. I did not provide participants with any incentives for taking part in the interview process to avoid the perception of persuasion or coercion. I discussed the interview date and time with the respondents and ensured the agreed time would not inconvenience them. After the interviews, I sent a thank you message to each participant to express my appreciation for their support.

Without the assurance of confidentiality, ensuring validity becomes challenging (Israel, 2015). I will keep the data collected locked in my vault for five years to protect the rights of the participants. I removed names or any other identifying information of individuals or organizations and ensured their details are not used outside of the research and without their permission.

Data Collection Instruments

I was the primary data collection instrument. A researcher may use qualitative methods like open-ended questions or interviews to collect data and use text and image analysis or themes and patterns interpretation to enhance the overall results (Abutabenjeh & Jaradat, 2018). Copland and Creese (2015) asserted that the relationship between the researcher and participants must be respectful and continuous. I was respectful to all participants and made efforts to establish an ongoing relationship with them. Yin (2017) noted that a qualitative case study might come from different sources, including documentation, archival records, interviews, direct observation, participant observation, and physical artifacts. Besides the data I collected through semi-structured interviews, I also requested data from company websites, company documents, and company reports related to the subject matter.

I ensured the reliability, validity, and rigor of my study's data collection instruments and processes through member checking and triangulation. Member checking is an iterative generative process and may be incorporated in the data collection process either by posing a specific questioning style or relying on key informants to verify the researcher's understanding of the data as the research process unfolds (Naidu & Prose, 2018). I conducted member checking by summarizing the transcribed data and sent the interpretations back to the participants for confirmation. Methodological triangulation is a process of enhancing rigor in the research of data collected from different sources (Rooshenas et al., 2019). I triangulated the data by collecting data from different sources, including semi-structured interviews and a review of organizational documents, including

statutes, articles of incorporation, history, and background, and press releases from company websites. I have attached the interview questions (Appendix A) and the interview protocol (Appendix B).

Data Collection Technique

Shifting from using a single source of evidence to multiple sources of evidence during a case study can be a more useful approach (Yin, 2017). I utilized the technique of collecting data from multiple sources rather than a single source to my study to reduced issues related to construct validity and reliability. Case study research must be comprehensive and incorporate multiple sources in real-life situations (Morgan et al., 2017). A consistent data collection method such as the interview protocol can help reduce interpretation bias (Forero et al., 2018).

Data sources for qualitative case studies include documentation, archival records, interviews, direct observation, participant observation, and physical artifacts (Saunders et al., 2016; Yin, 2017). According to Saldana and Omasta (2018), researchers can gather data through interviews, focus groups, observations, documents, field notes, photographs, video recordings, internet sites, and other audio or visual materials. Methods for collecting data may include qualitative interviews, documentary analysis, audio recordings of appointments, and quantitative recruitment log data techniques (Rooshenas et al., 2019).

The initial plan was to conduct face-to-face interviews. However, due to COVID-19 social distancing protocols and respecting participants' wishes who may not want to meet in person, I included virtual methods for conducting the interview, such as

telephone, skype, and video conferencing techniques zoom, WhatsApp messenger, and Facebook messenger. I conducted virtual face-to-face, semi-structured interviews as my primary data collection technique. I collected and incorporated additional information sources from company internet websites and reviewed relevant company documents and reports in my study. When conducting a study that involves human participants, researchers need to protect and maintain the rights of those individuals participating, as well as their organizations (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1979). I used an interview protocol (Appendix B) during the data collection phase of my study after Walden University IRB approved it. Saunders et al. (2015) described triangulation as a validation technique that involves using more than a single source of data and a collection method to confirm the authenticity of research data, analysis, and interpretation. Also, Yin (2018) detailed various methods of triangulation, including (a) data triangulation, (b) investigator triangulation, (c) methodological triangulation, and (d) theoretical triangulation. I used my interviews with participants, data from the company websites, and analysis of company documents and reports to triangulate findings for this study by comparing these independent results to corroborate the field research data for any emerging patterns, trends, or contradictions.

Field notes could help researchers capture things they see and hear (Copland & Creese, 2015). Due to covid-19 related travel restrictions, I could not pay a visit to the three companies physically. However, while audio-recording interviews, I also took field notes and asked for additional information such as company websites, company documents, and reports relating to succession planning from the companies under review.

I obtained the permission of the participants to record the interviews and noted any observations. The data collection technique for this study was semi-structured interviews with leaders of family-owned businesses using open-ended questions (see Appendix B), member checking, and a review of organizational documents, including statutes, articles of incorporation, general information, and press release from the company website. I engaged my participants in discussions that can provide information in answering the research question.

Data Organization Technique

Managing the qualitative data is useful for collecting, tracking, preparing, processing, organizing, storing, securing, retrieving, verifying, and sharing the data to inform subsequent data collection and enhance data analysis (Guest et al., 2013). Misuse of data affects people, even if the data seems to have nothing to do with people (Zook et al., 2017). Researchers need to identify the data source when managing data by labeling observable physical data, consent forms, audio files, and file documents under unique file names (Guest et al., 2013). I coded all data sources using separate code names for organizations and participants. I also stored all electronic data in password-protected files in a password-protected computer. I have secured in a locked safe in my house all data such as interview recordings, field notes, data from the company website, documents, reports, signed consent forms, and hard copies of data to ensure confidentiality of participants and the data.

The need to ensure the anonymity of research participants has received little attention, yet researchers must take anonymity issues seriously to protect the identity of

participants (Moore, 2012). Researchers must follow due procedures when handling data to avoid causing harm or stigmatizing groups (Zook et al., 2017). Doctoral researchers must organize the collected data to protect the participants and organizations participating in the study (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1979). Guest et al. (2013) equally underscored the importance of storing research data in dedicated physical and electronic spaces to ensure security for the researcher's benefit and participant confidentiality while avoid loss of important information. I will store the data for five years so that they can be readily available for reference. Afterward, I will destroy all data burning pages and erasing all electronic data.

Data Analysis

Data analysis is one of the critical stages of the research study. Raskind et al. (2019) asserted that a rigorous analysis of the data could help to identify the complexities of the issue, give a sense of appropriate mitigation measures, and allow participants to share their lived experiences. Data analysis is the process of preparing and organizing the data collected, reducing the data into themes through coding, and representing the data in figures, discussions, or tables (Cypress, 2018). Researchers can discover meaningful patterns, present data logically, and lead to proper interpretations through data analysis (Akinyode & Khan, 2018). Researchers can handle, compile, disassemble data, identify emerging themes and codes, and reassemble data using themes to make meaningful conclusions and valid observations (Yin, 2018). Kalpokaite and Radivojevic (2019) emphasized the need to ensure that the qualitative data analysis leads credible, dependable, and replicable, no matter the explicit and systematic methods chosen.

I conducted the data analysis in line with Yin's 5-step thematic analysis for conducting case studies to identify and code themes, trends, and patterns from the research data. According to Yin (2018), researchers must (a) collect and compile the data, (b) disassemble the data, (c) reassemble the data, (d) interpret the meaning of the data, and (e) conclude the data. For this study, as a first step, I collected and compiled data from different sources of including semi-structured interviews with senior leaders of family-owned businesses using open-ended questions, member checking, and a review of organizational documents including statutes, articles of incorporation, general information, and press release from the company website. I used different tools, including audio recording the semi-structured interviews, taking notes, accurately transcribing the interviews, and recording the responses systematically to enable coding, interpretation, and reporting. Technology played an important role during the data analysis stage of this study as I used audio recording devices and NVivo 12 software.

