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# Succession Planning Strategies in Faith-based Nonprofits: A Comparative Case Study

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2020

Abstract

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by

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M.Ed./Phil., African Institute for Critical, Creative, & Caring Community of Inquiry, in Affiliation with Montclair State University, New Jersey, 2006

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

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## Abstract

Although 75% of United States nonprofit leaders planned to vacate their leadership positions in 2013, 77% of nonprofit organizations, including faith-based nonprofits, operated without succession plans. Grounded by the frameworks of Charan, Drotter, and Noel's leadership pipeline and Vroom's expectancy, the purpose of this comparative case study was to compare effective succession planning strategies of faith-based nonprofit leaders in Maryland and Pennsylvania. The research questions addressed the succession planning strategies of faith-based nonprofit leaders. Data collection and triangulation included semi-structured face-to-face and telephone interviews of purposeful samples of six participants in each of two organizations. Data analysis was by means of the constant comparative method, which enabled the identification of emerging themes for each of the two nonprofits. Microsoft Excel facilitated the organization and analysis of interview data. Three common themes emerged from the data analysis of Organization A in Maryland and Organization B in Pennsylvania, respectively, as effective succession planning strategies to enable achievement of organizational goals and mission. The three common themes were human capital investment, trust in and empowerment of potential leaders, and leadership pipeline talent retention. Implications for positive social change include the potential for greater social responsibility, enhanced social capital, and advancement of beneficial community partnerships as a result of knowledge gained from the study.

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Dedication

To my Guru, Srila Bhakti Tirtha Swami Maharaja, and my grand spiritual master, Srila A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, for their eternal, unconditional love, and inner guidance.

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I am grateful to Sri Krishna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, by whose matchless grace enabled the achievement of this learner's academic goals. I am very thankful to Dr. David Banner and Dr. Robert Levasseur, committee chair and member, respectively, for their guidance and immense support. They nurtured and shaped my intellectual growth as I challenge my thoughts on the path. I am grateful for their vital contributions to the development of this research to the highest possible standard. I am also thankful to Dr. Elizabeth Thompson for serving on my dissertation committee as the University Research Reviewer.

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# Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Faith-based nonprofit leaders' implementation of succession planning strategies is essential for sustained organizational growth considering that incumbent leaders would eventually vacate their leadership positions (Berman, 2015; Sims & Quatro, 2015; Valentinov & Vaceková, 2015). Succession planning in faith-based nonprofits enabled leaders to continue to provide services in their communities (Follman, Cseh, & Brudney, 2016; Liket & Maas, 2015; Torry, 2017). However, many nonprofit leaders, faith-based nonprofit leaders inclusive, faced challenges in succession planning or development of leadership programs (Hopkins, Meyer, Shera, & Peters, 2014; McKee & Froelich, 2016; Renz, 2016).

Although strategic planning is fundamental to leadership succession planning in nonprofits, 61% of nonprofit organizations operated without strategic plans (DeVita, 2016). Nonprofit leaders' successful implementation of strategies for succession planning is contingent on setting of goals (Homer, 2016; McDonald, Weerawardena, Madhavaram, & Mort, 2015). The purpose of this study was to explore effective succession planning strategies that faith-based nonprofit leaders implemented in accomplishing organizational goals and mission from a comparative case perspective. This chapter entailed the description of the background of the study, problem statement, purpose of the study, research questions, conceptual framework, nature of the study, operational definitions, assumptions, delimitations, and limitations of the study.

## Background of the Study

The origins of nonprofit organizations in the United States predated the formation of the republic (Ma & Konrath, 2018). The early settlers of the United States created nonprofit organizations (e.g., orphanages, hospitals, and fire departments), to address an array of challenges in society. There had been meaningful transformation in nonprofit organizations; for instance, the number of registered nonprofit organizations in the United States has increased annually (Wiltshire, Malhotra, & Axelsen, 2018).

There had also been a significant shift from charitable and philanthropic interventions to social entrepreneurial business models, stakeholder interest, as well as a rise of expectations on transparency and accountability. The role of nonprofit organizational leaders had become more multifaceted considering that nonprofits play an active role in advocacy for implementation and promotion of public policies (Wiltshire et al., 2018). Successful nonprofits in the achievement of organizational goals and mission were grounded in leadership, fundraising, maintenance of ethical standards, and succession planning (Liket & Maas, 2015; Miller, 2018).

