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Executive Management Methods to Prepare Employees for Future Positions

Pheobie Latossa Coleman
Walden University

Walden University

College of Management and Technology

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Pheobie Latossa Coleman

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Review Committee
Dr. Peter Anthony, Committee Chairperson, Doctor of Business Administration Faculty

Dr. Tim Truitt, Committee Member, Doctor of Business Administration Faculty

Dr. Diane Dusick, University Reviewer, Doctor of Business Administration Faculty

Chief Academic Officer
Eric Riedel, Ph.D.

Walden University
2016

Abstract

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by

Pheobie Coleman

MS, University of Phoenix, 2007

BS, Jackson State University, 1998

Proposal Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Business Administration

Walden University

December 2016

Abstract

Creating successful leaders is one of the challenges that social services organizations are facing. Employees may lack essential managerial skills to become productive leaders, and some managers may lack viable succession planning methods for preparing employees for leadership positions. The purpose of this case study was to explore methods that executive managers use to prepare employees for leadership positions. Path-goal theory and transformational leadership represent the conceptual framework that grounded this study. Semistructured interviews were conducted with 10 executive managers in the social services industry within southwest Georgia with experiences and skills specific to implementing successful succession planning. Company archives of corporate reports, government records, and business and management records were used for triangulation. The data were coded and analyzed using a modified van Kaam method. Participants verified the accuracy of the analysis of their responses through member-checking. The findings revealed 4 emergent themes: organizational management, hiring employees that fit the culture, leadership capabilities, and talent management. A recommendation from the study was that executive managers find methods to prepare employees for leadership positions. These findings may contribute to positive social change by identifying methods to prepare employees for leadership positions, thereby generating organizational sustainability, increasing organization revenue, and creating community economic development.

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Dedication

This research study is dedicated to my girls, Asari and Kree. Mommy did this for you, my babies. I would like to thank my mother Hattie, my family member; Mary Ann, and Khenadi, my friends; Sandreea, Eris, and Anthony, Maria, Chris, Dr. Montgomery and Pastor Gage for your support and understanding. I cherish and dedicate this study to my sister that departed this earth on July 7, 2016. I love you, Monica Hendrix. I dedicate this work to the hard working supervisors and case managers in the social services industry.

Acknowledgments

I wish to extend thanks first to my God for the grace and blessings granted to me in pursuit of this goal, and especially for the wisdom it took to complete this stressful milestone. I would like to thank my doctoral study chair, Dr. Peter Anthony, for his time, insight, critique, and encouragement throughout this process. Thanks for taking on the task to guide me through this doctoral degree process. You have endured and sacrificed as much as I have to get to this point, which has been a long journey. I would also like to thank my doctoral study committee members, Dr. Tim Truitt and Dr. Diane Dusick. Your guidance and commitment helped me complete this study.

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Section 1: Foundation of the Study

Executive managers have been concerned about where their organizations are going as baby boomers reach retirement age (Wright, 2012). As baby boomers leave their current positions, there could be a significant impact on the organization. According to Wright (2012), succession activities did not continuously exist in most organizations; therefore, there was no need for succession planning and management. Rothwell (2011) defined succession planning as developing a pool of people considering promotions, or talent management concentrating on attracting, developing, positioning, and retaining the best-qualified individuals.

Effective talent management aids in meeting the developing skills gap facing organizations (Datt & Rivera, 2013). Recruitment and retention, learning and development, performance management, succession planning, and rewards and recognition were dynamic elements of a talent management plan (Datt & Rivera, 2013). Succession planning was critical to developing organizational success (Galbraith, Smith, & Walker, 2012). In this qualitative multiple case study, I explored succession planning as a mechanism to prepare executive managers to implement succession planning and determined how executive managers have improved employees' managerial skills and talent for future leadership positions.

Section 1 includes the problem, the background of the problem, the purpose, and the conceptual framework for this study. I chose to use a qualitative multiple case study method to explore mechanisms for executive managers to prepare their organization for future leadership positions. Executive leaders should focus on preparing potential leaders

by implementing succession planning when improving future leaders' managerial skills and talent within their organization. This qualitative multiple case study involved participants who held executive manager's positions and individuals who wanted to advance to a leadership position within the social services industry in southwest Georgia. I used semistructured interviews with open-ended questions to collect data and analyze the findings.

Background of the Problem

Baby boomers born between 1946 and 1964 who chose to leave leadership positions have affected the job market within the past 12 years (Pennell, 2010). Most employees would have liked to retire earlier rather than later; however, employees worked longer (Flynn, 2014). Baby boomers retiring from organizations may affect organizational productivity by leaving vacancies in leadership roles (Pennell, 2010). The increase of qualified employees may have lowered recognizable gaps by retirees since leaving the organization and executive managers properly trained the remaining employees increased leadership positions internally. With the predictable departure of baby boomers, executive managers began to realize the need for succession planning to handle the influences retirees had on an organization's capability without disruptions in service (Pennell, 2010).

Executive managers created interventions such as coaching, mentoring, and developing programs to prepare employees for leadership positions in organizations (Kim, 2012). A succession plan has served the purpose of capturing valuable insight and experience from employees who would like to assume future leadership roles (Galbraith

et al., 2012). The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore executive managers' succession planning methods as a means to bolster executive managers' ability to develop employees' managerial skills in order to have filled needed key positions for future leadership positions. The focus of this study was to establish an avenue for executive managers to provide information to employees concerning the concept of succession planning. The focus of this study included the social services organizational leaders in southwest Georgia.

Problem Statement

As baby boomers near retirement age, succession planning is critical for organizational leaders (Hall & Hagen, 2012). Baby boomers over the age of 65 will represent 25% of the workforce by 2020 (Doug, 2014). Executive managers have prepared for the future by developing and replacing key employees by anticipating a plan to transition employees into key leadership roles (Simoneaux & Stroud, 2012). The approach of involving a succession plan allowed executive managers to develop viable candidates' managerial knowledge and skills when replacing retirees.

Creating a succession plan has helped executive managers prepare a pool of candidates for key positions (Rothwell, 2011). The general business problem was that employees are not prepared to advance into leadership roles. The specific business problem was that some executive managers within the social services industry lacked viable succession planning methods for preparing employees for leadership positions.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore what succession planning methods were successful for executive managers when preparing employees for leadership positions. Executive managers within the social services industry in southwest Georgia implemented succession planning that bolstered executive managers' ability to develop employees' managerial skills in order to occupy needed key positions for future leadership positions. The specific population group of this study was executive managers within the social services industry in southwest Georgia. The intention behind succession planning was to identify and develop potential leaders within organizations (Gray, 2014). Executive managers strengthened employees' managerial skills and knowledge as they intentionally and systematically prepared employees for future leadership positions (Simoneaux & Stroud, 2012).

The ability to improve executive managers' abilities to enhance employees' managerial skills contributes to social change by helping leaders maintain organizational talent management and organizational sustainability. An executive manager's ability to provide employees with future leadership positions may provide a sense of security, stability, and eventual longevity where it comes to sustaining their profession and livelihood. The findings from this study may affect social change as individuals gained resources they have reinvested in the community.

Nature of the Study

A qualitative method was appropriate to address the purpose of the study. This study consisted of gathering participants' responses to open-ended interview questions in

a semistructured interview format. Hurt and McLaughlin (2012) stated that qualitative research is conducted to explore and comprehend the significance of people or groups related to a social or human problem. Therefore, my intent for using a qualitative method for this study was to understand actual experiences of executive managers using succession planning as a strategy to prepare employees for future leadership positions within a social services industry in southwest Georgia. Quantitative or mixed methods were not appropriate for this study since a quantitative approach and the quantitative element of a mixed methods approach focus on statistical analysis and hypotheses (Marshall & Rossman, 2014). Therefore, neither quantitative nor mixed methods fit the purpose of this case study.

The selected research design was a multiple case study. The intent of this study was to address (a) why there was a lack of entry-level employees advancing into senior leadership positions and (b) how to prepare employees for future positions. Yin (2012) noted that when a researcher focuses on answering *how* and *why* questions, multiple case study is an appropriate design to use.

I chose a multiple case study over a phenomenological study since the focus was on what succession planning methods leaders could have used and not an exploration of lived experiences. With the case study design, I used methodological triangulation to explore organizational documents along with the interviews. I did not choose an ethnographic design since the purpose of the study did not include observation of participants in their natural cultural setting.

Research Question

As employees attempted to move into leadership positions within the social services industry in southwest Georgia, they lacked sufficient managerial skills and talent to advance into future leadership positions. The following central research question framed this study: What are some succession planning methods that may help executive managers successfully prepare employees for leadership positions?

The interview protocol addressed the steps of the interview process. I included definitions in the definitions section and the interview protocol in Appendix A. I informed the participants of the definitions of transformational leadership, path-goal theory, and succession planning before the participants responded to these questions (see Appendix B). The following open-ended questions represent the interview questions for participants of the study (see Appendix B):

Interview Questions

1. What type of transformational leadership do executive managers displayed in your organization?

2. How do executive managers use path-goal theory when leading the organization to success?

3. How do executive managers assist with improving employees' managerial skills and talent?

4. What managerial skills do entry-level employees lack?

5. How should executive managers prepare employees for leadership positions?

6. What criteria did you use in selecting a mentor?

7. What programs do you recommend, such as coaching, mentorship, and developing programs as methods to help executive managers to prepare individuals for leadership positions? Explain.

8. What else, if anything, do you believe is pertinent to the purpose of this study about succession planning and promoting into leadership positions, which you would like to share that was not covered in the interview questions?

Conceptual Framework

The intent of this study was to explore succession planning to determine methods for executive managers to prepare employees for future leadership positions. The findings from this study may help executive managers exemplify what it takes to fill leadership vacancies. Transformational leadership and path-goal theory were two management theories that represented the conceptual framework of this study (Awan, Zaidi, & Noureen, 2011). The reflected principles of path-goal leadership theory and transformational leadership theory were two major approaches to understand leadership (Hayyat Malik, 2012).

The theory of transformational leadership derived around the mid-1980s (Rowold, 2014). Transformational leadership focused on leadership abilities and took management to a new level of changing organizations to a new course of action (Awan et al., 2011). There are different types of leadership styles; however, transformational leadership has gained more consideration from organizational researchers and academics (Mittal & Dhar, 2015).

Transformational leaders are brave, value-driven, enduring learners, have confidence in individuals, and can deal with difficulty and uncertainty (Tuckey, Bakker, & Dollard, 2012). Transformational leadership fits this study since transformational leaders are willing to place the needs of others first and an authoritative leader puts their needs first. A transformational leader stands as a role model for their employees and encourages them to think for themselves and rise to the challenge of leadership (Hyypia & Pekkola, 2011).

House's 1974 path-goal theory dealt with relationships between leader behavior of corporate managers and subordinates' job expectancies (Hayyat Malik, 2012). An organizational leader's role is to employ a large number of individuals having different abilities and motivation (Hayyat Malik, 2012). A transformational leader's goal is to empower and attract future leadership by providing the resources necessary for developing potential individuals (Dimaculangan & Aguiling, 2012). The next management theory that represented the conceptual framework of this study is the path-goal theory (Awan et al., 2011).

The path-goal theory of leadership is a situational theory based on an expectation which successful leader performance has a helpful impression on subordinate job satisfaction (Awan et al., 2011). Path-goal theory provides a to leadership and represented useful tactic to leadership and represents an analysis of functions that worked to fulfill subordinate surroundings for employees to be inspired, perform at high levels, and be content in their working environments (Awan et al., 2011). Tafvelin, Hyvönen, and Westerberg (2014) used the context of their article to discuss how transformational

leadership affected leaders in the social service industry. Williams (2012) stated that for over 30 years, transformational leadership methods increased job satisfaction. The intention regarding Williams' academic work was to decide if a connection occurred among transformational leadership and work fulfillment amongst in retirement military noncommissioned executives who had re-enlisted in the armed forces in South Korea.

A. J. Smith (2011) indicated that path-goal theory is an effective way to study leadership behavior. A. J. Smith used path-goal theory to evaluate a semiconductor manufacturer with a focus on the differences between supervisory and nonsupervisory personnel. House's objective was to affect the effectiveness, fulfillment, and incentive of subordinates in different ways (Soieb, Othman, & D'Silva, 2013). For instance, the different ways were offering rewards for accomplishing performance goals, explaining paths toward these goals, and eliminating obstacles to performance. The aim to use path-goal theory in this study stemmed from helping leaders remove barriers from subordinates' job performance and job satisfaction.

These management theories were applicable and fit the purpose of this study since transformational leadership and path-goal theory normally strengthened executive manager's skills and organizational setting. Using transformational leadership and path-goal theory in their succession planning may have been a method for executive managers to improve employees' job satisfaction and potential to ascend to leadership positions.

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Operational Definitions

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This section contains key terms used in the study.

Coaching: The definition of coaching is the procedure that allows wisdom and development to transpire and therefore work to increase (Naqvi, 2012).

Job satisfaction: General feelings an employee has about the job or the group of attitudes toward various characteristics of the job describes job satisfaction (Venkateswarlu, 2012).

Leadership: Leadership means to incorporate positions of chief executive, assistant director, supervisor, founder, and administrator (Dorczak, 2012).

Path-goal theory: The path-goal theory of management is a situational theory founded upon an expectation, which successful superior performance has a definite impression on subordinate job satisfaction (Awan et al., 2011).

Replacement planning: Replacement planning is the practice of recognizing the temporary or longstanding help by establishments having individuals who can assume accountability from demanding personnel during a crisis (Rothwell, 2011).

Soft skills: Soft skills include individual characteristics and interpersonal skills that describe a person's relationship with other people (Sultana, 2014).

Succession planning: The definition of succession planning, means developing a pool of people considering promotions; or skill administration, focusing on enticing, growing, positioning, and maintaining the finest persons (Garg & Van Weele, 2012).

Transformational leadership: Transformational leadership is a practice of leaders bringing forth important constructive changes in individuals, groups, teams, and organizational cultures (Warrick, 2011).

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

Assumptions

Several assumptions were necessary to research executive managers' lack of experience and training on how to prepare employees for future leadership positions within their organizations (Marshall & Rossman, 2014). I assumed some employees are lacking the needed materials and managerial skills to allow baby boomers to retire at their retirement age. Secondly, another assumption was that most organizational databases were not viewable to people outside of the organization, which caused limited access to human resources organizational data to determine the exact number of employees promoted to leadership positions. I assumed participants would have responded honestly to interview questions. Since students typically completed their degree within 3 to 4 years, not having the opportunity to collect data for a longer period may have affected results.

Limitations

The primary limitation of this study was that the majority of the data came from participants (Yin, 2014). The number of participants within the organization who agreed to participate in this study limited the results. Since I am the researcher and had a small amount of research experience, human error may have led to misinterpretation of analysis of the collected data. The results of the study were limited by the honesty and thoroughness of the participants' responses.

Delimitations

Delimitations are elements of the study that researchers can control (Yin, 2012). The population of this qualitative multiple case study consisted of executive managers who are currently using forecasting procedures to sustain organizational success by implementing succession planning. The first delimitation was that nonsenior leaders within social services were not participating in this study. Interviewing only senior leaders within social services represented a delimitation since I would not interview professionals that were not in social services leadership positions. Nonleaders may not have understood what managerial skills were lacking in the effort to retain employees.

The study was delimited to 10 participants. The study was further delimited to southeast Georgia. Social service is a large industry and a lot of information is unreachable since of the HIPAA law. The social services organizational leaders often must work long hours due to the lack of employees.

The retirement of leaders in social services, lack succession planning, and the limited number of future leaders qualified to obtain leadership of the developing total of nonprofits presents a crisis in the social service industry (Hopkins, Meyer, Shera, & Peters, 2014). The crisis in social services was causing managers to voice their fears about the insufficient training, which was causing a growing shortage of social services leaders (Hopkins et al., 2014). A business focus of this study was to explore management constraints and determine current methods and management abilities to restructure the social service industry by preparing executive leaders for succession planning purposes.