The data must be disaggregated to include the in-depth review of the data enables the researcher to explore the evidence and satisfy the what, who, where, when, why, and how (Maher et al., 2018). Researchers use the coding process to disassemble data to determine aspects of dissimilar data by defining and assigning data with codes, labels, and descriptions to ensure the recording and sequencing of data in a meaningful order (Aldahdouh, 2018; Phillips & Lu, 2018). As a second step in the data analysis process, I disassembled the data collected using the NVivo 12 software for data coding to sort, filter, identify possible relationships, confirm emerging themes, and analyze and report results.

Researchers could complement the weaknesses of NVivo software by resorting to traditional coding tools like notetaking, worksheets, journals, colored pens, and sticky notes, according to Maher et al. (2018). I took field notes and kept separate journals for each participating company to supplement the data collected.

To achieve data aggregation researchers can use strategies such as coding by labeling similar data with unique codes and assigning meaningful descriptions (Raskind et al., 2018). The codes and descriptions enable the emergence of mutual themes with varying levels of detail that facilitate the structured interpretation of the data for actionable conclusions. Relationships and common themes within the data that are relevant to satisfying the research question emerge during the data analysis stage (Yin, 2018).

Researchers can use qualitative data analysis software or computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software to organize and systematize the data collection and data analysis process (Freitas et al., 2019). Yin (2018) explained that data analysis involves identifying meaningful patterns and themes that describe the data relative to the purpose of the research. Researchers can use NVivo computer programs to code data and themes collected (Copland & Creese, 2015). NVivo software can be used to analyze open-ended responses, as well as other text-like data, images, videos, and reflective writing (Feng & Behar-Horenstein, 2019).

A three-step approach to using the NVivo software, starting from imputing, review, and then the analysis (Boddy & Boddy, 2016). Thus, the first stage enhances the data analysis process while the review helps to identify and clean out redundant materials

limiting the themes for analysis. Further, Newcombe et al. (2015) explained that the NVivo functions enable the researcher to assess coherence in analyzing data, while Weigl et al. (2017) pointed out that manual data management is time-consuming, error-prone, inefficient data analysis process as compared with the NVivo software. I used NVivo 12 software to process and analyze the data collected and stored in a password-protected file. NVivo qualitative data analysis software can help in sorting, coding, processing, and analyzing the interview data.

Similarly, the official company documents were extracted and separately loaded into the NVivo 12 software for independent coding, processing, and analyses. I used the additional data sources from official company documents in addition to data from semi structured interviews as a method of data triangulation. I used NVivo 12 to reassemble and interpret the data to identify and capture key insights to aid the analysis and interpretation of the data in line with the research question. Following the interpretation of data, I concluded relevant to the research question, the FST conceptual framework, critical topics from the study's literature review, and extant literature on succession planning strategies in family-owned businesses.

The theoretical lens through which I answered the research question is the FST conceptual framework. My final analysis stage involved linking the codes and themes to my theoretical framework and reviewing academic and professional literature. Text and contextual alignment in research studies are essential and help promote the study's reliability (Weigl et al., 2017). I reviewed new recently published studies to support the findings that emerged and relate the research results to the study's conceptual framework

and the general body of the literature. Consequently, I conducted a critical analysis of the research findings and linked the emerging themes and patterns. The critical analysis helped my understanding of the FST conceptual framework for this study regarding family members' role in the circumstances explained by generational adaptations across generations and the complex dynamics involved in family business succession planning in Ghana. I ensured triangulation of the data by collecting data from multiple data sources, including primary sources such as semi-structured interviews and other secondary sources from organizational documents such as statutes, articles of incorporation, history, and background, and press releases from company websites.

Reliability and Validity

Research rigor is the quality or state of being exact, careful, precise, thorough, and accurate (Cypress, 2017). Reliability and validity apply to qualitative inquiry (Spiers et al., 2018). Researchers can ensure rigor when they pay attention to the research design and the various components (Alpi & Evans, 2019). Data triangulation can help strengthen construct validity and enhance reliability, objectivity, truth, and attainment of data saturation (Fusch & Ness, 2015; Yin, 2018). Forero et al. (2018) suggested the methods of triangulation and reflexivity might be helpful to minimize the researcher's bias, affirm that the findings were objective, and accurately reflect on participants' perspectives and experiences. Cypress (2017) considered the term qualitative rigor an oxymoron because a naturalistic inquiry is different and often questioned for validity and credibility; however, there are means for qualitative researchers to improve the rigor of their research.

Reliability

Continuously changing human behaviors and interactions makes reliability problematic in qualitative research (Cypress, 2017). In quantitative research, reliability refers to precisely replicating the processes and the research results (Leung, 2015). Spiers et al. (2018) opined that reliability in qualitative research ensures that that data is adequate to exhibit consistent support for the analysis across participants. Reliability reflects the consistency of the research practices, analysis, and conclusions, considering the partiality and limits of the research finding (Cypress, 2017). I ensured that the data collected during this study is reliable by using member checking. During the member checking process, I summarized the transcribed data and the interpretations back to the participants to confirm that it represented the exact message they intended to pass across.

Researchers define dependability (reliability) as the extent to which another person can replicate the study and whether, when there is more than one observer, members of the research team agree about what they see and hear (Bryman, 2004); & Trochim, 2006). Researchers can ensure the research findings' dependability by transparently describing and documenting the different activities in the research process, from data collection, analysis, and interpretation to the presentation of findings in the form of an audit trail (Yin, 2018). Researchers can ensure the dependability (reliability) of a research study when they report in detail such that the reader can determine proper research practices followed and that future researchers can repeat the study (Johnson et al., 2020). I ensured the dependability of this research study by reporting the research

process in detail and keeping an audit trail of the research process from data collection, analysis, and interpretation, to the presentation of findings.

Validity

Validity refers to the appropriateness of the tools, processes, and data (Leung, 2015). Validity in research deals with the accuracy and truthfulness of scientific findings (Cypress, 2017). Leung (2015) asserted that to consider a study as valid, the research question, methodology, research design, sampling, and data analysis techniques, results and conclusions must be valid for the sample and context. Spiers et al. (2018) asserted that validity deals with data appropriateness, which provides an accurate account of participants' experiences. To demonstrate validity, I questioned the appropriateness of each step of the research process, including the research question and the sampling. FitzPatrick (2019) noted different aspects of validity, such as credibility, dependability, confirmability, authenticity, rigor, plausibility, goodness, soundness, transferability, and quality assessment. Moon et al. (2016) presented a narrower version of the elements of qualitative research quality, including credibility, transferability, confirmability, and dependability of the research. Yin (2018) emphasized the need to engage in member checking to seek respondents' validation to rule out any chance of misinterpreting the meaning of participants' views and perspectives. I used member checking to seek validation from participants and to ensure the accuracy of the data collected. I conducted member checking after the interviews by providing participants with my succinct summary interpretation of their transcribed interview responses to ensure accuracy.