A smart faith-based nonprofit leader denotatively implied not only being able to utilize technological tools to enhance succession planning efficiency but also incorporating notions of sustainability, compassion, and fairness for team members (Joachim & Stijn, 2016; Letaifa, 2015). As faith-based nonprofit leaders initiated a positive social change in their organizations, they adopted models that have been proven effective for the overall sustainable success in attaining organizational goals and mission (Northouse, 2018). Ninety-three percent of successful nonprofit organizations,

notwithstanding organizational sizes, were as a result of strategic planning and strategic management efforts (Reid, Brown, McNerney, & Perri, 2014).

Researchers measured nonprofit leaders' success in the attainment of organizational goals and mission by impact, activity, and capacity (Helmig, Ingerfurth, & Pinz, 2014; Nolan, 2015; Selden & Sowa, 2015). However, there was no common, clearly understood measure of nonprofit success for the achievement of organizational goals and mission (Michaelidou, Micevski, & Cadogan, 2015; Polonsky, Grau, & McDonald, 2016; Star, Russ-Eft, Braverman, & Levine, 2016). The actual measures of success for the attainment of organizational goals and mission for many faith-based nonprofit organizations were the statistics of the nonprofit organizations' programs (Epstein & Yuthas, 2017; Polonsky et al., 2016).

Nonprofit program statistics were difficult to procure and comprehend (Epstein & Yuthas, 2017; Polonsky et al., 2016). Researchers utilized three types of data to measure success for the achievement of organizational goals and mission for nonprofit organizations: inputs, outputs, and outcomes (Polonsky et al., 2016). In the inputs, researchers described the number the financial and nonfinancial resources that nonprofit leaders used to execute an activity (Polonsky et al., 2016).

Polonsky et al. (2016) suggested that in the outputs, researchers measured the activities that nonprofit leaders performed such as the number of people that they feed in a specific timeframe and the number of people who volunteer to serve in the organization. Polonsky et al. (2016) asserted that it is only by using outcome data that an individual might ascertain an accurate measure of success for achieving organizational

goals and mission. The shortcoming of output data was that although it showed the quantity of services provided, it did not specify whether any real benefit took place (Polonsky et al., 2016).

Polonsky et al. (2016) asserted that in outcomes, researchers were able to measure the level of improvement of communities' or clients' quality of life resulting from the nonprofit organization's activities. The extent that community education efforts of nonprofit leaders could help to reduce the hazards of teenage pregnancy (Polonsky et al., 2016). Faith-based nonprofit organizations were by nature goal-oriented (Anderson, Ochoa, Sullivan, & Maxwell, 2018).

Goals and goal-related procedures motivated, organized, and help direct the employees' behavior (Anderson et al., 2018). Setting small and achievable goals towards a larger goal could help nonprofit leaders and staff stay motivated considering that motivation faded over time (Anderson et al., 2018). Faith-based nonprofit organizational leaders could either view their organizational challenges as competition with others or as opportunities for growth to their full potential (Helmig et al., 2014).

Faith-based nonprofit leaders operated in a realm of duality; in other words, in a mundane world with success and failure as concomitant factors in the achievement of organizational goals and mission (Prabhupada, 2018). In some instances, faith-based nonprofit leaders attained organizational goals successfully but afterwards experienced failure (Davis, 2017; Grant & Potoski, 2015; Prabhupada, 2018). In other cases, nonprofit organizational leaders experience challenging situations but eventually paved through the

hard times and attained success in the achievement of their organizational goals and mission (Davis, 2017).

Sustainable success in achieving organizational goals and mission was a challenge to many nonprofit leaders. Unsuccessful nonprofit organizational leaders could learn how to succeed by observing critical strategies adopted by successful nonprofit leaders (Anderson, 2018; Helmig et al., 2014; John, 2016). Researchers had provided information on nonprofit success in achieving organizational goals and mission from diverse perspectives (Anderson, 2018; Helmig et al., 2014; John, 2016).

Leaders of nascent nonprofit organizations faced challenges that impacted on start-up success in attaining organizational goals and mission. The understanding of the challenges that nonprofit leaders faced prepared entrepreneurs to consolidate their resources and made informed decisions on setting up new nonprofits (Anderson, 2018). Bradford (2017) explored the roles of social responsibility and sustainability in youth empowerment for a viable nonprofit sector.