Significance of the Study

Contribution to Business Practice

The results of this study may assist executive managers in preparing employees for future key positions. Executive managers might use the findings to develop succession plans to strengthen skills, talent, and experiences of candidates to become qualified for future key positions. Implementing succession planning may have positively impact organizational retention and diversity of senior-level leadership (Hobbler, Lemmon, & Wayne, 2011).

A recognizable gap in this study was that employees might not have had requisite managerial skills, knowledge, or support systems to prepare them for future leadership positions. The lack of managerial skills and knowledge may have caused a gap in the organizational operations since organizational leaders may not have been able to place qualified individuals in leadership roles. In addition, recognizable gaps in this study may have been that motivation and dedication of candidates were low in relation to their job duties since of their underrepresentation as senior-level leaders in organizations. Underrepresentation as senior leaders in organizations could cause organizations to have high employee turnover and low productivity.

Therefore, the findings from this study may have provided recommendations to reduce employee turnover and low productivity gaps. This multiple case study was important to the process of businesses since the study purpose was to recognize ways executive managers could recruit and sustain employees for future leadership positions. Team leaders applying these recognitions may help to develop and maintain

organizational success for the organization, employees, and community. After conducting a thorough literature review there seemed to be limited research on barriers employees face as they aspired to reach senior leadership positions. Acknowledging that there were challenges executive managers' encountered as they tried to sustain viable employees for future leadership positions could benefit scholars, management philosophers, and executive managers.

Implications for Social Change

The findings from this multiple case study may contribute to positive social change by helping executive managers to promote qualified employees for leadership positions. In addition, contributing to social change may have given employees the ability to open avenues for other employees entering leadership roles. Organizations training and developing employees for leadership positions on continual bases may have prevented future positional vacancies (Hobbler et al., 2011). Executive managers implementing succession planning improved business practice by developing a larger pool of employees for leadership positions (Hobbler et al., 2011). Developing a pool of employees for leadership positions may allow baby boomers to retire earlier; therefore, qualified employees could replace baby boomers that are in leadership positions.

Organizational leaders building a strong organizational structure give the employees a competitive edge over competitors (Banerjee, 2013). The increase of executive managers focusing on improving employees' leadership skills reflected an increasingly diverse marketplace that could yield innovation and the ability to influence a

widespread customer base. In addition, the ability to produce innovation and the ability to influence a widespread customer base may have created revenue for the community.

The key to organizational growth is the power to involve the labor force to enrich the position of responsibility, key actions, mission, and vision of the association (Cole, 2015). Organizational leaders should ensure that their subordinates learn and understand their organizational structure (Cole, 2015). One way leaders may have expanded employees' knowledge about the company is through initiating employee orientations and developing programs.

An organization's growth may consist of promoting employees into leadership positions. As employees advance into leadership positions, their income should increase (Jacobson & Lalonde, 2013). The capability of having more income possibly improves their lifestyle. The influences of executive managers empowering employees into leadership positions have implications for improving communities as well as sustaining families financially.

The influence of empowering individuals in leadership positions gives them the opportunity to earn more money, which may allow them to invest, pay for higher education, gain leadership positions in the community, and provide security. For instance, employees could become leaders and role models in their communities, and with the increase of their income, they might be able to spend more money within their community. The findings of this multiple case study may serve as an additional resource to assist executive managers in effectively developing employees for future leadership positions. The intent of this study was to determine methods to encourage executive

managers to have prepared employees for leadership positions in businesses and to have encouraged individuals to strive to become leaders.

A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature

The review of the literature for this qualitative multiple case study is a variety of journals, professional books, and government documents. I used multiple databases to conduct an extensive web-based review. The literature review includes studies from the literature search that relate to the purpose of the study and the conceptual framework.

Online databases such as Business Source Complete, ABI Inform Global, Academic Search Complete, ERIC, Google Scholar, and ProQuest provided scholarly and peer-reviewed journals. A general word search relating to executive managers implementing a succession plan with organizational leaders in the social services industry led to 144 resources. This research included 144 sources with 121 (85%) peer-reviewed sources that are within 5 years of the expected completion of the study.

The organization of the review is a narrative explanation of executive managers deploying methods to establish senior leaders in leadership positions. The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore succession planning as a means to bolster executive manager's momentum to improve organizational leaders within the social services industry in southwest Georgia's managerial skills and talent for future leadership positions. Innovation is vital to organizational success, and managers should keep an open mind and evaluate needed changes that will improve succession planning (Leavy, 2013). The literature review highlights the need to revisit methods for executive managers to implement succession plans meant to sustain leadership positions within

organizations listed in the Social Services industry in southwest Georgia to enhance social change. The need to promote employees to senior leadership positions extends executive managers' ability to determine methods to sustain employees' job performance and job satisfaction.

Conceptual Framework

In this qualitative study, transformational leadership and path-goal leadership are management theories that represent a conceptual framework (Awan et al., 2011). These theories are tools to help researchers understand the concept of leadership (Hayyat Malik, 2012). Leadership is the art of equipping employees for career advancement. Effective leaders provide vision and motivation to a team in an effort to work toward the same goal. Leaders should provide employees with training, tools, time, energy, and emotional intelligence, which they can realize their full potential both personally and professionally.

Organizational leaders who improve employees' creativity are transformational leaders (Hassan, Bashir, Abrar, Baig, & Zubair, 2015). Transformational leadership is a type of leadership behavior that is recognized as an effective leadership style (Hassan et al., 2015). An effective leader is observed as a role model, a person who could motivate and develop a sense of self-identity to individuals (Hassan et al., 2015). For instance, a transformational leader's objective is to put employees' needs and wants before their own needs and wants (Awan et al., 2011).

Transformational leaders should analyze values that followers should learn and adopt (Awan et al., 2011). Leaders should promote consistency in their vision and

values. Organizational leaders who use the transformational leadership theory encourage their employees to make constructive leadership decisions (Hyypia & Pekkola, 2011).

Transformational leaders are known to be goal setters with the ability to encourage, be supportive, and passionate (Hyypia & Pekkola, 2011). Executive managers who use these traits show the ability to change an organization and its employees (Hyypia & Pekkola, 2011). Transformational leadership has four dimensions (Warrick, 2011). The transformational leader dimensions are (a) idealized authority, which refers to charisma or the capability to offer a clear vision, instill pride, and earn the respect of followers; (b) inspirational motivation, the ability to communicate expectations and significant undertakings through symbols and to motivate people; (c) intellectual stimulation, the ability to foster creativity, promote understanding, and solve problems; and (d) individual consideration, or taking a personal interest in people (Warrick, 2011). Bass (2011) described transformational leadership as specific behaviors such as being a model of honesty and fairness, setting clear goals, having high outlooks, encouraging people and providing support and credit, stirring the emotions and passions of people, and getting people to look beyond their own self-interests and reach for higher goals.

A great leader will lead by example, generate trust, change and direct expectations and perception, and motivate employees regarding work and common goals. A transformational leader should provide encouragement, appreciate, and care for their employees (Warrick, 2011). In addition, leaders should help employees with job-related issues and resolve and create new ideas to solve work-related difficulties (Hassan et al., 2015). A great leader implementing the above strategies may allow a comfortable work

environment. Organizational leaders investing in a comfortable workplace may lead to

subordinates wanting to advance into leadership positions. Eckhaus (2015) mentioned

that transformational leaders should be creative when challenging employees to think.

Potential employees seeking leadership positions need to be able to adapt quickly to

change in order to become an effective leader (Eckhaus, 2015). A transformational

leader is known to inspire and stimulate followers to be creative and shows concern for

each individual worker (Eckhaus, 2015). Leaders who inspire followers often help

employees leave their comfort zones and discuss future goals (Eckhaus, 2015).

Transformational leaders motivate employees to improve their job performance, keep

employees advised of changes, and aid employees to succeed (Eckhaus, 2015).

Organizational leaders who inspire and empower their employees by encouraging

positive relationships and developing unmet abilities could be considered a great leader.

Moreover, involved leaders may use job shadowing, communication, delegation, and

mentoring as a method to inspire and empower entry-level employees to become future

leaders.

Swayze and Calvin (2016) noted that individuals could gain knowledge through

educational, professional, or community-based leadership programs, and experiences all

of which can contribute to successful leadership development. Employees who are

motivated and feel comfortable in their working environment may put forth more effort

when accomplishing a task (Swayze & Calvin, 2016). Leaders who provide a workable

environment for their subordinates are known to use a path-goal theory style of leading

(Swayze & Calvin, 2016). The next conceptual leadership management theory to help to

understand leadership in this study is Path-goal theory (Hayyat Malik, 2012). A great path-goal theory leader may clear a path to research employees' goals by drafting a goal plan, observation, training, and encouraging them to meet their goals.

Under a path-goal theory, communication is vital to success from both the director and worker's viewpoints (Sampayo & Maranga, 2015). Path-goal theory is a management theory that helps leaders remove barriers from subordinates' job performance and job satisfaction (Sampayo & Maranga, 2015). House's 1974 path-goal theory highlights communications between leader behavior of corporate managers and entry-level job expectancies (Hayyat Malik, 2012). A specific problem with the social services environment is that leaders lack the soft skills to function. The fact that employees are not gaining the needed skills to advance into leadership positons may be because of the lack of communication. Decision makers and employees using effective oral and written communication could clear a path to improve job performance and job satisfaction.

Path-goal theory is a situational theory that drives successful leaders' abilities to make a positive impact regarding subordinate job satisfaction (Awan et al., 2011). The purpose of path-goal theory is to provide a functional approach to fulfilling subordinates work environments (Awan et al., 2011). As organizational leaders understand the concept of how to lead, they may strengthen employees' job satisfaction and prepare current employees for future leadership positions (Awan et al., 2011). Supervisors preparing employees to lead may allow employees to strengthen their skills to function as vital leaders. Executive managers executing productive training and development

programs could enhance employees' managerial skills in order to occupy needed vital

positions for future leadership positions.

Path-goal theory helps executive managers to improve conditions in the

workplace (Smith, 2011). Path-goal theory relies on the four pillars of directive

leadership, supportive leadership, participative leadership, and achievement-oriented

leadership (Smith, 2011). These four pillars describe perceived changes leaders may use

to enhance organizational success and sustainability (Smith, 2011). An executive

manager's function is to prepare employees for their job roles by informing employees of

the expectations of how to perform their duties effectively. The benefit of executive

managers taking the time to prepare employees for their job roles should help strengthen

employees' managerial and leadership skills (Sampayo & Maranga, 2015).

Supervisors should clearly communicate to employees their expectation regarding

their task completion (Sampayo & Maranga, 2015). An expectation of path-goal

leadership style is that a manager should communicate benefits and rewards of

completing goals. The purpose of the theory is to have leaders provide employees a path

to success by eliminating obstacles to capitalize on opportunities.

The goal of path-goal theory is to focus on exchanges between leader and

follower that emphasize rewards for work accomplished (Sampayo & Maranga, 2015).

Managerial and leadership styles and behaviors are essential and there are four

characteristics of the path-goal model: directive (clear guidance of performance

standards), supportive (being approachable, friendly, available), participative (requesting

subordinate is input in decision-making), and achievement oriented (setting high, but

realistic, standards) (Sampayo & Maranga, 2015). Path-goal theory allows flexibility, which encourages workers to feel comfortable about their job security (Sampayo & Maranga, 2015).

Succession Planning

The intent of this study was to explore specific methods to strengthen job satisfaction and prepare current employees for future leadership positions. A purpose for executive managers developing succession planning may build organizational success and improve the economy within the community. Newhall (2015) projected that many organizational leaders are changing the way they function.

Managers need to strategically plan how to select the right people for the appropriate position (Newhall, 2015). Succession planning is one of the elements organizational leaders are using to change how they are doing business. Succession planning is critical to organizational success, and succession planning can benefit an organization in various ways besides securing senior leaders' positions (Galbraith et al., 2012).

The intent of successful succession planning is to give executive managers an opportunity to help their employees develop leadership skills (Galbraith et al., 2012). The chance of developing managerial skills may allow employees to remain in their current positions or promote to future positions. Executive managers' aim for executing succession planning should be to promote internal employees who will fill future positions (Galbraith et al., 2012).

The downside of hiring within the organization is that the employee may not be ready for the position (Sinkin & Putney, 2014). The first person to retire is not a big threat to the organization, but the second set of retirees could be an important situation (Sinkin & Putney, 2014). To secure the organization, organizational leaders should prepare new and longtime employees to transition them to retiring employees' roles (Sinkin & Putney, 2014). Galbraith et al. (2012) mentioned that succession planning involves a preference for hiring internally only when an internal employee is better suited or qualified than an external employee to accept a vacant leadership position.

As executive leaders try to move forward with a plan, leaders should discern their role in the plan. They should establish a goal (Walker & Forbes, 2014). For instance, executive leaders should start a conversation with their team about where they are going, which may help frame the succession planning process (Walker & Forbes, 2014). Succession planning strengthens organizations internally through increased departmental performance, employee satisfaction, and retention, although creating communications for leadership stability through candidates who can readily fill critical positions (Galbraith et al., 2012).

When employees focus on professional development, they become better prepared to achieve their potential (Simoneaux & Stroud, 2012). According to Simoneaux and Stroud (2012), assuming a career progress approach towards professional development allows employees and organizational leaders to focus on short and long-term goals. Wisdom may affect the learning role to become a leader. Wisdom is something learned;

which is why it is imperative for senior leaders to share their experiences (Simoneaux &

Stroud, 2012).

Executive managers should prepare their senior leaders for success by enabling

employees to do their jobs and place them in viable positions. Executive managers

implementing effective development plans should recognize practical skills employees

have and provide methods of training to adapt to the dissimilar learning styles (Elahi,

2014). The ability to empower employees' managerial skills and talent may enhance the

employees' job satisfaction and production.

Succession planning with organizational performance. Kim, Thompson, and

Herbek (2012) found that effective leadership is the key to organizational performance.

Executive managers and human resources experts need to find avenues to create more

value for their employees (Schweer, Assimakopoulos, Cross, & Thomas, 2012). Finding

approaches for enhancing talent could be a critical phase of organizational performance.

Schweer et al. (2012) explained how the Hackett Group realized organizations

that excel at talent management improved wages by nearly 18% and enhanced

operational and development performance. Talent management is the key to

organizational success (Vaiman, Scullion, & Collings, 2012). Executive managers'

objective for using talent management for organizations is to entice, select, progress, and

manage workers in a combined and planned way (Garavan, Carbery, & Rock, 2012).

An effective succession plan is imperative to leadership development and vital to

organizational plan since the planning improves the ability to achieve orderly transitions

and sustain organizational performance (Kim, 2012). If executive managers effectively

fill leadership positions, they may be able to sustain survival within the industry. As executive managers prepare employees for future key positions, these positions may determine if organizations are going to survive in their industry in the future. Succession planning uses mentoring, coaching, and grooming as interventions inside the organization to identify potential employees to advance to senior roles, filling vacancies for senior leadership levels (Kim, 2012).

The art of succession planning programs proves an obligation to professional growth and expert progression and is an influential worker retention strategy (Kim, 2012). Executive managers may apply career development and professional advancement since it helps manage an individual employee's work experience within or between organizations (Inabinett & Ballaro, 2014). An employee retention strategy is a plan for addressing grievances and employee issues. Retention strategy may be a method for executive managers to project sustainability within organizations (Inabinett & Ballaro, 2014). The notion of applying succession planning as a mechanism to empower employee retention may be an organizational method to prepare employees before key positions of success (Hobbler et al., 2011).