Credibility

Data triangulation is comparable to looking through a crystal to see all the different facets and drawing meaning from the data collected, thus mitigating researcher bias (Denzin, 2012). Methodological triangulation refers to using data from multiple sources, multiple qualitative methods, or multiple researchers (FitzPatrick, 2019). Saldana and Omasta (2018) suggested that researchers collect the data from multiple sources such as interviews, focus groups, observations, documents, field notes, photographs, video recordings, internet sites, and other audio and visual materials. To ensure credibility, I employed methodological triangulation by collecting data from multiple data sources, including primary sources such as semi-structured interviews and other secondary sources. Secondary sources included information gathered from the company website, annual reports, and publications and reports from company websites. I also took field notes during the interviews. By gathering data from different sources, I was able to increase the study's credibility by confirming and disconfirming information. I used member checking and methodological triangulation to ensure the credibility of the results of the study

Data Saturation

Data saturation is one of the best-practice methods that researchers use to increase the rigor and trustworthiness of qualitative research (Johnson et al., 2020). Benítez et al. (2018) noted that data saturation is where additional data collected provides no new information. Data saturation occurs when no new information emerges from the data collection, new coding is not feasible, and no new themes are emerging (Fusch & Ness,

2015; Johnson et al., 2020). Researchers can ensure data saturation by checking for the availability of sufficient information to respond to the research question by tracking codes per interview until no new codes emerge from conducting additional interviews (Forero et al., 2018). I achieved data saturation by increasing the number of research participants using purposive sampling until no new insights emerge from collecting additional data.

Transferability

Transferability refers to using the same research process in a different situation, which may lead to different results (FitzPatrick, 2019). Transferability deals with issues about the ability to transfer the findings from a study to other contexts. Transferability is how much the research results can be extrapolated, with confidence, to a broader population (Moon et al., 2016). Qualitative researchers can ensure transferability by providing the necessary details to enable the reader to determine whether the results of a study are applicable in a new but similar context (Yin, 2018). A method for checking transferability is by thick description where the researcher describes the phenomenon under study in detail, thus allowing readers to establish the extent to which the study results are transferable to other similar periods, settings, and situations (Cypress, 2017). I ensured the transferability of this study where other future researchers may use the same research process and arrive at similar results by implementing purposive sampling and thick, detailed descriptions.

Confirmability

Confirmability refers to the ability of the study findings to be well connected with

the conclusions such that it is possible to replicate the process (Moon et al., 2016). Researchers must ensure the detailed journaling of the methodology, reflecting the process of data collection, documentation, analysis, and how the constructs and theories emerge from the data (FitzPatrick, 2019; Moon et al., 2016). I ensured the confirmability of this study by capturing the procedural steps to research for this study to gather the data on the constructs and theories.

Transition and Summary

In Section 2, I discussed the role of the researcher, participant, research method and design, population and sampling, ethical impact of the research, data collection, data organization, data analysis techniques, reliability, and validity. In Section 3, I presented and discussed the data collection, analysis, and identification of themes from the findings from the study, related the application of this study to professional practice, and presented the implications for social change. I also provided practice recommendations, suggested areas for further research, and concluded the study. I concluded by sharing my reflections on the doctoral study process and my experiences within the doctoral program.

Section 3: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore the strategies leaders in family businesses use to implement an effective succession plan. I conducted semistructured interviews with six senior executives from three family businesses in Ghana who successfully developed and executed succession plans for future leaders. The data collection process included semistructured interviews and a review of organizational documents, including statutes, articles of incorporation, history, background, and press releases from the company website recorded, transcribed, and coded. The interview protocol and member checking were both applied for the field phase of this study in addition to this review.

NVivo 12 software was used to categorize, code, and identify key themes from the transcribed interviews and company documents. The following themes emerged from the thematic analysis: (a) preservation of family legacy, (b) succession planning purpose, (c) training and mentoring, (d) entrepreneurial learning, and (e) cultural embeddedness. I applied Yin's thematic analysis by analyzing process to various documents from the participating companies, including interview transcripts, company reports, and strategic and business plans relevant to succession planning. For the three sampled companies, their official documents corroborated the data collected from the six interviews.

Presentation of the Findings

The overarching research question for the study was "What strategies do leaders in family businesses use to implement effective succession plans?" The participants in

this study shared their lived experiences on the techniques they had used to implement effective succession plans successfully. The six participants were senior executives of three family businesses in Ghana that had developed and executed strategies to establish succession plans for future leaders effectively. All the three participating family firms had demonstrated successful leadership transition for at least one generation. The participants had been employed with their firms for a minimum of 1 year and were a part of at least one successfully executed succession plan. Table 1 provides information on the participants' eligibility to participate in this study.

Table 1

Eligibility for Participants

Requirement	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6
Participated in at least one successfully executed succession plan	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Number of years employed with the firm	>20	>35	>25	> 20	>10	>10

I assigned to the participants and the companies alphanumerical codes C1 to C3 for companies and P1 to P6 for participants. I interviewed six participants using semistructured interviews; each interview lasted between 40 and 50 minutes. I observed data saturation after conducting the sixth interview, where no new themes and information emerged, so there was no need for more interviews. Upon completing the interviews, I transcribed the audio recordings of each interview, summarized the transcribed data, and then conducted member checking by sending the summary of the transcripts back to each participant to ensure appropriate interpretation. All participants agreed with the interpretations of their summarized interview answers. From the thematic

analysis, the following primary themes emerged: (a) preservation of the family legacy, (b) succession planning purpose, (c) training and mentoring, (d) entrepreneurial learning, and (e) cultural embeddedness.

Theme 1: Preservation of the Family Legacy

The six study participants noted that the founder or leader's original vision embodies the family legacy, which is essential to preserve and pass on from one generation to another. Long-term survival is at the core of the business strategy to protect family values for the long haul. Business continuity is critical for the survival of Ghanaian family businesses. P6 noted that the family business was in existence to pass on the father's legacy to the children and members of the community. It would be a waste if no family member took over the business, which will curtail the preservation of the family legacy, noted P3. P1, P2, P3, and P6 also confirmed that a family firm succession plan is a strategy for preserving and promoting the family's values.

A typical characteristic of succession planning is that every leader has a particular vision and plans. It becomes vital to make necessary adjustments and changes to the business strategy when a new leader noted P1. Because the business strategy and structure of C1 were not suitable at the time of taking over, according to P1, he made changes to the strategic plan resulting in a more relevant business model. It was essential to ensure the new strategy and structure would position the business well under the prevailing situation to ensure viability. P1 aimed to reshape the focus of targeted clientele and add additional services. The refocusing of the business strategy during the takeover in C1 was necessary to remain viable for the long-term as P1 perceived that the old model

would not last in the current dispensation. Regardless of the modifications made to the business strategy in C1, the founder's original vision still holds to this day.

Successor Identification

All participants interviewed portrayed the passing on of the business to a family member as a natural part of the family business. Succession naturally comes with Ghanaian family businesses, according to P3. It is almost automatic to initially focus on the first male child as the next successor, noted P1. P6 equally documented that there is every intention to pass on the skills to someone in the family. In the case of C3, at the creation of the business, the founder already knew the next successor, according to P3. All participants confirmed a high expectation for the first male child of the family to take over the business from the parent who founded the company in succession in Ghanaian family firms. There is a lot of expectation on the first male child to be ready to take over unless he has no interest or intention to be in the business, in which case it falls on the next child. Because of the automatic expectation for the first male child to take over the business, such children would receive special attention during the grooming stage, noted P1. The current generation of successors in C1 and C2 are first male children. There was, however, an exception in C3 where the successor was female because there was no first male child in the family.

Family Communication Style

Most participants noted that the communication style was more authoritative, with older generations operating like dictators. However, changing trends influenced by Western culture are slowly reflecting a more open Ghanaian communication culture. For

example, P1, P3, and P5, who are the younger generation and currently running their family's businesses, confirmed their parents' approach to communication and decision-making was more open and consultative. As a result, a consultative approach to decision-making applies. The open communication also helped to understand whether the children were interested in taking over the business. Leaders build trust much more quickly when the older generation understands the intentions of the younger generation and vice versa. The management of the company cannot hand over to someone you do not trust to have the best intentions of carrying on the family legacy, according to P6.