Helmig et al. (2014) suggested that intrinsic and extrinsic factors contributed to nonprofit success in the achievement of organizational goals and mission. The success factors of nonprofits included servant and transformational leadership, fundraising, succession planning, and strategic planning (Helmig et al., 2014). The understanding of the success factors in nonprofit organizations enabled leaders to make informed decisions for sustainable growth (Helmig et al., 2014).

Senses-Ozyurt and Villicana-Reyna (2016) suggested that leadership, integrity, and inclusiveness enabled volunteer retention in nonprofits for sustainable success in the

attainment of organizational goals and mission. Although 86% of organizational leaders believed the urgency of succession planning in enabling sustainable success in the achievement of organizational goals and mission, only 14% had the conviction that they did it well (Rosenthal, Routch, Monahan, & Doherty, 2018). John (2016) found that multidimensionality of socially constructed success existed in both faith-based and secular nonprofits.

John (2016) suggested that faith played a significant role in forming a conceptual lens that enabled leaders of faith-based nonprofits to judge their work and promote their clients' interests. The existence of a faith-centric environment in faith-based nonprofits was a considerable difference in success in organizational goal attainment and mission achievement between religious and secular nonprofit organizations (John, 2016). Although leadership bench strength was essential to successful succession planning in nonprofits (Bozer, Kuna, & Santora, 2015), 70% of open C-suite positions in the nonprofit sector were filled by external candidates in 2014 (Landles-Cobb, Kramer, & Milway, 2015).

Almost entirely 50% of the replacements in nonprofits were from another nonprofit organization. Onboarding of external executive personnel could cost double the leaving executive's remuneration (Landles-Cobb et al., 2015). Nonprofit leaders' provision for promotion opportunities and mentorship of their workers enabled talent retention for sustained nonprofit success in organizational goal attainment and accomplishment of the organizational mission (Adebola, 2019; Bolander, Werr, & Asplund, 2017; Mhlongo & Harunavamwe, 2017).

In nonprofit organizations, voluntary turnover created significant cost, considering that it reduced nonprofit organizational performance, thus challenging its sustainability over time (Selden & Sowa, 2015). Selden and Sowa (2015) reported that certain high-performance work practices (HPWPs), for instance, onboarding, employee relations, leadership development, and compensation, had lower voluntary turnover. Selden and Sowa (2015) suggested that leaders of human service nonprofit organizations who sought to advance retention should consider investing in staff and volunteers for the development of future leaders and enabling a work environment for positive social change.

The nonprofit sector accounted for 10.3% of the United States workforce with 11,426,870 employees (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2014). Nonprofit organizations filled the gap between market and government failures by providing services that public and for-profit organizations could not offer (Bryson, 2018). Successful faith-based nonprofit leaders had a vision, that is, they were endowed with foresight about what was yet to transpire in the local and global settings. Employee emotional stability and conscientiousness, information sharing and self-efficacy regarding leadership candidate selection, and job satisfaction positively impacted on retention of prospective leaders for succession plans (Acikgoz & Sumer, 2018).

Effective faith-based nonprofit leaders had positive and achievable expectations, and they were capable of removing a social and psychological obstacle to enable them to achieve their expectations (Torry, 2017). A plethora of research exists in the management domain on successful nonprofit leadership. However, researchers have not sufficiently

addressed the perspectives of faith-based nonprofit leaders on succession planning strategies that enable sustainable success in the accomplishment of organizational goals and mission.

Existing literature on nonprofit success in achieving organizational goals and mission was mainly on quantitative measurements that added value to nonprofit organizational success. There was a need to bridge the gap in the nonprofit literature by exploring faith-based nonprofit leaders' implementation of succession planning strategies for success in the attainment of organizational goals and mission from a qualitative comparative case study perspective. An understanding of succession planning strategies in faith-based nonprofits for organizational goals attainment and mission accomplishment might supplement the literature on nonprofit success, in alignment with the purpose of this study.

## Problem Statement

Faith-based nonprofit leaders needed to implement succession planning strategies to enable success in achieving organizational goals and mission (Bozer et al., 2015; Torry, 2017). Succession planning or leadership development programs enabled faith-based nonprofit leaders to attain success in the achievement of nonprofit organizational goals and mission (McKee & Froelich, 2016; Santora, Sarros, Bozer, Esposito, & Bassi, 2015; Torry, 2017). Although 75% of United States nonprofit leaders planned to vacate their leadership positions (Kunreuther, Segal, & Clohesy, 2013), 77% of nonprofit organizations operated without succession plans or leadership development programs (Bryson, 2018).