Planning and managing organizational leaders' principal succession. Pennell (2010) stated that in many U.S. organizations, succession planning and retiring managers have become an interest in organizations, as there have become shortages of managers with the exception of baby boomers, which are reaching retirement age. Implementing a succession plan is a strategy that affects the retirement of such a huge percentage of the people will have on their capability to meet their executive goals minus disruptions in

service (Pennell, 2010). Rothwell (2011) described nine reasons for having a succession plan:

1. Advance the growth and improve retention of talented people;

2. Recognize continuing necessity for restoring emptied positions and to create suitable teaching and worker improvement initiatives;

3. Improve the talent of viable workers obtainable to occupy positions;

4. Give to the establishment's tactical business strategy and approaches;

5. Confirm employees receive suitable developmental opportunities;

6. Guarantee organization leaders have complete access to the knowledgeable money of their employees;

7. Encourage growth and progression of a different pool of personnel;

8. Increase the performance of workers to reply to changing uncertain stresses; and

9. Increase employee confidence and obligation to the business.

Zepeda, Bengtson, and Parylo (2012) stated that when managing and planning, it is imperative for executive leaders to use succession planning as a plan to ensure sustainability and effectiveness. Human resource strategy is essential to the management of leadership succession (Zepeda et al., 2012). Succession planning and management evolves from replacement planning, which is a procedure of risk management (Rothwell, 2011).

The labeling of expected openings and finding those that seem as doable stand-ins for those leaving their positions stems from replacement planning. Succession planning and management includes developing management abilities with an importance on

change and teamwork (Rothwell, 2011). According to Pasamar and Valle Cabrera (2013), an organizational challenge for leaders is sustainability in economic, environmental, and social surroundings.

Executive managers should make significant changes when effectively managing their social, economic, and environmental impacts. Executive managers implementing succession planning is imperative as executive managers ensure sustainability (Bhattacharya, Sen, & Korschun, 2012). The goal of sustainability may be to achieve excellence in social, environmental, and financial performance. The former CEO of Deloitte Touch mentioned that the finest professionals in the world want to perform in establishments in which they can work comfortable in their environment, and they want to labor for organizations that display appropriate corporate citizenship (Bhattacharya et al., 2012).

Corporate Social Responsibility

As executive managers ensure sustainability by implementing succession planning, they should apply corporate social responsibility within the process to sustain employees' skills and talent for key positions. Corporate social responsibility focuses on the account and environmental impacts of business activities (Bhattacharya et al., 2012). Executive managers incorporate volunteer projects and donate time and talent toward the society aid to form corporate culture (Watson & Rebecca, 2013).

The purpose of corporations engaging in society is building trusting relationships and a sense of favor (Watson & Rebecca, 2013). Corporate social responsibility duty is applicable to every corporate body to protect the bodies of the society at large

(Bhattacharya et al., 2012). Achievement may come from being able to appeal, inspire, and maintain a talented group of employees. Employees who possess skills and creativity may drive customer satisfaction in the way, which could differentiate organizations from their competitors.

Bhattacharya et al. (2012) stated that evidence indicates organizations' Corporate social responsibility activities involve a genuine, convincing, and progressively significant way to entice and retain good employees. Home Depot, Delta Air Lines, and SAP executive managers recognize the importance of using CSR as a means of attracting and retaining good employees (Bhattacharya et al., 2012).

CSR best practices of organizations appear to engage in a large number of CSR initiatives. Many executive managers within small and large organizations, with valuable names such as Cisco Systems, General Electric, and IBM see worker commitment in Corporate Social Responsibility as a planned necessity (Bhattacharya et al., 2012).

Executive managers implementing a succession plan are looking to sustain their organization success. Organizational leaders form a corporate culture by building trust in the community. Involving the community allows executive managers the ability to learn from outsiders and their employees. Therefore, the aim of corporate social responsibility is to provide protection within society by building trust and to discover customer needs.

Developing Employees' Leadership Capabilities

Executive managers may not be ready to assume key roles when wanting to advance employees into leadership roles (Robinson-Walker, 2013). Employees may become potential managers if the organizational leaders' nurture and develop them

through internal leadership training programs (Calareso, 2013). The training program should include gaining knowledge and experience about the history of the company and job responsibilities.

Succession planning is similar to leadership management (Shamsuddin, Wahab, & Angzzas, 2012). Organizational leaders may learn to apply social media and technology to broaden the approach to increase innovation within organizations (Shamsuddin et al., 2012). For instance, one leading approach to increase innovation using social media and technology might be to give employees the opportunity to learn about the company's mission, vision, and strategic planning, which could increase organizations employment capacity. Developing talent may require on-the-job experiences and classroom training programs to grow the following generation of leaders and employees in organizations (Baranczyk, 2013). Additional strategies that may affect career success are organizational culture and career choices. Organizational culture refers to basic expectations, standards, and noticeable objects (Baranczyk, 2013). Organizational culture deals with organizational expectations, experiences, philosophy, and values that sustain organizations although expressing self-image and inner workings of the external world (Baranczyk, 2013).

Organizational culture affects organizational leaders' succession planning to prepare employees for career success by affecting organizational leader's production and performance, and providing rules on customer care and service, product quality and safety, attendance and promptness, and concern for the environment (Montgomery, Panagopoulou, Kehoe, & Valkanos, 2011). Managerial culture regulates how a person

performs, what individuals consider, how they reply to different circumstances, and how they associate with current memberships and eliminate the inadequate (Montgomery et al., 2011). On the other hand, career choices relate to engaging in a learning procedure by helping to develop knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to succeed in any organization. As employees learn to trust their senior leaders, employees' attitudes toward their job performance may change how employees think about moving into senior leadership positions (Luna, 2012).

Warshawsky and Havens (2014) claimed that if executive managers build effective relationships with their employees and commit to their organizations, then the action might lead to an important succession planning technique. For instance, proper succession planning should stem from executive managers knowing more about their employees' satisfaction with their current roles and understanding their career plans (Warshawsky & Havens, 2014). Succession planning is a process for identifying and developing key leaders to create a talent development culture within organizations (Gary, 2014).

Executive managers implementing succession planning will increase engagement and retention by providing a career hierarchy (Gary, 2014). Engagement is an oath between the employee and the organization accountability where individuals completely express themselves objectively, mentally, and passionately although working (Soieb et al., 2013). Talent development culture may affirm individual's strengths and develop capabilities that produce results.

Developing an employee's leadership abilities may strengthen organizational growth when organizational leaders implement effective succession planning. Employees may gain knowledge and experience by attending training programs. Executive managers should allow entry-level employees to voice their opinions about their experiences and give new ideas, and superiors and subordinates should have a positive rapport (Warshawsky & Havens, 2014).

Selection Process

The executive managers' mission should be to hire viable employees. Organizational leaders hire employees for two causes: (a) to develop a business and (b) to fill in those who have left the position (Lazear & Spletzer, 2012). Brody and Cox (2015) discussed how organizational leaders ought to consider performing screening methods before hiring an employee for future positions. One screening technique that a leader can use when hiring employees is to hire a private investigative company (Brody & Cox, 2015). The influence of hiring a private investigator may stem from gaining public news of a person profile individuals who may have a list of individual's wrongdoings before the organizational leaders hiring them.

Sometimes individuals seeking positions with organizations may misrepresent the fact that they did not complete their academic degrees or scholarly awards. A person may overemphasize their titles, duties, and responsibilities in prior positions when trying to advance into a leadership position (Brody, 2010). Establishing their profile in the beginning of hire may lead to a productive future with the organization. When

organizational leaders select viable employees for positions, the leaders should request

thorough searches (Barg, Weiner, Joseph, Pandit, & Turner, 2012).

Organizational leaders looking to place employees need to check the following:

all prior employment, full academic history post high school, and any qualifications,

certificates, activities, and professional qualifications which candidates report on their

resume (Brody, 2010). Checking these elements could aid executive managers in

generating ways to improve an employee's managerial skills and talent. Other screening

techniques organizational leaders should consider when screening employees: (a) credit

check, (b) reference check, (c) criminal history, (d) driving records, and (e) integrity

testing. Directors using screenings techniques should prevent future fraud and criminal

activities. Employee screenings may benefit the mission of the company by hiring skilled

workers.

Organizational leadership success depends on having the correct employees in the

right place, with the right skills, and at the right time. The organizational leadership

selection process is an area which executive managers closely monitor employees when

promoting internal employees. The selection pool is to ensure which fitting internal

selection pool is available when the need occurs to replace senior leaders.

Selecting a new employee is an intimidating process (Levoy, 2012). Many

employers recruit by running an ad and scheduling interviews. Levoy (2012) displayed

ways to avoid problems and navigating the hiring process: Take your time, make it a

team effort, do your homework, tap into resources at hand, and learn from your mistakes.

When organizational leaders hire, they cannot just hire star employees and imagine them to stand automatically out in their new environment (Groysberg, Lee, & Abrahams, 2010). Organizations may get the most out of the talent they acquire by using coworkers to strengthen employees (Groysberg et al., 2010). Organizational leaders and veteran employees analyzing other employees work habits at the division level contribute to subordinate skilled loss of necessary personnel, especially among the best performers (Groysberg et al., 2010). Implementing a successful selection process may generate from organizations having a good recruiting plan.

Organizational leaders consider communication channels as a useful role when recruiting for leadership positions. Web technology enhances the ability for executive managers to reach potential people for positions within organizations (Whelan & Carcary, 2011). Organizational leaders use online screening in an effort to ease the recognition of significant talent sources from the subsequently improved candidate pool (Whelan & Carcary, 2011). Social networking is a trend that employers are starting to use as a tool for screening job applicants (Vicknair, Elkersh, Yancey, & Budden, 2010). A source revealed that 45% of organizations in 2009 use social networking websites as a screening tool for applicants (Vicknair et al., 2010).

In summary, selecting viable employees will strengthen an organization's talent pool. When executive managers hire the best person for a position, they must explore various techniques when recruiting. As supervisor brainstorm recruiting strategies, they need to know the organization budget, where to look, and what type of positions they

need to fill. Hiring managers need to invest in employee recruiting sources, such as, local advertising, social media, and recruiting firms.

In addition, when hiring adequate individuals hiring managers need to conduct background checks and request professional references to help attract and hire the best employees. Managers should complete a thorough background search on all potential employees. Job recruiting is to develop an organization talent pool. Executive manager's selection process intention should be for competitive and skilled employees.

Job Recruitment

Corporate leaders have a difficult time when establishing and sustaining a strong talent pool (Stahl et al., 2012). Job recruitment and selection practices signify a requirement for corporate leaders aiming for competitive and skilled employees (Zaharie & Osoian, 2013). Talented individuals are a critical driver of organizational success (Auger, Devinney, Dowling, Eckert, & Lin, 2013).

The recruiting process is an important sector of the hiring process. Good recruiting may allow leaders to operate on a professional level and confront challenges with confidence (Thielsch, Träumer, & Pytlik, 2012). Organizational leaders are starting to recruit online for total funds and competitive burden, and since it is the outstanding method to influence their specific collection of candidates (Thielsch et al., 2012).

The cost associated with organizational leaders recruiting new hires can cause organizational financial challenges. Advertising for employment openings is one means organizational leaders have when recruiting potential employees. Furthermore, charges for using recruiting firms, applicant testing, and human resources interviewing candidates

are cost effective for organizational leaders (Inabinett & Ballaro, 2014). Top-level staff implementing policies and procedures for employee retention aids executive managers to reduce recruitment costs and contribute to organizational profits (Inabinett & Ballaro, 2014).

Organizational reputation plays an important factor when potential employees are seeking employment within their organization (Auger et al., 2013). Potential employees would like to see organizations having sustainability. As organizational leaders prepare for hiring future employees, leaders should think about how likely individuals may view their organization. During the hiring process, people have limited knowledge of companies as they apply for positions. The only correspondent knowledge that applicants have when considering applying for a position are limited information about the organization and the job description (Nolan, Gohlke, Gilmore, & Rosiello, 2013).

The employment opportunities involve job seekers relying on the images of an employer to form beliefs about how job seekers will adjust to their organization (Nolan et al., 2013). The importance of engaging the talent conflict through staffing is to place greater pressure on the status of the organizational success rate. Organizational leader's social responsibility is a factor because organizational leaders should consider overall reputation (Auger et al., 2013).

The first step in recruiting viable employees may be to create a job description. Creating a job description may provide an opportunity for managers to recognize a level of proficiency, skills, and aptitudes, which are essential to the position and with the identification of what methods they should use to select a candidate. Since the

advancement of technology, the resources most organizational leaders seem to use in hiring future employees is online recruiting. The technology sector is growing in organizations where technology is making it easier for executive leaders to communicate and store information.

The importance of growing leadership potential in organizations is vital when it comes to an effective talent management planning (Church, Rotolo, Ginther, & Levine, 2015). The assessment and development of leadership potential in organizations is a critical factor in and an effective talent management strategy. Executive managers must focus on recruiting, employee development, performance management, payment, reward systems, and retention (Stahl et al., 2012).

Employees seem to be an essential element to organizational development. An employee performance depends on if organizational leaders are successful or if they are going to fail (Hameed & Waheed, 2011). Most organizational leaders invest a huge amount of money on employee development (Hameed & Waheed, 2011). The purpose of a jobholder making progress is to improve the abilities of an employee and the organization (Hameed & Waheed, 2011). Effective performance management leads organizational leaders to better organizational results (Jyothsna, Jyoshna, & Rajanikanth, 2013).

Organizational leaders use performance management as a technique to steer the organization through the orderly meaning of mission, strategy, and goals of the organizations (Jyothsna et al., 2013). Strengthening employee performance depends on shared goals and aligns incentives for all stakeholders (Garg & Van Weele, 2012). To

increase organizational performance, organizational leaders should attempt to find and maintain turnover-retention equilibrium (Ryu & Lee, 2013).

Retaining Qualified Employees

When combining effective organizational leaders with a productive employee, the mission statement of the organization should produce growth opportunities (Inabinett & Ballaro, 2014). As executive managers discuss avenues to lead their team to success, there are methods executive managers need to consider when exploring avenues. Executive managers implementing succession planning as a method to fill leadership vaccines should consider finding ways to strengthen job satisfaction, train and retain qualified employees for future leadership positions.

The fact that Baby Boomers are approaching retirement, organizational leaders should know that retaining newly employed, mid-career and retirement-eligible workers are as imperative as using above average new employees (Cho & Lewis, 2012). A national publicly traded business mentioned realistic solutions for succession planning. The company predicts that 50% of their staff will be retiring between 2015-2020 (Appelbaum et al., 2012).

To retain personnel, executive managers may need to know why employees choose to leave. However, hiring employees should be the responsibility of everyone in the organization (Prakash & Sukanya, 2012). To keep employees, managers should hire the right people. In order to hire the right people, managers should ensure an excellent selection of applicants for every position. As managers recruit internally, their efforts must be as aggressive as the external effort of recruiting (Prakash & Sukanya, 2012).

Developing a welcome plan is another way to retain employees. The employee's first-year experience is a determinant if they will stay or go (Prakash & Sukanya, 2012). Employees' first year could be the time they feel frustrated and isolated since they are discovering the ins and outs of the organizational structure.

To make them comfortable in their first year, executive managers should spend more time training and get to know new employees on a professional basis (Prakash & Sukanya, 2012). One way an executive manager may devote more time with employees is by evaluating employees after a reasonable time of employment. The intent of executive managers conducting evaluations is to identify employees' problems and strong areas.

Executive managers may need to set goals as a means to retain employees. Moreover, measuring employee turnover could be an effort organizational leaders could use to keep employees. Prakash and Sukanya (2012) claimed organizational leaders could find out how effective your organization is by measuring organizational turnover.

A method to reduce employee turnover may be to set reasonable goals. Setting reasonable goals may give executive managers an idea to modify opportunities to reduce organizational employee turnover. A retention program and accountability measures may increase retention and decrease turnover (Prakash & Sukanya, 2012).

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction involves the employee's general feelings, which an employee has about the job or the group attitudes toward various aspects of the job (Venkateswarlu, 2012). Employees may be willing to work if executive managers optimize working

conditions. Enhancing work conditions may increase how employees feel about their jobs. Therefore, executive managers communicating feedback in a positive way and giving positive statements could empower a workable environment.

An open-door policy is a strategy leader use to apprise their team of their availability to help. Managers keeping their employees engaged may help employees feel satisfied when working as employees in their organization. Employees having the ability to share their opinion and contribute to organizational change may minimize their feelings about their job and increase positive attitudes toward the aspects of the job.