C1 and C2 have been in existence for over 50 years. Participants from C1 and C2 indicated that the first generation founders did not practice much flexibility and openness in communication. For example, P2, the dad of P1, went through a rigorously controlled communication style with his dad, who founded the business. The flexibility and openness became more enhanced from the second to the third generations, where there was more freedom to share different perspectives and introduce new ideas. The current generation is even more open between P1 and his young son, who is being prepped to take over the business. C3 has only been in existence for about 10 years, and both participants reported a very open communication style and an open and consultative decision-making approach. P1 is cautiously making efforts to allow more openness now to make his mistakes now when he is around and guide him. P1 asserted that it is essential for the different generations to understand each other, which can only be possible through very open communication.

Participants' assessment of the impact on the business of the communication style that existed in the family businesses over the generations indicated that open communication facilitates a practical understanding of whether the child has a genuine passion for the company. The relaxed communication style helps to understand whether the selected next-generation leader is passionate about the business. If there is no passion, then the management could take steps to develop or enhance the passion. Through open communication, it also becomes possible to understand the talent and capabilities of the child and how to hone the skill and take it to the desired level appropriate for success. The opportunity given P1 to make his own decisions had been helpful to sustain his interest in the business. From the findings, it became apparent that an open communication style creates more trust between family members, making open decision-making possible. A participatory leadership approach is ideal for allowing the child to participate in decision-making. Inviting ideas from the child can also help build essential skills for the future.

Theme 2: Succession Planning Purpose

Based on the data, only one out of the three family farms participating in this study had a formally documented succession plan. Though C3 reported documenting a well-structured succession plan, C1 and C2 noted that their company has no succession plan was not formally in writing. Regardless, all three participating firms had implemented rigorous strategies to ensure the business's passing over to the next generation. According to P1, there is no written down succession plan in C1; however, succession naturally comes with their industry, mainly working their hands. All

participants confirmed that the succession idea was in the founders' minds, who implemented different strategies to ensure that a close family member is prepared and groomed to take over the business. Succession planning is an inherent part of Ghanaian family businesses where children must join the family business. All participants indicated that the succession plan starts right from the business's inception, whether documented or not. Ultimately, all participants agreed that it is crucial not only to have succession intention but also to write it down as a formal plan. Having an adequately documented succession plan is helpful for the business to survive for the long term.

Long-term survival is at the core of the family firm strategy to protect the family values for the long haul based on the study findings. C3 is a social enterprise type of business to social transformation rather than a commercial venture. The rationale for the social enterprise approach was to ensure the passing on the family legacy to a broader stakeholder base, noted P6. The family business leaders could establish such firms with the prime objective of promoting family values. Thus, the succession plan becomes a very crucial roadmap for attaining this important objective right from the onset. Making profits is equally essential; hence, an approach that ensures long-term continuity while bringing in profits is a more sustainable approach. The family business could sometimes be set up as a memorial to honor a beloved family member's memory. Besides promoting the family legacy, C3 was set up to honor the memory of a younger brother who passed tragically, noted P6. P4 equally stated that the reason for establishing C2 includes honoring the memory of their late grandparent, who was talented. According to P6, founders and owners of family businesses need to factor in succession planning to their

business models and strategies. The business strategy must include a clear succession plan that will enhance business continuity and passing on the family legacy, which was the case in C3, noted P6.

Alignment of Governance Mechanisms with the Succession Strategy

Governance structures within Ghanaian family firms vary. Ghanaian family members strongly influence micro-family businesses' operations (Agyapong et al/, 2016). The small firms that participated in this study are governed solely by the business owner and did not have written down statutes to guide business conduct. Owners of the small firms C1 and C2 consulted their children sometimes but not on all matters. External parties are usually not involved in the governance of small Ghanaian family firms. The more prominent firm/institution, C3, was more structured and had in place well-articulated statutes that guide business conduct. The regulatory role that family governance mechanisms such as family councils, assemblies, offices, meetings, committees, and family constitutions play in the relationship between the family and the business (Adams & Quagraine, 2018).

In Ghanaian family firms, the succession plan is at the core of the strategic plan. The statutes and regulations of the business could entrench the succession plan at the core, as was the case in C3, noted P5. Embedding the succession plan in the strategic plan can allow preserving certain entrenched positions within the statutes for family members only. At the inception of C1, the founder already wrote had the name of the successor in the statutes, noted P6. The successor had already been named and designated to take over the highest leadership role on reaching a certain stipulated age. In C1 and C2, the

leadership role is for the first male children. Leaders in C3 left the power of appointment of the most senior position to the family.

Other succession strategies included in the governance mechanism in C3 were that only a family member could be made a permanent member of the council to ensure protection for the family's control of the firm and protect the family legacy from one generation to another generation. The right to appoint a few other vital positions was also deliberately reserved for the family in C3. Depending on the nature of business, governance and regulatory requirements may require other nonfamily members on the board in such larger Ghanaian family firms. Empirically this family is one African family that indicates how leaders in a family-owned corporate organization can structure the growth business, according to P5.

Governance structures may also require the involvement of other nonfamily members. Business leaders can plan such that the family, as the smallest unit, would still retain certain rights and particular representation. The statutes offer an opportunity to make sure that a family member remains a permanent member of the governing council while the nonfamily members rotate. The family also has a say in who gets appointed on some key identified positions.

Leadership Competencies

Leadership skills ranked second in terms of essential leadership competencies. Without adequate knowledge about the nature of the business, it will not be easy to pass on the company. The potential successor must have the requisite academic background and relevant years of experience, like the requirements for any other nonfamily potential

successor. A successor who does not understand the business's nature could waste resources and cause financial loss. Ghanaian family firms, therefore, ensure that the training of potential successors includes practical leadership skills. An example from the study finding showed that after P2 returned from the UK having completed his professional training, his assumption was to start helping his father run the family business automatically, but that did not happen. P2's dad was not ready to hand over because he felt the need to learn some leadership skills and the professional skills necessary to prepare before taking over. Good communication skills were the third critical competency identified in this study to be crucial to effective succession planning in Ghanaian family firms. Through sound, open, and honest communication, participants were able to assess the interest of their children in the family business. Through open communications, the child will also feel free to innovate and share great ideas to take the company forward, which the parent must be open to welcome and see how this could be applied if found useful.

All participants also identified trustworthiness as being an essential relevant skill in Ghanaian family business succession. P5 noted that from the experience of other family businesses, external family members meant to support often set up similar companies of their own with the same ideas. It is essential to hand over to someone trustworthy and committed, and hardworking. Trust is emphasized as the binding material that keeps groups together, hence determining the social system (Missimer et al., 2017). The family connection is vital because of the need to align with the vision of the founder. It is essential to have someone whose ideas are in sync with and who buys into the vision of

the founder of the business. Technical competence is necessary, but it is equally important to have someone who buys into the founder's vision that nonfamily members may not appreciate.

Regardless of the knowledge about the importance of the successor to have the right competencies, none of the firms approached could confirm the existence of a competency profile with written down required competencies that the successor must possess. A similar study on Ghanaian family business succession planning concluded that no active steps exist to build a profile of the role and the skills the prospective successors required to fill the position (Buckman et al., 2019).