The general problem was that many nonprofit leaders did not implement effective succession planning strategies to enable success in achieving organizational goals and mission (Weisblat, 2018). The specific problem was that faith-based nonprofit leaders often did not implement effective succession planning strategies to enable success in achieving organizational goals and mission (Barton, 2019). Succession planning strategies for success in achieving organizational goals and mission were significant to faith-based nonprofit leaders, considering that they enabled faith-based nonprofit leaders to make informed operational decisions and implemented strategic plans (McKee & Froelich, 2016; Santora, 2019; Santora et al., 2015).

Private foundations, public charities, and other categories of nonprofit organizations constituted over 1.5 million registered nonprofits in the United States in 2016 (National Center for Charitable Statistics, 2016). Sargeant and Day (2018) suggested that 70% of nonprofit leaders faced challenges in the attainment of success in achieving organizational goals and mission. Existing literature on nonprofit success in attaining organizational goals and mission has characteristically been quantitative. The study might contribute to positive social change by enlightening faith-based nonprofit leaders on effective succession planning strategies for success in attaining organizational goals and mission.

## Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative study, using a comparative case study design, was to compare the effective succession planning strategies that faith-based nonprofit leaders in Maryland and Pennsylvania implemented to enable success in achieving organizational

goals and mission. The need for the study was to bridge the gap in existing literature in the area of succession planning strategies in faith-based nonprofits from a comparative perspective.

## Research Questions

The overarching research question that served as guidance in this qualitative comparative study is: How do the succession planning strategies of faith-based nonprofit leaders in Maryland and Pennsylvania compare in their ability to achieve organizational goals and their mission?

The sub-questions are:

1. What succession planning strategies do faith-based nonprofit leaders implement to enable success in achieving their organizational goals and mission?
2. How does the implementation of succession planning strategies help faith-based nonprofit leaders to successfully attain organizational goals and mission?
3. What succession planning strategies, if any, work best to achieve organizational goals and mission?

## Conceptual Framework

Nonprofit leaders, including faith-based nonprofits, have low interest, intent, or an understanding of the impact of succession planning on executive leadership, and therefore, were not prepared in implementing succession planning (Richins, 2018). Faith-based nonprofit leaders' sustainable achievement of organizational mission and goals

were contingent on effective succession planning (Bryson, 2018; Valentinov & Vaceková, 2015). Renz and Herman (2016) recognized that having a clear and suitable purpose, ensuring retention of talent, generating economic value from social benefit, and instituting mutual accountability led to sustained operations for effective succession planning in organizations.

Faith-based nonprofit leaders played a role in individual and collective lives; hence, successful succession planning for achieving sustainable organizational goals and mission represented an essential ingredient for national development (Bryson, 2018; Renz & Herman, 2016). Vroom's (1964) expectancy framework and the leadership pipeline framework of Charan et al. (2011) served as guides in this qualitative comparative case study because the two frameworks provided an understanding of strategies for succession planning in accomplishing organizational goals and mission. Vroom's (1964) expectancy theory primarily hinged on workers' motivation in the work setting being dependent on three factors, namely expectancy, instrumentality, and valence.

Vroom (1964) developed and utilized a formula for the calculation of motivational force: Motivational force = Expectancy x Instrumentality x Valence. Vroom (1964) suggested that when employees embarked on making choices in their work environment, they would typically choose what motivated them the most. In his expectancy framework, Vroom (1964) framed the cognitive processes of succession planning and motivation.

Vroom ascribed a prospective leader's decision to exit an organization on the

impact of three cognitive constructs related to the motivational forces that affected behavioral decisions (Chen, Ellis, & Suresh, 2016; Purvis, Zagenczyk & McCray, 2015). Vroom's framework applied to the individualistic nature of planning for the sustainable achievement of goals and mission pertinent to this study. The leadership pipeline is a systematic developmental process that involved senior organizational leader training of potential leaders or internal candidates in preparedness to undertake leadership roles (Charan et al., 2011).