Employee job satisfaction directly affects the goods and services an organization produces or sells since individuals feel satisfied with their job (Venkateswarlu, 2012). A significant determinant of job satisfaction is the employee's personal characteristics (Venkateswarlu, 2012). An employee's job satisfaction closely relates to job enrichment practices (Pan & Werblow, 2012).

Job enrichment is a program under, which the employee assignment has a variety of roles. The roles given to employees by organizational leaders are intense and organizational leaders should ensure that the employees are monitoring their independence and control over the completion of the job task (Pan & Werblow, 2012). Employee job satisfaction is an important dimension and is an indicator of organizational success (de Menezes, 2012).

A result in empowering subordinate leader's managerial skills and talent may eliminate the need for baby boomers to work after they reach retirement age. Properly preparing employees and current leaders may enhance the ability to move into leadership

positions faster. Potential leaders moving into areas faster may allow baby boomers to retire on time. Executive managers should implement succession planning to focus on individual development, which may improve organizational promotion practices.

Some barriers executive managers may encounter with the implementation of succession planning are: (a) lack of urgency, (b) motivation, (c) time investment, (d) organizational complexity, (e) budget expense, and (f) lack of resources to implement a plan (Kim, 2012). These encounters may deter business growth since executive managers are not routinely developing a pool of qualified employees to assume future leadership positions. Organizational leaders not implementing succession planning may not be able to train and develop future leaders (Kim, 2012). Therefore, succession planning is vital to executive manager's ability to identify, train, and develop future employees for future positions.

When operational managers hire externally, the result turns into higher failure rates (Kim et al., 2012). Results of executive managers promoting employees internally are more favorable than hiring employees externally (Kim, 2012). Executive managers choosing to hire an employee externally for senior leadership positions may have to train that person with the intent that the person does not have any knowledge of the organization's policies or procedures.

Moreover, the training team introducing policies, procedures, and their job description at the date of employment may help trainees better perform their job duties. This training process could be overwhelming for external employees since the demand of

new training as well as needing to support their families. External employees have obligations when managing their household as well as learning their new job role.

Currently, employees have responsibilities in which could result in long hours but still have obligations to support their children physically, emotional, and mentally (Pasamar & Valle Cabrera, 2013). Married couples yearly work somewhat extra hours than single individuals do as of 1979, by 2000 employed mommies at all financial ranks have extra 5 to 12 added weeks' worth of time to their yearly assigned work. Black-Beard et al. (2010) stated that unmarried women are more likely than wedded mothers to work longer and in nonstandard hours. In addition, the training process for training external candidates may be a longer process than developing an employee within their organization.

The differences in developing an employee within an organization compared to hiring an external employee are that executive managers do not have to retrain existing employees but must train external employees on policies and procedures. Existing employees have internal information about their organization; know if the environment is durable, and if the policies and procedures are effective, and followed. Most existing employees should understand the functions of the job and it should not take executive managers as long to develop an existing employee for a position. The cost of staffing employees is less expensive than replacing employees (Prakash & Sukanya, 2012).

Training an external employee will take longer to prepare for a position within the organization and will cost the team more when developing existing employees. Church (2014) specified that hiring external leaders in organizations nose dive within the first 18

months and the cost is overwhelming. Executive managers developing and training individuals may help improve organizational performance, which this study uses succession planning as an avenue to create methods to fill future leadership positions.

Organizational Training

Chambers (2013) noted that new hires lack the viable skills required in changing organizations ability to promote effective leaders. Organizational leaders implementing training programs help employees obtain promotions although strengthen their career goals and achieve living standards (Jacobson & Lalonde, 2013). A viable training program may lead employees to high-paying jobs and maintain and or advance their careers (Jacobson & Lalonde, 2013). Developing effective training programs may propose opportunities for relatively low-income employees to become ready for careers, which allow them to enter the common people and for displaced employees to recover an important percentage of their misplaced incomes (Jacobson & Lalonde, 2013).

Bettering organizational managerial leadership skills also improves the nation's affordability and support financial growth (Jacobson & Lalonde, 2013). As executive managers attempt to improve employees' managerial skills and talent, executive managers should train employees on organizational needs and create a program, which is understandable for the employees. Organizational leadership development may often become vital, attached, and changeable; it is impossible for executive managers to work out everything.

Employees may not be ready or attentive in assuming important roles when desired (Robinson-Walker, 2013). Succession planning is essential to organizational

leadership growth and imperative for qualifying leaders who can achieve the organizations' vision. Robinson-Walker (2013) suggested that implementing succession planning offers a strategy to manage barriers, which can disturb or prevent executive managers from accomplishing a goal of developing future senior leaders. Executive managers use methods such as coaching, mentoring, and developmental programs as a process to aid with succession planning (Griffith, 2012). The effective leadership development program is for educational intervention and skill building activities intended to identify and develop the management abilities of people (Kim et al., 2012).

Coaching as a method to aid with succession planning. Naqvi (2012) explained that coaching is a process to help employees learn how to develop their skills to improve job performance. Executive managers improving employees' job performance may allow employees to become senior leaders within organizations. Frisch, Lee, Metzger, Robinson, and Rosemarin (2011) mentioned that one way to increase the value to organizational leadership growth is to develop coaching skills. Coaches seek to develop and understand leadership concepts, practices, and appreciation for the challenges, which leaders face (Frisch et al., 2011).

Coaches are to work with managers on their self-management, personal efficiency, and management influence (Frisch et al., 2011). As coaches become familiar with the subject, they use the foundation of Personal Models of coaching to help employees' self-directed discovery and change (Frisch et al., 2011). Leading others sometimes becomes a very complex human endeavor.

Since the 1930s, the practice of hiring coaches is a concept to improve an individual's performance and affect revenue (Trenner, 2013). At one time, coaching was an intervention strategy to correct underperformance, but coaching can enhance the abilities of executive managers (Trenner, 2013). Executive managers, which apply coaching appears to have employees wanting to work with them since these leaders' help employees succeed in both short- and long-term career enhancements.

Mentorship as a method to aid with succession planning. Mentoring programs implement resources in sectors of organizations to attract, develop, and retain employees (Tolar, 2012). Mentoring is an important component when considering strategies for career development. Kao, Rogers, Spitzmueller, Lin, and Lin (2014) claimed that mentoring aids employees in overcoming career problems, awareness, taking control, understanding organizational politics, gaining advice, and increasing access to materials. Mentoring is a valuable aid for career development and advancement for employees (Kao et al., 2014).

Often, employees are reluctant to advance into leadership positions since there may be a limited number of their gender and race in leadership roles (Kao et al., 2014). Employees may be unaware of the knowledge of how to obtain a leadership position internal or external within organizations. Executive managers should provide materials electronically and provide handouts for employees who wish to advance into leadership positions. The information will guide employees in the right direction as they prepare to advance to future leadership positions (Tolar, 2012).

As executive managers strategize a mentorship selection process, they are aware of the pros and cons of pairing mentors with the same gender and race (Kao et al., 2014). Pairing mentors with the same gender and race may have a better understanding of each other since their cultural and ethical concerns. Incorporating mentors together with a different gender and race may not understand each other's thought process, and they may not have any similarities, which may make a difference in how they cope with one another. Organizational leadership implementing a mentorship program may need to educate them on how sexual harassment may play a role in hindering mentorship programs (Tolar, 2012).

As executive managers plan to prepare employees for leadership roles using the method of mentoring, they should ensure which avenue to consider when selecting mentors. When selecting a mentor, a leader in an organization should acknowledge if the mentor and mentee are compatible. For instance, a man may be more comfortable with another man and a woman may be comfortable with another woman. Women protégés who have or had mentors are effective more when their mentors are women as well (Kao et al., 2014). Mentoring may lead to the advancement in employment, success in education, and personal development.

Riley, Cudney, and Long (2013) discussed how leaders lack people skills in the effort to communicate effectively, resolve conflicts, and to lead. Riley et al. revealed in an article that engineering managers are managers who understand the technical and business side of the business; hence, managers educated in both business and

technological capacity tend to have higher success rate. Due to most of the engineers

having only technical skills leaves a perception that engineers lack people skills.

Lacking the necessary people skills affect communication, problem solvers, and

managers. The result of engineering managers not being able to function as a leader has

put the organization in a challenging situation (Riley et al., 2013). Another method that

may enhance managerial skills and talent is developing an effective training program.

Organizational leaders should measure employees' performance and ensure

accountability of the employees' progress each year within the training program

(Chambers, 2013).

Leadership Development Programs

Executive managers' development programs should involve succession planning

as an organizational strategy to gain size and resources for the benefit of the

organizational growth (Chambers, 2013). Executive managers use leadership

development training to educate and build employees skills in order to address and

improve the leadership abilities of people. Leadership programs should also involve self-

reflection elements to assistance managers to comprehend their management styles and

judgments and how to influence others. These programs may be developed to confirm

which organizations have leaders at all hierarchy of the organization. The objective for

implementing effective programs is to help potential leaders possess the essential

abilities, capabilities, and accepting to promote the business to extreme levels of success.

As organizational leaders try to improve retention they should devote extra time

and resources when implementing methods to develop workers as forthcoming leaders

and manage a positive working environment (Selden & Sowa, 2015). Organizational

leaders, which have voluntary turnover is often dysfunctional and can be harmful to

organizational success (Selden & Sowa, 2015). The effect of organizational turnover

causes organizational time, money, and production and has direct and indirect effects on

the organizational bottom line (Harrison & Gordon, 2014). Employees who are

comfortable in their organization are subject to having a greater unified attitude and

greater inspiration to sustain their involvement in their business (Liu, Cai, Li, Shi, &

Fang, 2013). Therefore, organizational labeling may have an undesirable rapport with

workers' intent to depart from their organization.

Training is a sufficient part of the organizational process when it comes to

promoting viable employees. These employees should have skills to do their current job

and skills to improve and develop within their department. Executive managers may

incorporate training by using modules to prepare employees for future senior leadership

positions.

Executive managers provide online training in an effort to provide employees

freedom to complete web-based modules according to the employees' schedules. Elahi

(2014) mentioned that individuals leave organizations, which do not provide

opportunities for growth and development. Organizational leaders who provide

opportunities for development is key to attracting and retaining top talent (Elahi, 2014).

Sustaining Organizations through Leadership Succession Planning

An executive manager's goal should be to retain their top employees for future

leadership positions (Prakash & Sukanya, 2012). Executive managers are slowly

implementing succession planning to help with talent shortages. Baby boomers are retiring from leadership positions and executive managers may need to replace baby boomers with viability skilled leaders.

Executive managers may avoid this by developing individuals for leadership positions before baby boomers retire. Gathering baby boomer's collective experiences before they retire may shape the next generation of leaders within organizations. The next generation is the Generation Y (born between 1978 and 1989) and Generation Z (born 1990 and later; Tulgan, 2013).

Executive managers should forecast when they would lose top talent across the organization (Hall-Ellis, 2015). Forecasting for risk such as employees retiring may be critical to succession planning and organizational success. Hall-Ellis (2015) mentioned that organizational leaders develop issues when retiring employees and their colleagues decide to leave their place of employment and start fresh at a new place of work. Another way executive managers may prepare for leadership replacement is to look at Generation X individuals. Generation X employees seem to have a longer time sustaining organizations; baby boomers may have 3 to 5 years left to work within organizations (Tulgan, 2013).

Conducting an internally strategic workforce analysis may foresee the effect of retirement over the next years. Executive managers could prepare to emerge leaders by retaining retirees longer so retirees could share their skills and tools with emerging leaders. As mentioned before, coaching, mentoring, and developing programs are key organizational leadership strategies. These organizational leadership strategies offer a

productive way to transfer knowledge and skills, as well as wisdom gained from years of

knowledge from retirees to emerging coming forth leaders. Organizational leaders are

concentrating on developing employees' performance by implementing new strategies for

sourcing, attracting, and recruiting adequate employees (Kusuma & Sukanya, 2013).

George (2013) discussed how succession planning programs have different

functions. There are various steps organizational leaders can use to develop a succession

plan (George, 2013). The steps in developing a succession plan (a) identifying high

potential candidates, (b) defining knowledge, skills, and abilities of a capable successor,

(c) assessing candidate strengths and weaknesses, (d) identifying development

opportunities and monitoring, supporting, and (e) evaluating progress. Organizational

leaders managing and developing key talent is becoming a norm when it comes to

minimizing gaps in leadership (Gandhi & Kumar, 2014).

Managing the succession talent may enable the best individuals to establish skills

necessary for possible future positions. Sustaining organizational leadership success

through succession planning is significant to administrations with a higher amount of

chief executive officer turnover (Valentine, 2011). Executive manager's aim for using

succession planning is to provide transitional leadership for the organization and for an

organization to engage in a process, which allows potential employees for a leadership

position to gain needed managerial skills and talent (Valentine, 2011). When executive

managers bring up the topic of leadership succession planning, this may cause

considerable emotion, fear, stress, conflict, and questions, and may create potential

discomfort between boards and executives.

The right succession plan can increase enthusiasm for work, reduce anxiety, and guard against selection bias during the hiring processes (Selden & Sowa, 2015). Incorporating a succession plan helps organizational leaders assure stability, engage leadership in a review of the organization's talent, give more attention to diversity, encourage the reconsideration of organizational systems and structure, and align various units within an organization (Selden & Sowa, 2015). Organizational leaders should focus on supportive management, managerial values, and career progress when trying to increase the obligation stages of older workers (Duxbury & Halinski, 2014).

Perspective of Leadership

Executive managers could maintain financial competitiveness in this diverse landscape by embracing leadership styles, which are most productive when inspiring the different groups (Mulki, Caemmerer, & Heggde, 2015). Abbott's (2012) view of leadership is that executive managers need to staff and lead organizations with people with high levels of expertise, professionalism, and leadership ability. Executive managers face continual organizational failures such as technology change and social development (Abbott, 2012).

Therefore, organizational leaders cannot afford to waste their valuable people resources (Abbott, 2012). The lack of soft skills amongst managers and non-management professionals may be a problem when executive managers try to advance individuals into leadership positions. Executive managers implementing a succession plan to improve soft skills may allow individuals to advance their careers.

Soft skills such as, group skills, intercommunication skills, morals, time-management skills, and a gratitude difference are career attributes, which employees should possess when looking to advance into future leadership roles (Robles, 2012). Soft skills play a part of every organizational sector. Current employees may lack soft skills.

Executive managers recognizing the lack of soft skills may defuse the lack of employees advancing into leadership positions. Subordinates need the skills to connect, organize, work under stress, and solve problems. According to Sultana (2014), leaders are looking to replace acceptable skills with higher standards of character and communication.

Phipps, Prieto, and Ndinguri (2014) discussed how emotional intelligence is suggested as helpful when developing leaders. Self-confidence, empathy, ambition, self-control, and curiosity could be requirements for characteristics to be successful leaders. Without effective focus, leadership businesses will eventually fail.

Leaders should inspire employees by supporting interactions, building relationships, and encouraging self-management and strategic integration in organizations. Employees should want leaders to provide purpose, direction, and meaning, trust, optimism, and action and results. Great leaders should be able to impart organizational vision, strategic direction, and changes.

This qualitative study pertains to the conceptual framework supporting two theories and contrast gathered data within this study. Transformational leadership and Path-goal theory are theories, which support the conceptual framework of this study. These theories seem to support organizational leaders purpose to transform productive

leaders into leadership positions. Hyypia and Pekkola (2011) are scholars who presented transformational leadership in their literature.

The purpose of using transformational leadership is to motivate leaders. Managers who have remarkable transformation leadership often have effective organizations (Taylor, Cornelius, & Colvin, 2014). Path-goal theory helps executive leaders improve conditions in the workplace. A. J. Smith (2011) highlighted path-goal theory as a means of getting the audience to understand how to strengthen employees' managerial skills, talent, and organizational sustainability.