Theme 3: Training and Mentoring

Responses received from all participants alluded to the fact that both formal and informal grooming methods apply. Proper professional training and sufficient knowledge and in the area of business are critical. P1 is a 3rd generation successor in the family business of C1. P2 is the second-generation successor who is the first son of his father and was sent for professional training in the UK by his dad out of six siblings. P3 is a 2nd generation successor in the business. P1 being a 3rd generation successor, did not train professionally in the UK like his dad and granddad; instead, he pursued an academic degree in Ghana while at the same time being taught in the business by his dad. P1 noted that both his dad and granddad kept a library of books they used during their studies abroad in the UK, which P1 would often read to gain more knowledge. Although P1 was not trained professionally in the UK like his dad and grandfather were, he picked up the skills informally by working in the family business. P1 noted the vital role that his

knowledge in administrative issues has played in managing the family business. P1 stated that while being trained professionally in the informal way as you work in the company, you get to study the people working in the company regarding their character and behaviors, strengths, and weaknesses. In this sense, you also learn some soft skills indirectly while also getting a complete understanding of how things work. A study confirmed that successors are introduced to the work in the Ghanaian context, visiting the family business during holidays and weekends (Buckman et al., 2019).

Ghanaian family firm owners usually try to ensure that the children get training in the same line of business. When the children complete formal education, the parents expect the child to help the family business. Some children may choose to join the family business in small family firms directly after secondary school rather than get higher education degrees.

Formal Education

The study findings showed that right from the inception of the family business, P5 was being groomed to take over the running of the company. One of the succession planning strategies in C3 was to skew P5's education towards the future takeover. Therefore, P5 completed bachelor's and master's degrees in the family business area with her dad's encouragement, who is also the founder of the business. P5 is also currently pursuing a doctorate in business administration to equip her for the new role fully. Part of the formal education strategy in C3 involved carefully selecting good preschools and secondary schools for potential successors.

Participants confirmed that critical success does not lie only with technical skills. Still, there is a need for a more holistic approach regarding the education of future successors, including getting certification in the business's administrative aspect. A good leader does not only have to be technically competent but must also understand the administrative aspect of running the business, noted P1. The diverse knowledge is essential and had helped to understand different aspects of managing the business. Successors, therefore, must be formally educated in multiple areas to facilitate a good understanding of all the various aspects of managing the family business.

Informal On-The-Job Training

Another part of the Ghanaian succession training process included the children working in the family business during vacations to learn the ropes. Informally, the children hang around and play in the company, where they observed and learned some skills about the business. The study findings confirmed that while going to school, P1, P3, and P5, the younger generation in charge of C1, C2, and C3, would work part-time during weekends and holidays for a small allowance for the family business. The idea of receiving the allowance sustained their interest, and the part-time work they picked the skills by default.

According to P1, a constant feeling of the environment, through regularly being present in the office premises, builds adjustment and makes the children get used to the place. The founder gets to assess the successor's capabilities and identify their managerial and technical competency requirements as the successor gets involved in the family business while still young (Buckman et al., 2019). P2, P4, and P6, the older

generation got the opportunity to observe their children and assess their capabilities and interests. The older generation can help shape the children and better prepare them when they understand them well.

The P1, P3, and P5 learned a lot during frequent visits to their parent's offices. By hanging around their parents at work and doing errands or odd jobs to support parents, the P1, P3, and P5 also learned some crucial soft skills and competencies such as working extra hard and being diligent. Building soft skills such as effective leadership and communication skills can help bring out trust issues and identify a passion. P1 noted that he observed that his dad was extremely hard working and would work an extra hour every day after all other employees had left for the evening. This practice stuck with him to this day and was an important lesson.

P1 noted that it is possible to even learn about the character of the people working in the business, which is good background knowledge that can help once a successor controls the company. P1 has three children of his own, and he is grooming the first boy son for future succession. Similarly, P3 and P5 are also grooming their children for succession. The training strategies don't change with time and are still helpful in transferring essential skills. According to P1, he applies a similar approach and has already observed specific strengths and capabilities in his son, grooming for succession.

Intense Mentorship

Mentoring played a key role as P5 went through a fast-track grooming. As a result, she became the only one involved as a foundation director during her 20s. Later in life, he learned from his dad by consulting him whenever he encounters a difficult work

situation. Even up to the age of 90, P3's dad was still guiding him. Before the dad passed, he would call the dad whenever he had complex issues, and the dad will either refer him to specific books or physically come to the business and show him how to handle the problematic issue. Mentoring successors go on for life in Ghanaian family businesses. The older generation serves as mentors for young successors and is available to guide them even after retirement. P5 went through a crash course in terms of her preparation to take over the running of the family business. P5 went through a fast-track grooming process put in place for P5. The degree of mentorship was very intense. The mentorship involved introducing P5 at a very intimate level to the people who had the knowledge, expertise, and experience, making sure she was around the best professors, CEOs, politicians, diplomats, etc.

As part of the grooming process, the successor gets introduced to the founder's partners and social networks (Buckman et al., 2019). In addition, P6 noted that he often shares his ideas and experiences of running businesses over time with P5. He allows P5 the room to disagree and even to make her own mistakes. However, if I feel strongly, I step in and 'apply the breaks' – noted P6. The life experiences and pitfalls shared by P6 guide P5 to avoid making similar mistakes, and hopefully, she will be able to meander pitfalls that are inevitable along the way. P5 emphasized that the intense mentorship part of the succession plan made more impact in preparing her effectively to take over the running of the family business.

P6 noted that he acknowledges the hard work of P5. He is very proud of her achievements so far and shows appreciation that she is doing very well, although

culturally, he may not show it openly as an African man. In Ghanaian family business succession, the successor and founder work side by side towards the power transfer in a bridging partnership (Buckman et al., 2019).

Incentive System for Successors Under Training

Ghanaian family business owners give incentives to potential future successors as they work in the family business during weekends and holidays. By providing a small allowance, they can sustain the interest of the children. The incentives also motivate the children to continue hanging around the family firm to perform errands and odd jobs to support the business. Inadvertently, the children learn beneficial soft skills such as effective communication style, which help deal with trust and identify a passion. The incentives are in different forms, such as a small allowance, salary, or extra income earned by providing additional services on the side to some clients. Although incentives were in place, all participants in this study noted that potential successors were not treated differently regarding salary and benefits. However, the successors under training must work hard and learn all the needed skills and competencies. While training, my dad informed me that I would not get any special treatment and that the only benefit was that I would not need to pay for the apprenticeship, according to P2. P2 found this approach by the dad to be a little bit difficult.

Regarding his children, P2 noted that he would not apply the same approach as his dad use during his time of training. The most important thing is for me is to be there to guide my daughter, noted P2. The critical role was for my daughter is to know how to manage the business.

All participants confirmed that the incentives given during training were not excessive and were often considered inadequate by the younger generation undergoing grooming. The younger generation participants noted that the incentive systems might have been deliberately planned not to be excessive as a strategy to avoid creating a sense of complacency with the future successors complacent while emphasizing that hard work comes with rewards.

The carrot and stick approach adopted by the parents to give some allowance for time spent helping in the business after school, during weekends, and during holidays to the child when they perform small tasks is a very effective strategy to transfer knowledge, according to P1. The preceding statement confirms the assertion by Werner et al., (2018) when they noted that family firms are more effective with knowledge preservation compared to nonfamily firms. Ghanaian family-owned businesses recognize knowledge and capabilities as a valuable resource to be passed on during the succession planning process and the need for a systematic approach that makes easy retrieval when collecting, storing, and using the knowledge (Buckman et al., 2019).