Charan et al. (2011) developed a six-step leadership pipeline model in enabling the creation of the next generation of organizational leaders by outlining a leadership development program from junior positions to senior executive leaders. The six steps of the leadership pipeline, to wit, managing self to managing others, managing others to leading managers, leading managers to functional managers, functional manager to business manager, business manager to group manager, and group manager to enterprise manager (Charan et al., 2011). The leadership pipeline is a pragmatic model in which Charan et al. (2011) outlined principles to facilitate the attainment of potential leaders' desired leadership roles.

Charan et al. (2011) sought to ensure that organizations had effective leadership that results from internal leadership development as against looking out for external leaders to fill organizational leadership position when the need arose. As applied to this research study, the leadership pipeline served as an organizational asset in enabling succession planning. Charan et al. (2011) recognized the identification of leaders and potential leaders, assessment of leaders' competencies, leadership development planning,

and measurement of the leadership pipeline effectiveness, to enable the implementation of succession planning strategies.

Charan et al. (2011) underscored the challenges that prospective leaders must overcome in a bid finding themselves in the desired leadership position. Leadership pipeline enhanced the efficiency of succession planners in the implementation of succession planning strategies and served as an organizational asset in the processes of succession planning (Charan et al., 2011). Griffith, Baur, and Buckley (2019) suggested that there was a correlation between leadership pipeline and succession planning. McClements (2017) utilized the leadership pipeline in facilitating executive succession planning.

## Nature of the Study

Researchers recognized three research methods namely quantitative, qualitative, and mixed (Mertens, 2014). In quantitative study, the researcher used predetermined methods, characteristically survey-based instruments, to enable collection of observational, attitude, performance, as well as census data; and used statistical techniques for data analysis (Mertens, 2014). Researchers used the quantitative method to generate and test hypotheses based on existing theories (Yin, 2018). The quantitative research method was not appropriate for this research, considering that the study did not involve testing hypotheses.

Mixed-methods incorporate both qualitative and quantitative methods and might encompass closed-ended and open-ended questions, statistical as well as text examination (McNabb, 2015). I did not choose the mixed method, considering that the research

methodology encompassed collecting statistical and numerical data which was not the focus of this study. Qualitative research consisted of one or more developing methods of data collection, including open-ended interviews, observations, audio-visual content, and documents analysis (Percy, Kostere, & Kostere, 2015; Willig & Rogers, 2017; Yin, 2016). Qualitative data analysis would include text and image review and would yield themes by pattern analysis (Barnham, 2015; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Willig & Rogers, 2017; Yin, 2016).

The nature of this study was the qualitative method, using a comparative case study design. The choice of the qualitative method arose because it provided the means to obtain an understanding of the research participants' perceptions, which might help address the research question. The study's data collection methods included semi-structured interviews.

The comparative case study was the most suitable research design for this study, considering that it enabled the researcher to compare perceptions of participants. The objects of comparison were the perceptions of leaders from the two nonprofit organizations regarding succession planning. The comparative case study subsumed case study (Goodrick, 2015; Yin, 2018).

Researchers utilized case study to investigate a contemporary phenomenon in depth and in a natural setting, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and context were unclear (Yin, 2018). A case study design enabled the researcher to collect data impartially from a real-world scenario and asked questions that related to what, how, and why (Reichel, 2018; Yin, 2018). Exploration of succession planning

strategies that faith-based nonprofit leaders implemented to succeed in attaining organizational goals and mission through case study constituted the most suitable approach for this inquiry based on Yin's (2018) description.

The comparative case study enabled the researcher to examine context and features of succession planning strategies that faith-based nonprofit leaders implemented in attaining success in organizational goals and mission. The comparative case study was especially useful for understanding and explaining how context influenced the success of an intervention, and how to attune the intervention to a specific context to accomplish envisioned outcomes (Goodrick, 2015; Yin, 2018). The comparative case study was appropriate to understand the perspectives and experiences of leaders regarding strategies for nonprofit success.

The study entailed utilizing semi-structured and open-ended interview questions (see Appendix A) to collect insightful perceptions of research participants as the in-depth primary data for the research (Yin, 2016). Data collection from interviewees were at places that the interviewees chose. The sampling strategy was purposeful snowball sampling (Palinkas et al., 2015) to generate a sample of six participants for Organization A and six participants for Organization B that enabled the attainment of data saturation.