Transformational Leadership

Warrick (2011) defined transformational leadership as a method to bring forth leader's constructive changes in individuals, groups, teams, and organizational cultures. Transformational leaders inspire one to do more than one would initially expect to do by expressing a vision, providing and suitable role model, promoting the acceptance of intellectually (Dimaculangan & Aguiling, 2012). Leaders apply transformational leadership through encouragement, vision, and the talent to encourage supporters to go beyond their self-interests for a common desire (Warrick, 2011). In addition, Hyypia and Pekkola (2011) mentioned that in 1978 Burns created the concept of transformational leadership theory with the assumption to motivate followers. A transformational leader tries to place team members with their most appropriate strengths, maximize their productivity, and ensure organizational goals are being met.

Transformational leadership and charismatic leadership overlap in meaning (Tuckey et al., 2012). Despite the overlapping of transformational leadership and

charismatic leadership, prior scholars used the terms interchangeably. Charismatic

leaders like to build interpersonal rapport with followers (Khatri, Templer, & Budhwar,

2012).

Charismatic leadership can influence the importance of employees' work as

measured by work commitment (Tuckey et al., 2012). Charismatic leaders have a unique

referent authority to influence their subordinates. Charismatic leaders serve as an

inspiration to subordinates, provide clearness when the situation is unclear, resolve

shortcomings, and motivate change by articulating a strategic vision. An interaction

between leaders and their followers result in changes of followers' attitudes and

motivation portrays charismatic leadership (Hackett & Wang, 2012).

Transformational leadership theory continues to evolve over the years (Epitropaki

& Martin, 2013). Although transformational leadership increases followers' performance

by motivating them to achieve an organization's goals, speechmaking alone might not be

enough to make transformational leadership and effective leadership strategy, which may

serve as a limitation of transformational leadership (Grant, 2012). A transformational

leader's best practice is to set goals and effectively encourage employees when the

speechmaking connects to the individual recipients of their work (Grant, 2012).

Path-goal Theory

In 1971, House, an American psychologist, developed a path-goal theory of

leadership (Soieb et al., 2013). House posited that a manager's approach and conduct can

initiate inspiration, fulfillment, and performance of his or her entry level employees

(Soieb et al., 2013). Employees may execute at an effective level, which will satisfy

managers, and vice versa if leaders exhibit a constructive approach and use supportive

and motivating practices. House established this theory of leadership to explain how

leaders' behaviors affect job satisfaction and performance of subordinates.

Path-goal theory helps executive managers to improve conditions in the

workplace (Smith, 2011). Path-goal theory rests on directive leadership, supportive

leadership, participative leadership, and achievement-oriented leadership four pillars.

These four pillars describe perceived changes in leaders' behaviors for the good of the

organization's success. An executive manager's function is to prepare employees for

their job roles by informing them of their expectations of how to perform their duties

effectively. The benefit of executive managers taking the time to prepare employees for

their job roles should help strengthen employees' managerial skills, talent, and

organizational sustainability.

Overflowing workloads often causes employees problems with their job

performance (Carrillo, 2015). Social service providers often are overworked since their

caseload. The provider's caseload can be intense due to their job requirements and

deadlines.

Social service providers are at high risk for burnout when too much work is

giving (Green, Albanese, Shapiro, & Aarons, 2014). This negativity of the burnout could

affect provider's ability to perform their jobs effectively and hinder provider's ability to

learn fully their job roles (Green et al., 2014). Burnout is personal stressors on the job

that causes a lengthy enduring emotional reaction (Leary et al., 2013). Employee burnout

could be destructive to employee obligation and job satisfaction (Leary et al., 2013).

Common problems that cause leaders to fail at performing would be time management and people problems (Meager & McLachlan, 2014). Leaders should take on their workload and their subordinates' role as well. If they are not able to balance the workflow, they may become overwhelmed and frustrated.

Leaders need to know how to handle varies personalities. Each individual has different ways of expressing themselves as well as leaders have different types of leadership styles. Organizational leaders could address these challenges by implementing leadership development programs (Meager & McLachlan, 2014).

Transition

This study explores executive managers' methods of succession planning to prepare employees for future senior leadership positions on the Social Services industry list in southwest Georgia. Rothwell (2011) and other authors in this study posit how implementing succession planning may help organizational leaders prepare employees for senior leadership positions. The purpose of succession planning consists of identifying and tracking high potential employees who have the competencies to fill higher level managerial positions (Juhdi, Pa'wan, & Hansaram, 2015). The benefit of executive managers implementing succession planning is to provide development experiences, which lower-level managers must complete to maintain a managerial position.

The content of this qualitative multiple case study implies how executive managers need to produce interventions to prepare employees for future organizational leadership positions in the Social Services industry. This study uses a qualitative

multiple case study research method to determine the findings and recommendations for revealing issues relating to individual's lack of managerial knowledge and skills when advancing into leadership positions organizations. The outcome of this study may allow executive managers to find interventions to maintain and recruit employees for future leadership positions within organizations.

Organizational leadership mechanism should be to improve employees' managerial skills and knowledge relating to their position. This qualitative multiple case study intervention is to aid executive managers in developing viable individuals by implementing succession planning. Executive managers apply succession planning as a method to ensure, which executive manager's managerial talent will be available to an organization (Juhdi et al., 2015).

Section 1 of this multiple case study is an overview of the goals of the research, including the significance of the study, the research questions, the nature of the study, and the conceptual framework supporting the methodology. In addition, this section provided definitions of terms, and an overview of the assumptions, limitations, and delimitations of the study. Transformational leadership and path-goal theory support the conceptual framework of this qualitative multiple case study.

Section 2 provides an overview of the data collection of this study. The elements of this section include analysis of participants, the role of the researcher, research method and design, population, sampling, data collection, data analysis techniques, reliability, and validity. Section 3 will provide an application to professional practice and implications for change; elaborating on the overview of the study, presentation of the

findings, applications to professional practice, implications for social change,

recommendations for action, recommendations for further study, and reflections.

Section 2: The Project

Section 2 includes an overview of the data collection process, including the role of the researcher, participants, research method, research design, the population of the study, ethical research, and data collection instruments and tools. This section highlights the population and the sample size of this study. This section concludes with a description of the reliability and validity of the study.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study is to explore reasons why executive managers' lack viable succession planning methods. Executives in the social services industry in southwest Georgia implementing succession planning may bolster executive managers' ability to develop employees' managerial skills in order to fill needed key positions for future leadership positions. The specific population group of this study was supervisors in the social services industry in southwest Georgia. The intention behind succession planning is to identify and develop potential leaders within organizations (Gray, 2014). Higher-ups should strengthen employees' managerial skills and knowledge as they intentionally and systematically prepare employees for future leadership positions (Simoneaux & Stroud, 2012).

The ability to improve executive manager's abilities to enhance employees' managerial skills contributed to social change by maintaining organizational talent management and organizational sustainability. The supervisors' ability to provide employees with future leadership positions may provide a sense of security, stability, and eventual longevity where it comes to sustaining their profession and livelihood. The

findings from this study may impact social change as individuals gain resources they may reinvest in the community.

Role of the Researcher

As a researcher, it is imperative that I report all data and separate personal perceptions, morals, and beliefs when engaging research (Ben-Ari & Enosh, 2012; Tufford & Newman, 2012). My role in this study was to be the major translator of the research instrument. My involvement in this qualitative multiple case study was to collect data from interviewing participants, observing behavior, and exploring documents. To enhance each interview session, I used an appropriate interview procedure that is an ethical practice for when it comes to participants' rights (Turner, 2010).

I preserved all ethical standards by adhering to the protocols outlined in the Belmont Report (Bird, 2010). The primary purpose of the Belmont Report is to protect participants in research studies (Oquendo, Stanley, Ellis, & Mann, 2014). In this qualitative multiple case study, I determined and eliminated, as much as possible, any bias, which may have potentially affected data collection and data analysis (Seidl, Meisinger, Wende, & Holle, 2012). The purpose of collecting data for this multiple case study was to find methods and recommendations for executive managers to prepare employees for future leadership positions in the social service industry in southwest Georgia.

I am not an employee of the social services industry where the research took place and do not have a personal working relationship with participants. However, I reside in

the local county and believe that social change will amplify job satisfaction for the citizens of that county and will ensure, which citizens may have a great place to live and raise children. Developing individuals' managerial skills and talent may result in having more professional mentors, removing the need for baby boomers to work beyond their retirement, and giving future scholars a reason to pursue higher education. Executive managers' ability to recruit and maintain good employees may minimize economic insecurity within the community and effect social change.

Participants

I interviewed 10 executive managers. The criteria for the study participants include a variety of expertise and skills, but all participants had experience in the social service industry. I recruited individuals based upon professional and personal contacts, which range from organizational leaders, past coworkers, or colleagues in social services within southwest Georgia.

I recruited entities using the snowball sampling method. A snowball sampling method is a technique to build a participation pool (Waters, 2014). The snowball sampling method is the ability to gain viable participants who I know and ask them if they know of someone who has an interest in participating in this study. For example, using virtual networks is one strategy to help gain access in hard to reach populations (Baltar & Brunet, 2012).

An advantage of using virtual networking is to increase the earthly area within southwest Georgia and assist with the labeling of persons with hurdles to approach. For instance, I used social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn as a virtual

network to gain access to participants for this qualitative study. In addition, I looked for existing groups of potential participants who have participated in a related research study, and I used snowball sampling as a method to gain participants for this study. Gaining access to participants for most researchers is a major hurdle (Smith, 2012). Obtaining access to participants is a major hurdle since this is a hard to reach population. To ensure time restraints, office commitments, and confidentiality do not hinder supervisors from participating in this doctoral study, I adjusted my schedule as necessary to meet with the potential participants.

As researchers gain access to participants, they should create a working rapport with participants. Establishing a working relationship may include finding ways to engage with participants (Smith, 2012). Using interpersonal skills, communicating effectively by making a personal appeal with a letter followed by a phone call, getting to know participants, and ensuring flexibility is away I established a working relationship with participants (Smith, 2012). Trying to establish working relationships with participants was a productive and positive information gathering process.

I took measures to assure ethical protection of participants which included the participant's identities and the responses obtained from participants has been kept confidential. The purpose of the data retention plans to protect the rights of the participants is to limit the information collected by narrowing to only the minimum amount of data necessary to accomplish the research purposes (Yin, 2014). Participants responded to interview questions (see Appendix B) and completed a consent form (see Appendix C), which Walden University Institutional Review Board (IRB) requires.

These Walden University requirements are best practices to adhere to security policies and protection of participant's confidentiality of their information collected under the protocol.

Yin (2014) mentioned that when choosing the sample size of a single or multiple case study, one should try to aim toward logical explanations and avoid thinking of a sample of cases. The sample size of this study was 10 organizational leaders and employees within the social service industry. Participants answered semistructured open-ended questions approved by Walden University IRB.

Data protections are necessary for participant confidentiality. I stored participants' data to include transcripts, audio files, and interview coding on a USB drive. After completion of this study, all obtained information will remain in a secure location for a 5-year period. After 5 years of storage, I will destroy the transcripts, audio files, and USB drive by using a shredding company.

Research Method and Design

The following section identifies and justifies a method and design for conducting this qualitative multiple case study. A qualitative research method and a multiple case study were the chosen research method and design for this study. The reason for choosing a qualitative research method and multiple case study over the other research methods and designs was that this study's purpose was to explore actual experiences of executive manager's residing in southwest Georgia listed within the social services industry.

A qualitative multiple case study research method allows an understanding of the nature of the study. Creating original ideas relating to the phenomenon and the potential to uncover issues that exist within the phenomenon also helps readers to understand the nature of the study (Marshall & Rossman, 2014). Qualitative methods have earned the respect amongst researchers for the importance and validation of their outcome (Yardley & Bishop, 2015).

Research Method

Marshall and Rossman (2014) mentioned that in qualitative research the researcher is the primary data collection tool; in contrast, quantitative research uses multiple forms of instruments (Peredaryenko & Krauss, 2013). A qualitative researcher analyzes a specific phenomenon by using semistructured open-ended interviews in a natural setting in an attempt to understand how people make sense of their experiences and perceptions (Michaelson, McKerron, & Davison, 2015). In addition, Michaelson et al. (2015) elucidated that a qualitative method has earned respect amongst researchers for the meaningfulness and authenticity of their results.

The reason for choosing a qualitative method over the other research methods was that qualitative method is a tool researcher's use to explore the meaning individuals ascribe to a social problem. A quantitative method is useful when a researcher is looking to broaden overviews, which remain stable across specific contexts (Yardley & Bishop, 2015). There are five approaches a researcher could use to conduct a qualitative study (Hurt & McLaughlin, 2012). For this study, the multiple case study purpose explored individual and organizational actual experiences complex involvements, relationships,

communities, or programs, which supports deconstruction and the following rebuilding of many difficulties (Yin, 2012).

The purpose of a qualitative method is to identify the essence of human experiences about a phenomenon by using sensory data such as words, illustrations, and auditory (Marshall & Rossman, 2014). The phenomenon in this study was employees lacking the managerial knowledge and skills to become future senior leaders within the social services industry. In designing this study, I chose a qualitative approach versus a quantitative or mixed approach since a quantitative approach focuses on the statistical value of the effect of a variable (Marshall & Rossman, 2014).

Mixed methods represent a social science research approach, which requires integration of two major methodological approaches: qualitative and quantitative (Yardley & Bishop, 2015). A quantitative or mixed method approach was not warranted for this study since there are no variables with which to develop a quantitative survey and thus no relevance for a statistical evaluation (Yardley & Bishop, 2015). In general, basic differences in qualitative and quantitative research are their investigative intentions, the type of questioning they pose, types of data collection equipment they make use of, the forms of data they create, and the amount of flexibility giving into the study design.

Research Design

This multiple case study design was the preferred research design for this study. Multiple case study research allows readers to focus and analyze findings. If a participant experiences a phenomenon, a case study may determine its applicability (Houghton, Casey, Shaw, & Murphy, 2013).

Most the interview questions in this study asked *how* or *why*, which made the preferred method for this study, a multiple case study (Yin, 2012). A researcher's goal in a multiple case study is to focus on individual's actual phenomenon (Houghton et al., 2013). Participants can potentially benefit equally from this study by learning ways on how to improve their managerial knowledge and skills.

In a qualitative research, there are five common methods of qualitative research: inquiry, narrative, phenomenological, participatory action, grounded theory, ethnographic, and multiple case study (Marshall & Rossman, 2014). I used a multiple case study research design rather than the other designs because time and activity bound this study; a multiple case study design allows the researcher to collect detailed data using various data collection procedures over a constant period of time (Marshall & Rossman, 2014).

Ethnography, grounded theory, phenomenological research, and narrative research were not the best choices for this study. Ethnography involves researchers studying a complete social group in a normal setting over a lengthy period by collecting data through observation and interviews (Houghton et al., 2013). Ethnography was not the best choice since this study does not involve using participants over a prolonged period (Houghton et al., 2013).

The grounded theory involves using a new theory around a research process, action, or interaction grounded in the views of participants (Marshall & Rossman, 2014). A grounded theory did not pertain to this study since a new theory is not applicable for this study. A phenomenological research design identifies the essence of human

experiences about a phenomenon as described by participants (Marshall & Rossman, 2014).

Phenomenological research is groundwork since this study process was not a prolonged engagement. This qualitative study includes exploring one or more individuals bounded by time and activity. Case studies are a strategy of inquiry researchers use to explore programs, event, activity, process, or one or more individuals (Marshall & Rossman, 2014).

Multiple case study relates to this study because of the phenomenon of executive managers' process to embark on succession planning as a method to prepare employees for future leadership positions. The purpose of this study was to understand real-life experiences of executive managers implementing succession planning as a way to prepare employees for future leadership positions. In addition, multiple case study process represents studying a small number of individuals through broad and prolonged assurance to develop plans and relationships of signification (Moustakas, 1994). This study involved a subgroup including executive managers developing future senior leaders within the social services industry in southwest Georgia.