Theme 4: Entrepreneurial Learning

The study findings also indicated that innovation is critical for long-term survival. Skills and techniques change over time, so staying abreast of current and future trends is vital. Buckman et al. (2019) asserted that family-owned businesses' entrepreneurial learning and succession planning are strongly interlinked. In Ghana, family businesses tend not to survive beyond the second generation, noted P5. P5 attributed the challenge related to lack of continuity to the lack of education; for example, the founder is usually

the entrepreneur, but subsequent generations may not be interested in entrepreneurship. It would be great as a country to start averting our minds to entrepreneurial skills within our education system, noted P5. Within a Ghanaian context, making entrepreneurial learning an integral part of the succession planning process goes a long way to give a family business better chances of remaining viable in the long haul, even after the founder is gone (Buckman et al., 2019).

Theme 5: Cultural Embeddedness

Participant five noted that the most formidable challenge with family succession is to make sure the right culture is in place within the business. The strategy to preserve company C's family legacy is to engrain the original vision in the culture of the organizational culture. Once the corporate culture encapsulates the vision, it won't matter who takes over in the next 20 years. By the time of the 3rd generation succession, if all things go according to plan, the vision would have been ingrained in the institution's culture. The vision would have become part of the institution's culture and can be carried forward easily – according to P5. Another cultural dimension is that although the younger generation, out of respect, may not want to impose and instead defer to the judgment of the older generation as a sign of respect. The practice of the younger generation letting go of some ideas and accepting ideas put forward by the older generation as a sign of respect could impact the business both positively and negatively.

Stakeholder Engagement Approach

C3 has successfully used the stakeholder engagement culture approach as part of its succession strategies. Through this approach, some Ghanaian family firms have a

stakeholder engagement culture to promote family culture involving the family, management and staff, and the broader stakeholder network. The stakeholder engagement approach employs systematic methods to inculcate the vision in the minds of all stakeholders. This approach pays excellent attention to how they orient newcomers into the family business. The orientation is important and must align with the corporate vision. A great deal of attention is given to external networks as a channel to carry the legacy forward to the outside world. Suppose we get it wrong and cannot build the organizational culture around the original vision within the next ten years. In that case, it will be challenging to continue the family legacy, the institution might continue to exist, but the vision could be lost, according to P5.

Another typical cultural dimension is where the adult is always correct, and the child is always wrong no matter their age. The older generation has challenges accepting ideas from the younger generation as they don't want to be 'wrong.' The older generation would still like to maintain the power to make decisions for the younger generation on business issues. A typical example is that the founder in C1 could produce only a limited quantity of products per week; however, it is now possible to make more than twice that capacity per week with improved skills and techniques. The difference in opinions, unfortunately, brought disagreements. In a typical Ghanaian cultural context, the older generation perceives that the younger generation is trying to usurp authority. The current generation of successors, P1, P3, and P6, all noted that sometimes their ideas take the back seat to avoid coming across as usurping the authority of the older generation predecessors, thus limiting their ability to take the initiative and innovate.

Success Factors

Besides formal and informal training and grooming processes, participants also noted other success factors such as interest, passion, trust, family networks, and good communication. Within the industry where the person wields the skills, it is essential to pass it on to someone you trust. It is necessary for the older generation to have complete trust and confidence in the potential successor, albeit still being available to give guidance if need be. Disagreements occur occasionally, and opinions diverge sometimes, but that should not deflect attention from the structured succession strategy. Neither should it affect the implementation of the plan – noted to P6.

Succession Challenges

P5 noted that the most challenging part of family succession is to make sure the right culture is in place within the business. Challenges related to resistance to change. There appears to be the fear of the older generation losing their control position, which makes them resistant to change, not embracing the new perspectives. The next challenge relates to government regulatory standards. For example, there are specific regulatory requirements in industries that the government highly regulates. Hence, any family member in line for succession must meet all the regulatory requirements of the oversight bodies. The government must perform its role as regulator and make sure the business does not cut corners. However, to preserve family interest, family businesses must include specific clauses in the business strategy. Often it becomes difficult to secure all the necessary approvals from regulatory due to special provisions to ensure continuous family involvement. A further challenge relates to the need to prove yourself as a

successor and show that the post is not just being handed to you – noted P5. I had to work twice as hard to avoid perceiving that I'm getting the leadership role only because I am related to the founder, P5 noted.

The narrow family pool of candidates poses yet another challenge to the family business. The challenge is to find the next immediate family member who will be interested in carrying on the family legacy, noted P6 and P1. The fear of not having any suitable or interested close family member to pass on the baton in the future is one of the challenges family-owned businesses must grapple with, according to P6. One of my children is very much ICT inclined, so I'm doing everything possible to see how to merge the interest of my child to the family business so that the children can take over the running of the company in the future, noted P3.

Another more difficult yet unavoidable challenge is the inability to distinguish between family life and business. The distinction between family and business life is essential but not an easy decision to make. According to P1, family business leaders sometimes tend to look at things from a personal perspective because they know you and are used to your ways rather than looking at things from a business perspective. For example, the parents want to have a say in who the child gets married to because they want to control who enters the family and make sure that decision will benefit the business in the long run, according to P1. P5 confirms having to move into the same house as her parents to make it easier to work together more effectively. Living in the same house with my parents helps push the business forward and sometimes comes with the benefit of getting other family members to provide free childcare during office hours,

noted P5. However, the challenge is where there is conflict at work in the boardroom, and it continued at home. You can't close from work and forget about it; you don't know when work stops and when the family begins, according to P5.

The study findings showed that the intense continuous grooming aspect of the succession plan implementation impacts the social life of successors. The requirement to learn from the best practitioners leads the potential successor to socialize more with far older people and less with own age mates. Finally, challenges related to strategies that veer away from the founder's vision can sometimes lead to disagreements. Strategies must always tie in with the original vision of the founder.

Threats posed by the economic impact of COVID-19 have immensely affected the survival of such family businesses. All participants emphasized the need for the government to put in place strict policies to support such family businesses to avoid extinction. There is the need for tailor-made regulatory frameworks suited for family business succession.

Links to the Literature

All participants mentioned that succession planning is essential for preserving family legacy in family-owned businesses; however, effective succession planning has received little attention. The importance of succession planning is a widely acknowledged truth, and so is the fact that there is a lack of proper planning (Bąkiewicz, 2020). Succession planning has a positive relationship with business sustainability (Bokhari et al., 2020). From the study findings, C1 and C2 did not have document succession plans formally. However, both companies put in place efforts to ensure the transfer of power to

a family member. The acknowledgment from participants about the importance of succession planning yet the data confirming the inability of two companies that participated in this study to show a documented plan aligns with the literature. The participants noted the importance of not only having the intention to pass on the business to the next generation of family members but also to document the plan. A written succession plan offers both parties a sense of direction and can avoid confusion during decision-making (Buckman et al., 2019). Although C1 and C2 did not have a formally documented succession plan, participants acknowledged the importance of adequately writing the succession plan.

Family firms play an essential role in economic growth and development; countries are the predominant business forms worldwide (Matias & Franco, 2020). Bąkiewicz (2020) equally noted that family businesses play a crucial economic role. Bokhari et al. (2020) concluded that succession planning in family-owned businesses positively and significantly links business sustainability. Bąkiewicz (2020) underscored the importance of succession planning to the business development component. The study participants highlighted that the succession plan is the roadmap to ensuring that the family preserves and passes the legacy from one generation to another. It is beneficial to pass on the family legacy to a trusted family member rather than an outsider who might not be loyal to the family, noted P1, P3, and P5. Both P5 and P6 confirmed that the succession plan for C3 is entrenched in the company's statutes and included specific aspects of appointing the next leader preserved for certain family members. P5 also noted

that the succession plan mandates that a family member has a permanent seat on the board of directors.