Connotatively, leaders referred to board members, directors, and chief executive officer. The sample for each nonprofit consisted of faith-based nonprofit leaders as they were the implementers of succession planning strategies for nonprofit success in achieving organizational goals and mission. I began the data analysis by

coding the data from each interview transcript inductively and identified themes related to the study's research question that emerged from the interview.

I used color coding manually for matching patterns that enabled easy identification of themes related to succession planning strategies based on the recommendation of Cole and Harbour (2015). I matched and clustered similar expressions and identified relevant themes from the interview transcription content — the constant comparative method facilitated in the identification of themes for Organization A and Organization B. In a final step, I compared the themes of each nonprofit to develop the final results of the study.

## Definitions

*Nonprofit goals:* Nonprofit goals refer to an observable and measurable outcome with objective(s) that nonprofit leaders hope to achieve in a cognitive time frame (Renz & Herman, 2016).

*Nonprofit mission:* A nonprofit organization's mission statement defines the organization's purpose and scope of service (Torry, 2017).

*Nonprofit organizational leadership:* The interpersonal ability to influence individuals as well as groups or teams, to accomplish goals in not-for-profit making organizations (Osula & Ng, 2014).

*Nonprofit organization*: An incorporated not-for-profit making organization that has financial, as well as operational interests akin to a for-profit corporation; nevertheless, nonprofit organizations' objective criterion is the fulfillment of a social task, not for generating profits (Renz, 2016).

*Onboarding:* The orientation and integration of a newly employed worker into an organization (Selden & Sowa, 2015).

*Self-efficacy:* A person's self-confidence that what they could do meets the needs of performing a particular task (Bandura, 2014).

*Smart nonprofit leader:* A smart nonprofit leader denotatively implies not only being able to utilize technological tools to enhance his/her efficiency but also incorporating notions of sustainability, compassion, and fairness for team members (Joachim & Stijn, 2016; Letaifa, 2015; Northouse, 2018).

*Strategies*: Aforethought planning of actions, designed to enable nonprofit leaders to achieve sustainable success in the accomplishment of organizational goals and mission (Ovans, 2015).

*Success:* The accomplishment of the goals and mission of nonprofit organizations (John, 2016; Pinz & Helmig, 2015).

*Succession planning:* The process of identification and development of new leaders, to serve in leadership positions when senior leaders eventually quit, retire, or die (Akinniyi, Llama, Idowu, & Oraegbune, 2018; Tebbe, Stewart, Hughes, & Adams, 2017).

*Volunteer Performance*: The value of different volunteers' activities that enable accomplishment of organizational goals (Vantilborgh & Puyvelde, 2018).

## Assumptions

Reality and values were the bases of the researcher's assumptions (Townsend, Wallace, Smart, & Norman, 2016). Assumptions are belief systems that are rooted in truth; however, researchers would not use assumptions to authenticate self-evident beliefs

(Townsend et al., 2016). Duncan and Fiske (2015) asserted that an assumption is a statement, believed to be true, but lacking empirical evidence for substantiation or validation.

The assumptions in this study were threefold. Firstly, faith-based nonprofit leaders might be accessible and helpful in sharing their perceptions on the succession planning strategies they implemented to accomplish organizational goals and mission. Secondly, the participants might truthfully answer the interview questions regarding the succession planning strategies that faith-based nonprofit leaders used to enable success in the attainment of organizational goals and mission. Thirdly, I assumed that participants were representative of the population.

## Scope and Delimitations

Delimitations referred to design limits that researchers control to enable them to narrow the study's scope (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2019; Daniel, 2018; Haberfellner & Fenzl, 2017). The delimitation of the study entailed narrowing the study's scope to high and middle-class faith-based nonprofit leaders of the two participating nonprofits in New Maryland and Pennsylvania and comparing the results of their strategies for succession planning. The semi-structured face-to-face interviews entailed asking faith-based nonprofit leaders questions to stimulate insightful responses on strategies that they implemented in their faith-based nonprofit organizations for sustainable success in the attainment of organizational goals and mission.

The establishment of the study's precise sample size was at the attainment of data saturation. The justification for the sample sizes was that there were no strict criteria for

sample size in qualitative inquiry (Boddy, 2016; Fusch & Ness, 2015; Malterud, Siersma, & Guassora, 2016; Saunders et al., 2018). The two research sites in Maryland and Pennsylvania delimited the research. Other delimitations of the research included the period of the investigative inquiry and the qualitative comparative case study design. The inclusion/exclusion criteria that defined the target population of the study, research questions, as well as interview questions, were other delimitations of the study.