Population and Sampling

The population from which the sample came was executive managers implementing succession planning to prepare employees for future leadership positions. The sample consisted of a participant pool of a minimum of 10 leaders selected through a snowball sampling of organizational leaders in the social services industry in southwest Georgia. Snowball sampling is useful for respondent-driven sampling in hard-to-reach

populations (Goodman, 2011). Snowballing is a strategy used for response-driven sampling, when a population is hard to reach, or when they refer to response-driven sampling as a variation of further development of snowball sampling (Goodman, 2011). Snowballing is a successful technique where researchers use one individual to reach another person, who in turn provides the name of the third, and this continues until all participants needed for the study are interviewed and methodological saturation achieved (Baltar & Brunet, 2012).

The decision in determining the sample size depends on some considerations and has no one perfect answer (Bryman, 2012). Moreover, time and the cost is a consideration when deciding the sample size (Bryman, 2012). The Walden University DBA policy recommended that when using a multiple case study, researchers should have a minimum of five participants. I interviewed 10 participants as this sample size meets the purpose of this study (Yin, 2014). In this qualitative study, the sample consisted of executive managers and employees of the social services Industry.

The initial step in the data gathering process is the selection of participants (Englander, 2012). The eligibility criteria to participate in this qualitative multiple case study involved executive managers within the social services industry in southwest Georgia. Executive managers had to want willingly to participate in the collection of data. Representatives should be willing to participate in this study for study purpose only. The representative should not discuss this study with other individuals. The representatives had to fill out a consent and confidentiality form to participate in this qualitative study.

The criteria for selecting participants for this qualitative study were business owners and supervisors with a year or more experience in a leadership position who could answer research questions and enhance understanding of the phenomenon under the study (Balon, Alpert, Cluver, & Lewis, 2013). The participants work in the social service industry in southwest Georgia. The participants agreed to participate in this study by responding; *I agree* to an email requesting their permission to participate in the study. Another criterion was for the participant to keep all information confidential concerning the interview.

The selective interview setting for this study was face-to-face interviews using semistructured open-ended questions. The interviews were one per participant and lasted approximately 45 minutes each. Although I allowed for additional time, no participants needed extra time. If there was a need for more time, I articulated this to the participants.

There were 10 prominent questions about each participant's working experiences, which are the subjects of the interview procedure. A list of the prominent questions is in Appendix B. During the interview procedure; I took field notes to assist in analyzing the research study. The study findings aided in developing ways executive managers could improve employees' managerial skills and talent to prepare employees for future key positions.

Ethical Research

Researchers deal with ethical dilemmas within studies. I assumed that participants would acknowledge and agree to the rights of this study. Walden University IRB's purpose is to ensure that the gathered research is acceptable for this study and

which participants comply with the university's ethical standards. The approval number for this study is 03-11-16-0194025.

Researchers should guard against misconduct, which may reflect on their institution. Participating in this study was on a voluntary basis. For the consenting process of the ethical research process, prospective participants received an informed consent form via email (see Appendix B). The email included an invitation that introduced the purpose of the study and to determine candidates interested in participating in the study. Signed confidentiality agreements were for anyone who may view data, which contains identifiers, such as a transcriber or translator.

Researchers are responsible for observing legal and regulatory requirements when conducting research (Pollock, 2012). Therefore, participants filled out a consent form after IRB approval and prior to responding to interview questions. I distributed and collected signed consent forms before each participant started the study process. The invitation to participate in this study included filling out a consent form (see Appendix C). After participants had agreed to participate, then I scheduled the interview.

The interviews took place at a suitable time and location for participants and me. I used a digital recorder to capture interview sessions on a password-protected hard drive. Discovering the findings and recommendations of this qualitative study, I analyzed the collected data retrieved from the recorded interviews of the participants by transcribing interviews after completing all participants' interviews.

After completing the initial interviews, I interpreted what the participant shared and then I used member checking to share the interpretation with the participant for

validation. Corrections of all inconsistencies in interpretation or transcription occurred

before data analysis. Participants had the right to withdraw from the study, at any time

without repercussion, by opting out on the consent form or by not completing and

returning the consent form (Praestegaard & Gard, 2011).

No participant needed to withdraw from the study. I did not offer any monetary

incentives; however, I provided findings and recommendations from this study to anyone

for the purpose of preparing executive managers for organizational success. I stored all

data electronically on a password-protected hard drive to which I only have access. To

protect participants' confidentiality and rights, I stored all raw data in a metal locked

cabinet within my home for 5 years.

Five years after the study publication, I will destroy raw data by shredding written

and printed documentation and erasing electronic data. The participants' identities

directly or indirectly will not appear in this study. Researchers not disclosing

participant's identities will help protect the confidentiality of participants' identities. I

did not use participants' names; instead, I coded each participant's data with an

alphabetic coding scheme, such as P1, P2, and so on.

Data Collection Instruments

In a qualitative research, data collection includes exploring the procedure of how

individuals attach meaning, events, or a program happening in a real-world setting as

each research setting has its own nuances, histories, cultures, and subcultures (Yin,

2012). Qualitative research includes approaches such as interviews, observations, and

written documents. Official documents included websites and archives, such as corporate

reports, government records, and business and management records. These materials consisted of information on executive managers implementing succession planning within organizations. These documents came from databases such as EBSCO and ProQuest and from participants' interviews. A majority of the scholarly and peer-viewed journals are from EBSCO and ProQuest.

Researchers have suggested that the best way to gather data in a qualitative study is to use a semistructured interview process (Yin, 2012). Semistructured interviews are a useful way to gather data since semistructured interviews enhance flexibility and control during the data collection process (Yin, 2012). Therefore, a semistructured interview was the best approach to determine how executive managers may prepare employees for leadership positions. Semistructured, face-to-face interviews were the primary data collection instrument for this qualitative multiple case study. In a qualitative research, the researcher is the primary interpreter of the research instrument (Scarneci, 2012).

I was the primary data collection instrument in this multiple case study. I used face-to-face interviews with semistructured questions, organizational documents, and current and peer-reviewed journals that are primarily related to the focus of this study. I used a qualitative method approach to collect this study data. The process involved direct interaction with individuals on a one to one basis, such as an interview.

The purpose of the interviews, organizational documents and scholar peer reviewed articles were to answer research questions in this study. Yin (2012) noted interviews help researchers to explore individuals' perceptions of events, actions, or processes. The interview data collection instrument permitted the exploration of the in-

depth experiences of participants concerning preparing employees for leadership positions.

An interview guide helped guided the interview portion of the research. The guide involved general questions determine by responses from participants. Michaelson et al. (2015) stated semistructured in-depth interviews are an attempt to understand how people make sense of their experiences.

I decoded an organizational development process to establish, reconstruct, and distribute effective ways to improve employees' managerial skills. Exploring this issue helped me understand how to become an effective leader. As the primary interpreter of this study, when gathering data, it was important for me to access the research sites and obtain permission to conduct interviews at the company site (Marshall & Rossman, 2014). These steps should help the reader to understand the perspective and any potential bias, which could occur in the research process.

The interview location and schedule were agreeable to both the participants and me. The interviews began with introductions, explanation of the study intent, research question for the study, and documentation of the study results. The interview questions in this qualitative study were semistructured, pertaining to in-depth actual experiences and work experiences of executive managers and employees (Gillard et al., 2012).

During the interview process, participants got a questionnaire consisting of 10 questions relating to the qualitative study. The questions were general questions intended to elicit experiences and views from participants. These open-ended questions led

participants to discuss their perceptions and experiences as they try to position themselves into leadership positions.

The intent of interviewing participants helped formulate participants' work experiences and perceptions. As specified by Yin (2014), the use of in-depth interviews may allow access to informal organizational contexts, explore the hidden underpinnings characteristic in the organizational setting, and research into the social change of the organizational development. Participants' willingness to take part of the interview process depended on executive managers gaining dormant information. Participants decided to participate in this study for such reasons including personal interest, attention, pleasure, self-motivation, thoughtful, common judgment, corrective interest, tangible interest, financial interest, political empowerment, and informing change.

I enhanced the reliability and validity of the data collection instrument by verifying which participants are organizational leaders within the social services industry. I insisted that the participants answer to the best of their knowledge. This study data came from other published articles, which justified test and re-test reliability of documentations.

Any forms in this study such as the solicitation letter (see Appendix D), sample consent form (see Appendix C), and the interview questions (see Appendix B) appears in the appendixes section of this study. In determining internal consistency among others, participants filled out consent forms before the interview starts, retrieved a schedule from participants to ensure a valuable time to conduct all interviews, and scheduled interviews two months out from the start of the first interview.

Participants received an email with a reminder of their interview date and the interview questions a week before their scheduled interview. Participation in this study was on a voluntary basis and participants had the right to decline or discontinue participation at any time. In this study, there were no adjustments or revisions made for standardized research instruments.

Interview questions and questionnaires are successful tools to help gather participant's personal experiences (see Appendix B). Developing a participant matrix may allow researchers to measure and verify information presented by participants. Researchers in a qualitative research have to present accurate and truthful information and not incomplete or false information.

Data Collection Technique

The primary data collection technique in this study was semistructured face-to-face interviews. The interviews were open-ended questions located in Appendix B. The data for this qualitative study came from the face-to-face interviews of participants from the chosen snowball sample. The interview data collection technique allowed me to use open-ended questions to present the experiences, opinions, and views of participants and develop meaning to actions, events, and processes related to organizational succession planning.

The data were collected by developing semistructured research questions and translating findings and recommendations. Furthermore, I used company archives to find viable information that could help leaders to strategize ways to prepare employees for leadership positions. The goal of collecting data for this multiple case study was to find

methods and recommendations for executive managers to prepare employees for future leadership positions in the social services industry in southwest Georgia.

The interview data collection began after receiving approval from Walden University's Research Center IRB. After I received approval from the committee, the next step was for prospective participants to receive an email and a phone call about participating in the study. The technique to collect data within this qualitative study was semistructured in-depth interviews. Interviews are one way of collecting data in a qualitative research (Jacob & Furgerson, 2012).

Surveys are another source of data collection, but I conducted interviews as a source to gather participant experience. The reason was that surveys do not give an opportunity to discuss issues in detail and explore opinions (Chikweche & Fletcher, 2012). Interviews in a qualitative study provide opportunities for the researcher to collect rich and sense-making data (Frels & Onwuegbuzie, 2013). Furthermore, interviews are a method to guard against confusion, such as if participants misunderstand a question, I can clarify the question. The following was the interview protocol:

Phase I

1. Set an appointment with each participant at a time,

2. Create a conducive setting to converse,

3. Arrange an area suitable for face-to-face interviewing,

4. Ask if participants want something to drink.

Phase II

1. Explain the process and thank the participants for taking time and having the willingness to take part of the study,

2. Discuss to participants, the importance to keep their information confidential, by concealing their names; with alphabetical letters, such as P1, P2, P3 and so,

3. Remind participants about the consent form, they have a right to decline or disclose from participating in the research process, and the information collected is for this study use only. Explain that the interview is semistructured and consists of open-ended questions.

4. Ask permission to record the interview, and if they would like a copy, they need to initial on the giving document which they would like a copy of the interview.

The estimated time of the interview was 45 minutes, but extra time was allowed as needed for participants to complete the interview. After completion of the interview, I thanked participants for their time and completed the interview by stopping the recording. I used a pilot study to conduct this study. Prior to data collection, I had four professionals from the university who had knowledge of this study topic to review interview questions to determine if they met the purpose of the study.

Data Organization Technique

Proper structure of the data, the instrument, and efficient data collection promote the reliability of the research (Luo, 2011). In protecting the integrity of research and meet ethical requirements of protecting participants, it is imperative that all gathered organizational data are effective, backed up, and raw data protected. Expanding organizational leader's commitment and promoting strong moral working values may

assist to guarantee the protection of persons and researcher's civil rights research and examination (Amon, Baral, Beyrer, & Kass, 2012). The process of keeping the information confidential, I used alphabetical letters to distinguish participants. I asked participants to state their alphabet before I asked the first interview question.

After completion of all participants' interviews, I transcribed the data to determine recommendations and findings. NVivo allows a researcher to address coding patterns and for information to supply the expert with tools to question and verify the coding processes (Onwuegbuzie et al., 2012). NVivo is the instrument used to hold and analyze the data (Onwuegbuzie et al., 2012).

NVivo software supports qualitative and mixed methods research utilizing its capacity to organize, and analyze content from interviews. NVivo provided a workspace that helped at every stage of this study, to structure the responses into similar themes. The data retrieved from the participants' were alphabetically cataloged and will remain in a metal locked cabinet in my home for 5 years after completion of the study to keep participant's data confidential.

As part of methodological triangulation, I reviewed company websites and archives to determine whether the interview data reflected the policies, procedures, and mission statements of the organizations. I will keep all information for 5 years after the completion of the study. Five years after completion of the study, I will destroy all hard-copy data by shredding and all electronic data by erasing all password-protected files .

Data Analysis

All data analysis logically and sequentially addresses all research questions appropriate for testing procedures to support the findings of this study. The data analysis process involves thorough, repeating, and interrelating procedures consisting of ways to ensure the validity and reliability of results. The study research questions appear in the research section and the data collection technique section of this study.

I did not use experimental variables and hypotheses in this qualitative study. Analyzing this study included using NVivo, CAQDAS, and Excel. The purpose of using the software was to enable organizing of text, visual, and data files. This software supports the end-to-end research process for qualitative research studies.

The value of using this software was to uncover themes from the data. The avenue of analyzing this qualitative research study was to use NVivo as a research tool. NVivo is a software tool to facilitate the analysis of data collected during the research process (Onwuegbuzie et al., 2012). CAQDAS is a tool to ease data management and processing when using a qualitative method (Franzosi, Doyle, McClelland, Rankin, & Vicari, 2013). Coding may help researchers interpret interesting subjects within the topic (Franzosi et al., 2013).

I developed a qualitative code, which is a recording that contains a list of predetermined codes, which a researcher uses for coding data. Organizing and preparing data involved using a color code scheme. The coding allowed me to sort related data when transcribing interviews, scanning materials, typing up transcriptions, sorting, and arranging the data into categories according to the differing sources of information.

I also used methodological triangulation as a means to explore organizational documents along with the interviews. Using different methods provided deeper understanding and analysis of the concepts and focus of the study.

Transcribing data allowed discovery of recommendations and findings of how executive managers may strategize ways to improve an employee's managerial skills and talent applicable for key future positions. Executive managers could apply succession planning as a source to find methods to sustain and retain employees for future positions within their organization. Interpreting data is the last process during the interview (Turner, 2010). Interpreting data helps with uncovering and compiling data into codes (Turner, 2010). The analysis of the literature review and the conceptual framework provided insights into the reasons why executive managers should engage in succession planning when preparing to advance future leaders.

I followed the analysis method formulated by van Kaam (1966) and modified by Moustakas (1994) to support the intent of this study to explore ways executive managers could advance employees into leadership positions. Methodological triangulation was the method I used to gather data when conducting ways executive managers could prepare employees for senior positions. I retrieved data from companies' websites and archives, such as corporate reports, government records, and business and management records. I coded each official document with an alphabetic coding scheme, such as C1, C2, and so on. Tying in how these data related to the conceptual framework; the theories identified from the research presented in the conceptual framework section outlined preferred approaches to prepare findings and recommendations for this study.

Interview Questions

1. What type of transformational leadership does executive managers display in your organization?

2. How do executive managers use a path-goal theory when leading the organization to success?

3. How do executive managers assist with improving employees' managerial skills and talent?

4. What managerial skills do entry-level employees lack?

5. How should executive managers prepare employees for leadership positions?

6. What criteria did you use in selecting a mentor?

7. What programs do you recommend, such as coaching, mentorship, and developing programs as methods to help executive managers to prepare individuals for leadership positions? Explain?

8. What else, if anything, do you believe is pertinent to the purpose of this study about succession planning and promoting into leadership positions, which you would like to share that is not covered in the interview questions?

Reliability and Validity

Reliability and validity seem imperative when performing a qualitative, multiple case study research. When conducting this study, I had to ensure the data were accurate and consistent across different research and projects. In verifying this study's accuracy and consistency, Yin (2014) suggested that documenting procedures and checking for mistakes strengthen accuracy and consistency.