Firms must prepare for succession in advance because family firm succession planning begins long before the formal transfer of power from one generation to another (Matias & Franco, 2020). Having a properly written succession plan in family businesses could improve performance even before the plan is fully implemented (Mihaylov & Zurbruegg, 2020). All participants in this study noted that succession planning occurs at the very onset of starting the business. The participants in this study indicated that Ghanaian family business owners introduce their successors to the company early to generate interest. As the successor gained interest in the business, they gradually get more responsibilities in the family business, taking on weekend or holiday jobs (Buckman et al., 2019). Training at this early stage in life is a strategic approach that can offer tailored strategies to fill identified skills gaps.

Cultural embeddedness is part of family business succession but could lead to the specificity of cultural background becoming especially harmful to succession planning in the family business in Poland (Bąkiewicz, 2020). Family-owned companies are encouraged to consider succession planning when strategizing about business sustainability (Bokhari et al., 2020). Gaps in family business succession planning studies exist regarding how control of the family business is passed on (Bąkiewicz, 2020). Family issues and business issues affect each other in a family business. It is essential to manage the overlapping family-firm systems carefully (Mihaylov & Zurbruegg, 2020). The new generation participants alluded to the difficulty of separating family issues from

business issues that are sometimes challenging. P1 and P5 noted that the impact of the typical Ghanaian culture where the younger generation must show respect to the older generation could sometimes pose challenges when voicing opinions may be misconstrued as disrespecting the elders.

Researchers compared the power transfer process in family firms to where a founder would transfer the knowledge and business approach, emphasizing that both are gradual (Matias & Franco, 2020). The academic or formal development aspects, mentoring and coaching, planned assignments, and job shadowing are also important. Other informal elements include giving the successor a chance to gain external experience to build their entrepreneurial self-efficacy (Buckman et al., 2019). The new generation participants interviewed in this study had all gone through various grooming processes almost throughout their lives, starting from when they were young.

Links to the Conceptual Framework

The findings of this study align with the constructs of the FST, which constitutes the conceptual framework for this study. The results of this study underscore the influence of family values, culture, communications style, approaches to training and mentoring, and the impact on family issues on the family business. The FST by Murray Bowen in the 1950s viewed the family as an acting and reacting system rather than a mere group of individuals (Stanton & Welsh, 2012). Bowen's FST offers a broad view and emphasizes the functioning of the multigenerational family of the person (Butler, 2021). The family business is often the manifestation of the family system, and the nature

of family structures, parenting styles, and communication patterns influence the entrepreneurial abilities of family members (Soleimanof et al., 2019).

Researchers can identify mechanisms through which parents train other generations, thus broadening understanding of how families evolve in behavior through longitudinal, whole-family designs (Scott et al., 2018). While family characteristics and family traits could influence the features of the next generation's families, parents who have the will and intention may be able to improve the characteristics of their children through the use of higher levels of connection, individuation, and minimizing conflict (Bell, 2018).

The data gathered on the communication style trends from participants in C1 and C2, firms that have been around for more than fifty years, emphasizes a shift in approach from an authoritative style to a more open and flexible fashion. C2 type of communication is more open and relaxed, noted P5 and P6. Unique family member behavior patterns and interactions lead to ongoing individual behavioral changes, repetitive habits, routines, rituals, and the creation of shared realities (Padilla-Walker et al., 2019). Based on the data from this study, the second and third-generation successors confirmed that the successors must exhibit unique behaviors such as hard work, determination, and trustworthiness that the founders of the family business possess. The founders also adopt all means possible to try and instill good behavioral traits that they deem could lead to success. Open communication constitutes the foundation of the relationship, with both successor and founder not feeling constrained (Buckman et al., 2019).

Applications to Professional Practice

The succession planning process is a means to clarify and increase understanding of the needs and the direction of the business while identifying and developing the future successor (Ritchie, 2020). The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore the strategies leaders in family businesses use to implement an effective succession plan. The findings suggest that succession planning is essential to family-owned companies to ensure sustainability in such firms and preserve family values. The conclusions of this study provide valuable insights on succession planning strategies in family businesses. Insights from the participants demonstrate beneficial and effective succession planning strategies applicable in family-owned companies in Ghana.

Businesses must to plan for succession and avoid being caught unaware and unprepared (Ritchie, 2020). Insight from the study participants suggests that succession planning in Ghanaian family firms begins at the very onset of the business. Successors are groomed from a very age in life to take over the company in the future. Different data collected from participants underscored the need to formally write down the succession plan to serve as a road map.

One of the challenges of the succession planning process in family firms relates to family firm CEOs sometimes being reluctant to disengage due to psychological attachments (Umans et al. 2020). Family issues and business issues affect each other in a family business; therefore, leaders must carefully manage the overlapping of the systems (Mihaylov & Zurbruegg, 2020). Participants in this study noted the difficulty of separating family issues from business issues. Umans et al. (2020) asserted that the

emotional attachment of some family firm CEOs, fear or sadness about letting go of the business, could negatively affect or frustrate the succession planning in family firms. Participants in this study noted that the older generation is still involved in the family business directly or indirectly, even in their old age. The young generation participants currently running the businesses noted that they sometimes agree with their parents out of respect even though they had other ideas.

The findings from this study could be beneficial for management practice and contribute to an increased understanding of the essential elements in the succession planning process in an African context. Leaders in family firms can apply the strategies for effective succession outcomes and how critical stakeholders can effectively manage as part of overseeing the succession process for positive organizational results. Managers may find the various techniques for effective succession planning practices in family businesses elucidated through this study is helpful.

Businesses that plan and prepare proactively for succession transitions stand to enjoy long-term health and performance (Ritchie, 2020). Managers of family businesses could benefit from gaining access to more information about effective strategies necessary for ensuring smooth leadership transitions for business sustainability. The participants called on regulators and policymakers to implement tailor-made regulatory measures to benefit family businesses' growth and long-term survival. The study's findings reduce knowledge gaps in understanding the family business succession planning strategies in a Ghanaian context.

Implications for Social Change

Through this study, I discovered some effective succession planning strategies applicable in family-owned businesses in Ghana. A study on succession planning may produce more insight into effective leadership transition strategies, which may help executive leaders in family businesses in the communities. The potential for positive social change from the findings of this study could result in far-reaching social benefits by increasing awareness of the need for succession planning in family-owned businesses through providing advisory recommendations for family business leaders or future entrepreneurs. The social impact from the study may drive the adoption of succession planning strategies. The social impact may also include the opportunity to help reduce unemployment in the communities served by the family businesses.

The awareness created may positively impact beneficiary communities served by the family businesses due to senior executive leaders of family businesses planning effectively for leadership succession. The awareness created could contribute to helping solve the challenges associated with the lack of viability and sustainability of family businesses. When family businesses remain viable, communities can benefit by increasing numbers of family businesses and increasing economic activities to potentially reduce unemployment in the communities served by the companies.

Recommendations for Action

The study's findings have demonstrated some successful innovative management strategies that business leaders may adopt to enhance succession planning in family businesses in Ghana. The recommendations derived from this study are in line with the

following themes: (a) preservation of family legacy; (b) succession planning purpose; (c) training and mentoring; (d) entrepreneurial learning; and (e) cultural embeddedness.

In line with the study findings, I recommend that succession plans be formally documented as part of the business strategy regardless of the succession intention; and open and flexible communication that allows for participatory decision making is highly encouraged. I recommend a straightforward process for identifying relevant competencies and a competency catalog that can form a reasonable basis for business owners to assess the successors, identify competency gaps, and make appropriate plans to support them. Also, family business owners must focus on building entrepreneurial skills and engaging in entrepreneurial activities to succeed and thrive. Finally, there is the need for the government to have a supportive regulatory framework with tailor-made policies that support family businesses.

The results of this study may be disseminated to local, regional, and global businesses to demonstrate the application of succession planning strategies within family businesses. I intend to share the study's findings with others through education sessions, workshops, national and international conferences and seminars, and mentorship with interested business executives.

Recommendations for Further Research

The primary purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore the strategies leaders in family businesses use to implement an effective succession plan. The focus of the study on fashion design and higher education learning industries in Ghana can be limiting. This study's findings have demonstrated how future research may

consider other prominent Ghanaian economic sectors such as agriculture, tourism, and pharmaceuticals. This study was a qualitative multiple case study. The qualitative approach tends to be context-dependent, leading to findings that are the subjective views of participants, thus limiting the ability to generalize or test hypotheses. Quantitative or mixed-methods research may reveal essential relationships between the different factors impacting effective succession planning in Ghanaian family businesses.

Interviews make it possible to understand experiences, the meanings they attached to them, and the consequent effect on the succession process, which are all very important (Buckman et al., 2019). The study was limited to the Greater Accra region of Ghana. However, future researchers could target other regions. The study was also limited to only six senior executives and omitting other employees or stakeholders in the family businesses. Future research may include other employees or stakeholders in the family business.

Reflections

Although a long and challenging journey, I have mastered the art of independent research through this doctoral study process. I have learned to be more patient and more effective with my time management. My levels of endurance and perseverance have grown through this journey as I often needed to remind myself to commit to the goal and keep my eyes on the ball while ignoring the pain. My knowledge and understanding of succession planning have deepened tremendously. The impact of COVID-19 and related challenges for me to collect the data physically significantly delayed the data collection process. The effect of COVID-19 also led to delays from participants whose businesses

had been severely impacted and hence were less interested in prioritizing my research at that time. Throughout this doctoral journey, I have learned so much, which has dramatically impacted my inward and outward look at myself, family, country, and the world.

Conclusion

The primary purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore the strategies leaders in family businesses use to implement an effective succession plan. I conducted this study in Ghana with three family businesses. I used NVivo 12 to organize and analyze the data that I collected from the six participants, which led to the following themes: (a) preservation of family legacy; (b) succession planning purpose; (c) training and mentoring; (d) entrepreneurial learning; and (e) cultural embeddedness. The findings of this study were consistent with the current research concerning succession planning strategies in family businesses. The results confirm that succession planning is at the heart of the business strategy in Ghanaian family firms because the succession plan is the road map to ensure the preservation and passing of important family legacy from one generation to another generation. There are differences in succession planning about the size of the family firm.

The importance of documenting the succession plan is more pronounced in more prominent and more institutionalized Ghanaian family firms, and the opposite is true of smaller Ghanaian. Small family firms may not have a documented succession plan. However, larger family firms have well-structured and well documents succession plans. Also, succession planning is a natural part of the business strategy of Ghanaian family

businesses based on the Ghanaian culture of rights of inheritance. Potential successors in Ghanaian family firms must work extra hard to prove themselves worthy of carrying the family mantle. Such firms put in great efforts to successfully transfer essential skills and knowledge to potential successors through formal education, informal training, intense mentoring, and continuous coaching. The mentoring of successors goes on for life in Ghanaian family businesses.

Based on the findings, I propose the following recommendations: (a) succession plans must be formally documented as part of the business strategy regardless of the succession intention; (b) Open and flexible communication that allows for participatory decision making is highly encouraged; (c) a straightforward process for identifying relevant competencies and a competency catalog is vital and can form a reasonable basis for business owners to assess the successors, identify competency gaps, and make appropriate plans to support them; (d) family business owners must focus on building entrepreneurial skills and engaging in entrepreneurial activities as a means to succeed and thrive; (e) there is the need for the government to have a supportive regulatory framework with tailor-made policies that support family businesses.

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Appendix A: Interview Questions

1. What succession planning strategies are included in your organization's strategic plan?
2. What effective processes do you use in your organization for leadership development?
3. What key competencies do you use in the process of selecting future leaders as part of the succession planning process in your organization?
4. Does your organization have any knowledge transfer practices? If so, could you explain how they work?
5. What are the factors impacting success and barriers to effective succession planning?
6. Would you like to add any additional information about succession planning strategies?

Appendix B: Interview Protocol

Interview Protocol	
What You Will Do	What You Will Say: Script
Introduce the interview and set the stage.	Hello. My name is Vivian Amanquah and I am a doctoral student in the Doctor of Business Administration program at Walden University. Thank you for taking the time to participate in the study called “Succession Planning Strategies in Family Businesses” Please note the interview will be recorded and is confidential.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watch for nonverbal cues. • Paraphrase, as needed. • Ask follow-up probing questions to get more in-depth responses. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What succession planning strategies are included in your organization’s strategic plan? 2. What effective processes do you use in your organization for leadership development? 3. What key competencies do you use in the process of selecting future leaders as part of the succession planning process in your organization? 4. Does your organization have any knowledge transfer practices? If so, could you explain how they work? 5. What are the factors impacting success and barriers to effective succession planning? 6. Would you like to add any additional information about succession planning strategies?
Wrap up interview and thank participant.	I would like to thank you for your time and participation in the study.
Schedule and confirm a date when the participant will receive follow-up member checking via email.	I will review the recording of the interview we have completed today. In the following days, I will provide you with a summary of my comprehension of your answers to each question. I will ask for your confirmation by e-mail if the information is accurate and correct. You will be able to confirm if I have missed any information or to add any additional information.
Follow-up Member Checking	
Ensure member checking by sending an e-mail to participants with a summary of their responses.	<p>I have reviewed the recording of the interview; below is a summary of my comprehension of your answers from the recorded transcripts. Please confirm by e-mail if this information is correct for the following questions. Please let me know if I have missed anything and if there anything you would like me to add.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Question and succinct synthesis of the interpretation – perhaps one paragraph or as needed. 2. Question and succinct synthesis of the interpretation – perhaps one paragraph or as needed. 3. Question and succinct synthesis of the interpretation – perhaps one paragraph or as needed. 4. Question and succinct synthesis of the interpretation – perhaps one paragraph or as needed. 5. Question and succinct synthesis of the interpretation – perhaps one paragraph or as needed. 6. Question and succinct synthesis of the interpretation – perhaps one paragraph or as needed.

Pertinent guidelines for individual interviews:

- Everything is voluntary and participants may withdraw at any time with no consequences.
- All submissions are personal and not considered public speculations.
- Breaks are permitted.
- There are no right or wrong answers, you can pass a question if you desire.
- Notes will be taken with phone interviews. The interviews will be recorded.

Appendix C: Interview Selection Time

Dear Managers,

Several Interview dates have been listed for the phone interviews. Please select two different dates that will be feasible for your phone interview. Return the form to the researcher via email at [REDACTED] before the telephone interview sessions and you will be notified of your selected date. Each phone interview will be conducted taken in August 2020. The following are the available dates for the interviews:

1. August 10, 2020 _____
2. August 12, 2020 _____
3. August 14, 2020 _____
4. August 16, 2020 _____
5. August 18, 2020 _____
6. August 20, 2020 _____
7. August 22, 2020 _____
8. August 24, 2020 _____
9. August 26, 2020 _____
10. August 28, 2020 _____

Thank you,

Vivian A. D. Amanquah