Reliability

Qualitative reliability indicates researcher's approach may show consistency across different research and projects. During the research procedure, I treated all participants the same and ensured the data collected is not one-sided, and data is from scholarly peer-reviewed data. To ensure the transcripts were viable, a small group of people helped transcribe the interviews.

I verified the accuracy of the information by informing participants about the information gathered to increase the credibility and accuracy of the information presented in the study. The structure of data and efficient data collection are the reliability of the research (Luo, 2011). Searching for organizations and individuals who have experience in conducting interviews allowed knowledge of handling interviews and creating questions.

Validity

Dependability, credibility, confirmability, and transferability may enhance the trustworthiness of research conclusions. Virtual networks are a strategy to help gain access too hard to reach populations (Baltar & Brunet, 2012). I assured the dependability of the study by showing repeatability by interviewing 10 participants in an effort to gain their views on how to strengthen employees' managerial skills. Collecting the data from participants may emerge dependable recommendations to help individual's advance into leadership positions.

Providing in-depth literature review of supporting and opposing theories on succession planning was the credibility of this study. Elaborating on other scholar's

succession planning recommendations gave credibility to this study. Conformability derived from the ability of the researcher to check study accuracy.

Employing certain procedures, such as checking for mistakes, ensuring the codes are correctly use, and cross checking codes, achieves the objective of qualitative validity to determine if the findings are accurate from the standpoint of the researcher, the participant, and the readers. All information was subject to consistency review of mistakes to ensure strength. I used NVivo as a tool to help with the consistency of this study (Onwuegbuzie et al., 2012).

The study findings may help executive managers to communicate and provide results to other executive managers within the means of providing a succession plan from previous organizational programs to use specific theories in the past for other programs, which were similar to succession planning. This study used transformational theory and path-goal theory as management components to aid executive managers in promoting individuals to leadership positions. The defining problem of this study was to address succession planning as a means to sustain and retain viable employees for leadership positions.

Transition and Summary

This qualitative multiple case study addressed the succession planning of executive managers within an organization to sustain and retain viable employees for future positions. The effect of providing secure positions may sustain organizational success and community economics. Developing a succession plan may reduce employee turnover and loss of customers and business growth. Moreover, implementing a

succession plan may transpire a pool of talented individuals; improve production, recruit and retain productive employees; on behalf of these changes, implementing succession planning will enhance organizational leaders' contribution to social change.

Failure to plan a smooth transition may cause an organization to incur financial losses and even cause an organization to close (Giarmarco, 2012). Executive leaders being proactive could guarantee an effortless transition for leaders and employees (Flynn, 2014). Proactive succession planning was for experienced employees who are starting to think about slowing downing rather than concentrating on employees who are in the act of retiring (Flynn, 2014).

The objective of Section 2 is to provide an overview of the plan for conducting this study. The plan involves conducting face-to-face interviews, which is one of the instruments to collect data in this study. In addition, I used scholarly peer-reviewed articles to ensure reliability and validity, participant selection process, criteria for method and design, standards for review and sampling of participants, guidelines to ensure ethical research, and overview of data collection and executive managers plans in order to discover findings and recommendations.

This study included participants, who are organizational leaders in the social services industry in southwest Georgia. The research questions elicited feedback to support and improve executive managers' ability to recruit and retain good employees in the process of perfecting managerial skills and talent. The data came from a minimum of 10 participants who hold an executive position within the social services industry

organizational listing and primary data from various sources. Section 3 includes an

analysis of the data collection and critical findings.

Section 3: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change

Section 3 provides the findings of the study. Section 3 also includes (a) an overview of the study, (b) a presentation of the findings, (c) applications to professional practice, (d) implications for social change, (e) recommendations for actions, (f) recommendations for further study, (g) reflections, and (h) a summary and the study conclusions.

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore what succession planning methods are successful for executive managers when preparing employees for leadership positions. I conducted semistructured face-to-face interviews with 10 leaders working as executive managers in the social services industry in southwest Georgia. The goal of the study was to obtain data to answer the central research question: What are some succession planning methods that may help executive managers successfully prepare employees for leadership positions? I chose participants based on their roles within their agency. The participants chosen were leaders and they had at least one direct employee to report to them.

The participant interviews occurred in a similar manner and similar environments to ensure consistency and reliability in collected data. Interviewing participants in a comfortable location may allow participants to feel at ease when providing detailed responses to answer each semistructured interview question (Scarneci, 2012). The interviewees responded to eight semistructured, open-ended interview questions (see Appendix B) considering succession planning and promoting employees to leadership

positions. A review of the agencies' documents supported with data obtained from interviews.

After transcribing the 10 interviews and gathering company records, I imported data collected from semistructured interviews and new and existing literature into NVivo 11 qualitative analysis software for coding. I analyzed all the data and identified several emergent themes. Based on the central research question, data analysis of interview responses, and a data analysis of agency's documents, I identified several core emergent themes, which I grouped into four themes.

Presentation of the Findings

I used semistructured, face-to-face interviews as a means to answer the central research question, what are some succession planning methods that may help executive managers successfully prepare employees for leadership positions? In addition to semistructured interviews, I also reviewed related business records regarding employees' capabilities to advance into management positions to triangulate and confirm interview data and I conducted interviews until data saturation was reached. I scheduled all semistructured interviews in areas conducive to participants' schedules.

The conceptual frameworks for this research study were transformational theory and path-goal theory. The participants' responses supported transformational leadership and path-goal theory. Once data were collected via interviews, I grouped the data into themes. The qualitative interviews produced four emergent themes of leadership effectiveness: (a) organizational management, (b) hiring employees who fit the culture,

(c) leadership capabilities, and (d) talent management. Table 1 displays the frequency of primary themes from data collected from semistructured interviews.

Table 1

Frequency of Primary Themes from Data Collected from Semistructured Interviews

Theme	*N*	% Frequency of Occurrence
Organizational Management	40	6.89%
Hiring Employees that Fit the Culture	52	4.65%
Leadership Capabilities	51	7.65%
Talent Management	36	6.88%

Note. *n* = frequency

Theme 1: Organizational Management

The first primary theme that emerged from the interview data was organizational management helps supports executive managers to prepare employees for leadership positions. Organizational management is a leadership style that may help organizations break down the entire operation of a department in several phases. Participants' responses to Interview Questions 1 and 2 indicated that empowering, inspiring, and clearing a path for employees to reach their goals prepares employees for leadership positions. Participants' responses showed they tried to determine if candidates are leaders by recognizing their abilities during the interview process. P2 stated, and P6 confirmed, that they inspire employees as they enter the organization by assessing their skills, identifying if the position is the right fit, and planning their career path.

Supervisors provide training to improve employees' talents after 6 months (Chambers, 2013). After assessing their capabilities after 6 months, directors start staff development (Khoreva & Vaiman, 2015). Staff development includes attending online

and internal training to assist with building an employee's skills (Khoreva & Vaiman, 2015). The majority of the participants pointed out how effective communication is vital when anyone is in a leadership role.

Conversely, P4 and P7 mentioned, spending time with subordinates will help employees feel secure in their positions and enable them to become a leader. P4 stated that at the beginning of hire she spends time with her staff to get a sense of each employee's career path. Enhancing capabilities and empowering employees' thinking to become leaders can measure how excelling in organizational management could improve agencies succession plan.

Since establishing this doctoral study findings, Dyjack (2016) wrote a peer-reviewed study from the literature review that includes a new study since writing the proposal. Dyjack confirmed to this study findings by supporting the research by stating employees work better in surroundings where they are involved, empowered, and supported. P7 mentioned that employees work better if the employees feel involved, empowered, and supported. Conversely, Luna (2012) supported this doctoral study's finding by elaborating on how leaders having a positive relationship with subordinates may change how they feel about becoming a leader. The findings of this doctoral study ties to the conceptual framework ttransformational leadership since the purpose of this study were to find methods to prepare employees for future leadership positions. P3 and P4 inspire their subordinates by establishing career paths and having an open door policy. Warrick (2011) explained that executive managers use transformational leadership as a leadership style to bring constructive changes in individuals, groups, teams, and structural

cultures. As decision makers try to inspire their employees by creating trust-based

relationships and building management skills is an example a great transformational

leader.

Newhall (2015) tied these study findings to the existing literature of effective

business practice by changing how succession planning builds managerial success by

modifying the way leaders function as leaders: Executive leaders need to find methods

from existing literature that ties to the business practice (Newhall, 2015). By applying

varies management styles to organize, plan, lead, and control resources helps leadership

with achieving the agency's mission.

Findings of this study verified how breaking down departments into phases will

help decision-makers discover the next plan of action for boosting employees'

performance and improving managerial leadership skillfulness. P4 mentioned how she

assigns each employee a different case. Each employee caseload is sectored off by the

number of cases an employee may have on their caseload. These interview participants

were able to identify and propose ways they could build a successful team and build

leadership abilities. P1 and P8 use the hiring process to define candidates' abilities and

figure out if they have any managerial skills. After these leaders determining if the

candidate is a right fit, the supervisor begins to train the employees. P9 responded to

Question 3 by explaining that managers assist with improving employees' managerial

skills by allowing them to do on the job shadowing, complete orientations, and the

agency provides them with a mentor. P4 mentioned that she "assists her team with

conflicts by visiting the client's home with her case managers and developing conflict

resolutions between the case manager and client." Robinson-Walker (2013) highlighted how employees are not capable of performing their roles when first hired. By having continued access to supervisors and organizational leaders allowing employees to practice may improve job performance and managerial skills. Improving job performance and managerial skills may help potential employees to advance to leadership positions.

Once the supervisor knows each employee's goal, they work together to reach their goal. After completing staff training, managers then create staff development. P4 and P7 stated training is internal and external. P4 stated that she "email[s] her employees on upcoming training and state[s] to them why it is necessary to attend the training."

Theme 2: Hiring Employees Who Fit the Culture

The second theme discussed was hiring employees who fit the culture. Interview Question 2 related to how leaders lead an organization to success. The interview participants discussed how a great leader needs to be capable of operating successfully in agencies. The results from the interview questions determined that developing a good recruiting plan, creating job descriptions, handling emotional intelligence, knowing how to dictate assignments, and identifying individual's skills to fit positions may allow managers to hire employees to fit comfortable in their department.

Both P2 and P8 shared that they prefer hired employees to come in lacking social service knowledge so managerial leaders could train and groom employees in the right direction. P3 stated, "calls coming in with a small amount of understanding the job, 'being green'." These findings indicated that decision makers need to know how to

recruit and train when hiring the right person to assist with controlling the daily agency operations.

Johnson's (2016) peer-reviewed study extended my knowledge for this study findings by indicating that influencing employees to speak up, having an effective safety program, and employees having job aids to assist with anticipating and preparing employees for the most common problems prepares employees for position advancement. Comparing peer-reviewed studies, P9 agreed with Johnson, stating that "providing job descriptions, a safe place to work, and employees being involved with operations will prepare employees for leadership advancement." The findings tie to this conceptual framework transformational leadership since transformational leadership encourages employees to make positive leadership decisions.

Hyypia and Pekkola (2011) discussed how encouraging employees to make positive leadership decisions use the transformational leadership theory. The interviewed participants mentioned how communication and resolving conflict influence organization management when preparing employees to meet leadership requirements. Existing literature findings of effective business practice that ties to this study findings are employees who trust, and feel comfortable in their culture often stay longer and look for advancement opportunities (Liu et al., 2013).

This doctoral study findings revealed how leaders should be aware of knowing how to prepare employees for managerial roles once efficiently performing in their entry-level positions. Interview Question 5 asked how should executive managers prepare employees for leadership positions. The aim of satisfying company's missions is for

management to strengthen employees' managerial skills and knowledge as they purposely and thoroughly develop future leaders (Simoneaux & Stroud, 2012). Participant responses to establishing qualified hires are for managers and employees to communicate effectively, organize a productive working environment, and be able to give and receive feedback.

Ibidunni, Osibanjo, Adeniji, Salau, and Falola (2016) confirmed to this study findings by explaining how employers and their employees having mutual relationships and understand one another decreases the chances of employees leaving or being absent from work. For example, two of the participants, P2, and P8 stated that "they have an open-door policy." The open-door policy allows subordinates to enter their offices to discuss frustrations, weaknesses, strengths, and opportunities. Workers trusting agencies is a vital component for a steady employee-organizational relationship (Xu, Loi, & Ngo, 2016).

Theme 3: Leadership Capabilities

Leadership capabilities are the third theme that emerged. Participant answers to Interview Questions 3 and 5 indicated how leaders build leadership capabilities. The interview participants acknowledged that developing managerial skills is essential and succession planning is an excellent method to use. For instance, a majority of the participants use coaching, mentoring, shadowing, and development programs to prepare employees for career advancement. Two participants, P5 and P6, noted that when employees are hired, they are assigned a mentor (personal communication, April 5, 2016).

All interview participants provide internal and external training for their entry-level employees. However, once employees become leaders, the agency does not provide staff development programs. Agency training for new supervisors is limited. P4 projected that if her agency educates their leadership team, they could be more effective to their subordinates (personal communication, March 28, 2016). P7 discussed how there are a couple of factors that are important to being a leader, the one she mentioned was innate. P9 stated that "all leaders should have autonomy." Even though, employees may have a natural ability to lead, they still should attend departmental training and development programs to increase their leadership capabilities.

All participants used delegation of authority to prepare potential subordinates for leadership positions. The interview participants indicated from the interview questions that assigning responsibility and authority to subordinates helps prepare employees for management positions. P8 imposed that delegating responsibility inspires and empowers co-workers by allowing them to do things above their pay grade. Selecting coworkers to manage operations enabled them to think they have an ownership in part of the company so when they transfer to a leadership position, authoritative leaders feel the coworkers could function better. Managers need to know how to lead and follow.

Pater (2016) and P10 confirmed to this study findings by clarifying the more employees' practice, the better they are capable of improving their job performance. In addition, O'Connell and Gibbons (2016) extended knowledge to this study findings by validating that there are many ways to create effective service programs in organizations.

Path-goal theory ties to the conceptual framework of this study findings since the findings could contribute to directors finding ways for employees to reach their goals.

A. J. Smith (2011) explained that path-goal theory helps leaders enhance workplace conditions. Calareso (2013) and P9 acknowledged that "if leaders take the time to nurture and train employees through leadership training improves employees' capabilities." Calareso supported existing literature that bond to this study by adhering to views of staff development building employees' leadership capabilities. Drysdale, Bennett, Murakami, Johansson, and Gurr (2014) tied these study findings to the existing literature on effective business practice since high-level leaders challenge coworkers thinking increases the chances of the administrative team to develop a viable talent pool for a business that in turn is a strategy for succession planning.

Further findings in the study indicated that candidates, at the time of hire, lack practical talents when it comes to promoting effective leaders (Chambers, 2013). To increase agency performance, supervisors need to look into devoting more into improving the know-hows of their higher management confirmed (Asencio & Mujkic, 2016). Interview Question 4 asked what managerial skills entry-level employees lack. The interview participants discussed how subordinates lack leadership knowledge, empathy, conflict resolution, time management, organization skills, and the ability to delegate. Organizational leaders need to implement a succession plan to guide employees on how to develop know-hows to become adequate leaders. Executive managers aligning the right methods at the beginning of hire may be suitable methods to before employees for future positions.

The interview participants use delegation of authority as a method to establish leadership skills. Superiors use delegation as a task to help prepare workers for management positions. Interview participants discussed how part of employees' training deals with job shadowing. The job shadowing is work experience were hired applicants learn about a position by walking through the work day with a veteran employee. P5 elaborated on how external supervisors coming in lack agency knowledge and the agency does not help with building eternal supervisor's awareness of the organization and role.

Theme 4: Talent Management

Talent management was the fourth primary theme that emerged from the interview data. Staff who dictates leadership can look to path-goal theory to help build an effective leadership. Participants responded to Question 2 by indicating that they use staff development to work on employees' unmet abilities. The respondents to the interview questions recognized that coaching is a way to enhance employees' lack of proficiency.

P7 explained how "their agency does not conform to the path-goal theory." P7 also stated that "there should be more leadership positions within their agency." Developing effective leaders can demoralize turnover, improve services, and inspire employees to stay longer. Also, executive managers preparing employees for leadership positions could allow baby boomers to retire on time.

P1 and P3 explained how new leaders lack the skill to work with different multiple personalities and maintain a workable environment. P4 stated that "leaders

should not belittle their employees." Leaders understanding how to plan, organize, and control their emotions help build talent management.

Rachel, Pavithra, and Imran (2016) is a new study that extended knowledge to this study findings by discussing how talent management is the process of improving business to meet their goals. P10 and Church et al. (2015) acknowledged that talent management is important when leaders are crafting promotable employees. The conceptual framework path-goal theory bridged to these study findings since this study's findings pronounced how executives motivated and empowered employees to reach leadership positions. Church et al. and De Muse and Dai (2013) are supporting existing literature that ties to this study. De Meuse & Dai (2013) ties to this existing literature on effective business practice since executive managers reconsider their succession plans and talent management practices to guarantee an adequate talent pipeline that satisfies future leadership requirements.

As a leader leads a team, they should recognize their own and other people's emotions to differentiate between dissimilar feelings and label them suitably and to use emotional information to guide thinking and behavior (Badri-Harun, Zainol, Amar, and Shaari, 2016). Badri-Harun et al. (2016) justified how management requires some type of emotional connection between leaders and their followers. The interview participants highlighted how handling effective communication controls the workplace. Moreover, not managing effective communication could cause employee turnover.

P1 and P3 explained how new leaders lack the skill to work with different multiple personalities and maintain a workable environment. P4 stated that leaders

should not talk down to their employees. Leaders understanding how to plan, organize, and control their emotions help build talent management.

Summary

Generally, the research findings were consistent with the purpose of the study and linked to useful ideal type conceptual framework applied to executive managers preparing employees for leadership positions. The company website has a listing of their educational and training programs and strategic plan. They information on the website and the interview data reflects the policies, procedures, and mission statements of the archives. The main themes and findings that emerged played a vital role in understanding how operational managers need to have methods in place to replace departing leaders with qualified new leaders. This study might contribute to the understanding of how social service agencies could better prepare employees for leadership positions.

Galbraith et al. (2012) found that succession planning is a good method to use when perfecting leadership positions. Succession planning gives employees a chance to develop managerial skills internally before hiring externally. People involved in managing, practice excellent organization management and improve capabilities by enhancing talent management in efforts to achieve sustainability.

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Applications to Professional Practice

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This research is meaningful to business practice in several ways. The focus of the research was to understand how executive managers prepare employees for leadership positions. Individual in charged should use succession planning as an activity to

guarantee the continuous functioning of vital programs in the event of unexpected job vacancies in agencies (Cole & Harbour, 2015).

Executive leaders' best professional practices for using succession planning is to ensure that well-qualified leaders are available to step in where and when the need arises. Leaders in agencies should implement methods to evaluate and follow the progress of employees to properly strategize a successful succession plan (Stahl et al., 2012). A key component in having a productive agency is effectively developing talent management and succession planning strategies that support sustainability and performance goals (Beheshtifar & Vazir-Panah, 2012).

Executive decision makers should provide continuous educational programs to develop their current staff positions. Staff development activities are essential methods for improving and remembering new knowledge, skills, and capabilities of capable employees (Khoreva & Vaiman, 2015). Staff development activities are challenging tasks that grow the ability of employees to perform leadership roles in the future. Hence, it is in the best interests of directors to enhance management capabilities by using talent management and succession planning strategies that support sustainability and performance goals.

Research participants within this study discussed leadership guidance, defining each employee's role, communication, and understanding the business. Research participants also alluded to the need for supervisors to continue to coach and provide mentors to improve methods to prepare employees for leadership positions. Executive managers providing continuous education, establishing employees' career paths, effective

communication, and building a positive rapport could improve managerial business practice.

Implications for Social Change

Executive managers preparing employees for leadership positions not only positively impact organizational management; it may also have a positive impact on individuals and their communities. Succession planning process may have implications for employee development and engagement. Furthermore, succession planning offers subordinates with goals of accomplishing advanced positions within the agency, which may please employee ambitions, which can help supplement employees personally and professionally (Beheshtifar & Vazir-Panah, 2012).

Companies applying organizational management allow executive managers to analyze the agency strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Decision makers could minimize issues if they understand where the problems exist. Correctly putting the right person in the right positions leads to front-runners maximizing job performance. Maximizing job performance can allow baby boomers to retire on time and adequate employees to advance into leadership positions.

Over half of the participants stated that employee training conducted internally and externally. With agencies needing to revamp their process on improving managerial skills, agency management teams could work with college institutions to prepare and reinforce leaders' aptitudes. As executive managers break down departments in different phases, increasing leadership capabilities, and talent management can lead to efficient job satisfaction, family security, and advancing financial growth, and economic development.

Recommendations for Action

High-level roles should be able to distinguish methods to find the most appropriate applicants for positions within agencies (Inabinett & Ballaro, 2014). Employers have to recognize employees' ability to lead early on in their career. Executives need to find appropriate avenues to find employees for the right positions. Ibidunni et al. (2016) acknowledged that succession planning approaches are used to promote proactive organization positioning and help with hiring the right workers at the appropriate time to perform the right jobs and achieve the right objective.

Higher level staff should take steps to implement a succession plan. Furthermore, investing in social media and advertising should benefit agency leaders when it comes to finding reliable workers. When loyal employees are hired then developed, they could be developed into incredible leaders. As one rises from an individual contributor to a supervisor, they need to be capable of problem-solving and decision-making, be attentive to detail, have communication skills, and teamwork.

The presiding staff could strengthen leaders' capabilities by enhancing their strategic thinking skills by training, coaching, and staff development programs. Executive managers need to evaluate employee performance to find out subordinate's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Sustainably finding qualified employees and adequately preparing employees for leadership positions will positively impact communities and organizations by providing monetary and economic growth.

Findings from this study are important for decision makers who are looking to promote employees into leadership positions. Employees who are seeking to gain a

leadership role and researchers who are interested in learning about a leader's ability to lead need to pay attention to the results of this study. I will disseminate the results of this study throughout the participating agencies, provide training to businesses, and I may use this study as a topic for discussion as a consultant tool.

Recommendations for Further Research

This study objective was to find methods to help executive managers prepare employees for leadership positions. The study involved 10 operational managers supervising a department. The supervisory board requiring their management to continue their education by attending universities will build job performance. Executive managers promoting job continuing education could encourage employees to attend a college and or university. Employees enrolling in college courses may extend their leadership knowledge by taking leadership classes. Employees obtaining a degree could prompt future organizational leaders in businesses and cue future community leaders. Business owners offering educational growth may benefit current and future employees when it comes to their educational goals. In addition, the study should exhibit how executive leaders could prepare employees for leadership positions in the social services industry.

A limitation mentioned in Section 1 was about having limited collected data. I recommend to existing and future researchers to add employees who would like to become leaders as participants. I suggest that if a researcher qualitative case study consists of 10 participants, the researcher should use five employees whose goal is to become a leader and five employees who currently hold a leadership position.

Addressing both current leaders and potential leaders will provide viable information on their contributions to their roles as existing and future leaders. Existing leaders can discuss how they obtained their position and how they are effective leaders currently. Future leaders could speak on how their supervisors inspire and empower them to become leaders and what methods enhanced their managerial skills.

Reflections

My perspective and understanding of the doctoral process were vigorous and a learning process. Scholarly writing was not something I was proficient with, but I loved to write and conduct research. The entire doctoral process challenged me for the duration of the study.

I was overjoyed when my proposal was completed and was excited to start the data collection portions. Selecting potential participants were an intimidating procedure and I did not expect the process to be so strenuous when choosing possible participants. In the course of completing the study, I had three chair changes and one second chair change.

Through the process I was frustrated, drained, and felt that I could not complete this degree. As I continued to work through the doctoral study and meet positive influencing people, I became confident and determined to finish this degree. I learned many valuable tools such as writing tools, organization tools, and research skills.

As I learned and improved, I shared information with my fellow peers. Working on this study, helped me learn more about social services and the effect of authoritative figures lacking leadership skills. Conducting this study has given me the ability to share

the findings with organizations and to help other students move through the doctoral

process.

Conclusion

In summary, this study finding revealed that executive managers need to

strengthen employees' managerial skills and knowledge as they prepare employees for

future leadership positions (Simoneaux & Stroud, 2012). This study explored how

executive managers prepare employees for administrative positions. The supported

findings in this study displayed that in social services businesses, leaders use succession

planning as a method to empower entry-level employees to become leaders.

Gary (2014) believes that succession planning is a method to recognize and

develop future leaders within agencies. Superiors using organizational management as a

style of leadership will discover gaps in their department. Organizational management

applying a logic model to expand leader's capabilities, and talent management will build

a strong talent pool. For example, providing a compatible recruiting plan, identifying

skills and knowledge within 6 months to 1 year, and providing methods to enhance

performance and agency understanding will create successful leaders.

Existing leaders controlling their emotions, putting their staff first, and grooming

staff may encourage team members to trust them and will help them fit into their agency.

The supporting conceptual framework that ties to this study were transformational

leadership and path-goal theory. Transformational leadership aim is to encourage leaders

to go beyond their self-interest for a common need (Warrick, 2011). Path-goal theory

tied to this study since that methods help guide superiors to improve conditions in the

workplace (Smith, 2011). In general, transformational leadership and path-goal theory support businesses leader's intention to transform productive leaders into viable future leaders within their agencies.

The supporting findings discovered that departmental leaders use training new hires, providing coaching, mentorship and development programs for veteran team members are methods executive managers implement to prepare employees for future managerial positions. The study findings showed that if executive managers continuously provide educational programs after employees reach leadership positions may enhance their managerial ability to efficiently lead their department. The practical assumption respect to the professional practice of businesses using organizational management as a leadership style, enhancing employees' leadership skills and knowledge within agencies could sustain employees, gain revenue, and economic development within the organization and community.

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Appendix A: Interview Protocol

Interview: Exploring the perceptions and lived experiences of organizational leaders in southwest, Georgia.

A. The interview session will commence with salutations, introducing myself to the research participant, after which I will introduce the research topic.

B. I will thank the participant for taking the time to respond to the invitation to participate.

C. I will request the participant to read the consent form, ask any questions before proceeding to sign the consent form.

D. The participant will be given a copy of the consent from for their records.

E. The tape recorder will be turned on, and I will note the date, time and location.

F. The coded sequential interpretation of the participant's name e., 'respondent P1' will be indicated on the audio recorder (or electronic storage device), documented on my copy of the consent form and the interview will begin.

G. The interview will span approximately 45 minutes for responses to the 8 interview questions, including any additional follow-up questions.

H. I will explain any definition of terms that participants do not understand, such as, transformational theory, path-goal theory, succession plan, etc.

I. Then, I will inform the participant regarding the review of the interview report that I will make available after my transcription.

At the end of the interview, I will thank the research participant for taking the time to participate in the study.

Appendix B: Interview Questions

1. What type of transformational leadership do executive managers display in your organization?

2. How do executive managers use a path-goal theory when leading the organization to success?

3. How do executive managers assist with improving employee's managerial skills and talent?

4. What managerial skills do entry-level employees lack?

5. How should executive managers prepare employees for leadership positions?

6. What criteria did you use in selecting a mentor?

7. What programs do you recommend, such as coaching, mentorship, and developing programs as methods to help executive managers to prepare individuals for leadership positions? Explain.

8. What else, if anything, do you believe is pertinent to the purpose of this study about succession planning and promoting into leadership positions, which you would like to share that is not covered in the interview questions?

Appendix C: Participant Consent Form

You are invited to take part in a reach study of employee motivations and attitudes towards succession planning. The researcher is inviting senior leaders in southwest Georgia with experience working in the Social Service industry to be in the study. This form is part of a process called "informed consent" to allow you to understand this study before deciding whether to take part.

This study is being conducted by a researcher named Pheobie Coleman, that is a doctoral student in the Doctorate of Business Administration program at Walden University.

Background Information:

The purpose of this study is to dictate what succession planning methods are successful for executive managers when preparing employees for leadership positions.

Procedures:

If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to:

- Reply to the Consent Form by an email stating your written consent with the study's terms.

- Take up to 45 minutes to participate in an interview with the researcher.

- After I transcribe the recorded interview, I will arrange a follow-up meeting with the participant either via phone or email in which to review the initial interpretation of the interview to ensure the information is accurately captured by the participant.

- Audio recordings and handwritten notes will be utilized to collect information.

  Here are some sample questions:

1. What criteria did you use in selecting a mentor?

2. How do executive managers assist with improving employees' managerial skills and talent?

Voluntary Nature of the Study:

This study is voluntary. Everyone will respect your decision of whether or not you choose to be in the study. If you decide to join the study now, you can still change your mind later and my stop at any time. Inform the researcher of your intentions to withdraw prior to the study being published. If you decide to participate, you have the right to opt out anytime without penalty.

Benefits of being in this study:

Being in this type of study involves some risk of the minor discomforts, which can be encountered in daily life, such as time spent in the interview or minor fatigue and stress from the length of the interview. Being in this study would not pose risk to your safety or well-being.

Succession planning does not only enhance business operations. Succession planning, when implemented correctly, can become a conduit to increase the motivation and self-efficacy of employees. Employees are more than just workers inside of an organization or a position number. Instead, the worker is an individual that is someone's child, parent, sibling, or partner. By focusing on the social aspects of a worker when conducting process change like implementing training programs, the organization enriches the worker and enhances culture around them.

Payment:

There are no payments or gifts for your contributions in this study.

Confidentiality:

Any information you provide on behalf of this study will remain confidential and use

only for the purpose of this study. I will not use your name; instead, I will code each

participant's data with an alphabetic coding scheme, such as P1, P2, etc. Hard copies of

the data will be in a secure locked cabinet for 5 years, per Walden University request.

Contacts and Questions:

If you have questions concerning this study now or in the future, you may contact the

researcher via email at <u>Pheobie.coleman@wladenu.edu</u> or via ▮▮▮▮▮▮ If you want

to talk privately about your rights as a participant, you can call Dr. Leilani Endicott,

Ph.D. the Director, Office of Research Integrity and Compliance Chair, Institutional

Review board. Dr. Endicott contact information is as follows

Leilani.endicott@waldenu.edu and her phone number is ▮▮▮▮▮▮.

Statement of Consent:

I have read the above information and I feel I understand the study will enough to make a

decision about my involvement. If you would like to take part of this study please reply

by email stating your written consent with the study's terms as: After reading the study's

information, I understand and agree to the study's terms described previously. I will

schedule the day and time for the face-to-face interview at the participants' location. By

emailing the form below and returning it to the researcher (either the original copy or a

scanned copy), I understand, in which I am agreeing to the terms described above.

Print Name of Participant : _____

Date of consent :   _____

Participants Signature :   _____

Researcher's Signature :   _____

Appendix D: Solicitation Letter

Dear Potential Research Participant:

As a researcher in this study, thank you for your time. I am conducting a study regarding succession planning within the social service industry. The purpose of this study is to explore what succession planning methods are successful for executive managers when preparing employees for leadership positions.

If you agree to participate in this study, I will conduct an interview with you, which will last approximately 45 minutes. Your participation in the study is completely voluntary. Your information is confidential, and I will not release the specifics of any interview with anyone. I will use the information to determine various trends and relationships along with the other interview data to form conclusions on the best way to implement a succession plan for organizations with senior leaders working in the social service industry. I will contact the participants by email first, and if the participants' voluntary accept to participate in the study, I will schedule the day and time for the face-to-face interview at the participants' location.

Although the study may be published in the ProQuest Dissertation Database, the individual interviews with each participant will be kept confidential. No individual other than my study committee at Walden University will have access to the interview transcripts. I will not release information, which could impact your position within the organization.

If you have any questions, please contact me at any time. My phone number is

████████ and email is Pheobie.coleman@waldenu.edu. Thank you for your

consideration.

Sincerely,

Pheobie Coleman