## Limitations

One significant point on evaluating the limitations of a qualitative study was whether or not an event was within the control of the researcher (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2019; Merriam & Grenier, 2019). If an event was beyond the control of the researcher, it would probably have limited the study (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2019). Some of the limitations in this study were beyond my control. Respondents might choose to not contribute to their full capacity during the semi-structured interviews as to their insights on the effective succession planning strategies in faith-based nonprofits. There was an attempt in persuading prospective interviewees to provide insightful and truthful information during the interviews, given that the results of the study might promote their own faith-based nonprofit organizations' leadership transition.

Faith-based nonprofit leaders' burnout resulting from pressure from their management or pressure from their heavy workload could have hindered the sharing of insightful information (Kim & Park, 2017; Lee, Kim, & Yun, 2018; Zang, Zhou, & Zhang, 2016). The participants might have received instructions from their leaders to be cautious in sharing information on succession planning strategies for nonprofit success in

achieving their organizational goals and mission, which might have created a limitation to the study. Before the interviews, there was an encouragement for the interviewees to be candid in providing insightful and sincere thoughts on the interview questions, as the objective of the research was to facilitate higher sustainable success in leadership transition in their faith-based nonprofit organizations.

## Significance of the Study

### Significance to Theory

This study's significance to theory is that it might bridge the gap in existing literature in the area of effective succession planning strategies that faith-based nonprofit leaders implemented to facilitate the attainment of organizational goals and mission. Previous studies on nonprofit success for the realization of organizational goals and mission had mainly been quantitative. The qualitative data from this study might provide a needed addition to the literature.

The study results might provide insight into the impact of nonprofit leaders' effective succession planning strategies in achieving success in the accomplishment of organizational goals and mission. Knowledge from the findings of the study might enable the development of evidence-based succession planning strategies and provide a basis for future intervention research, including nonprofit leadership development. The study results may provide understanding into the effective succession planning strategies that faith-based nonprofit leaders in Maryland implemented in comparison to their counterparts in Pennsylvania.

**Significance to Practice**

The results of this study might provide faith-based nonprofit leaders with a deeper understanding of succession planning strategies for success in achieving nonprofit organizational goals and mission, and the contributing factors to that success. Through this knowledge, faith-based nonprofit leaders might benefit and improve their decision-making process on succession planning strategies to attain success in the achievement of organizational goals and mission. Establishment of succession plans might enable the provision of continuing job analysis and opportunity for senior organizational leaders' adjustment of roles grounded on changing business situations as well as strategic initiatives.

**Significance to Social Change**

The potential findings of this study, recommendations, and implementation may lead to positive social change in the form of social responsibility and social capital. Social change is the enhancement of human or social conditions by promoting the development of individuals, communities, or organizations (O'Cass & Griffin, 2015). Social responsibility entailed individuals' or organizations' service to society that enables a balance of economic growth and societal welfare (Lins, Servaes, & Tamayo, 2017; Petrenko, Aime, Ridge, & Hill, 2016; Wang, Tong, Takeuchi, & George, 2016).

Social capital consisted of the networks of the bond of affinities of people who work and live in a specific society, which promoted societal functional effectiveness (Santora et al., 2015; Pedersen et al., 2018; Williams & Mullane, 2019). The results of the study might add value to positive social change by providing succession planning

strategies to enable nonprofit leaders in recruiting, retaining, and preparing leaders to achieve organizational mission as well as sustainability. Through the development of succession plans, nonprofit leaders might strengthen organizational continuity as well as develop skilled volunteers who could assist in providing needed programs of service to the community. Moreover, effective leadership transition could facilitate the deepening and sustaining of faith-based nonprofit leaders' connectedness with members of the communities where the organizations operated.

Succession plans contributed to positive change given that at the core of talent management was the identification of essential roles of talented employees and creating avenues in ensuring that the skilled workers with appropriate capabilities and experiences were fixed in the right positions whenever the need arose (Hall-Ellis, 2015; Tafti, Mahmoudsalehi, Amiri, 2017; Valentine, Meglich, Mathis, & Jackson, 2017). Hall-Ellis (2015) asserted that the turnover of nonprofit leaders created organizational challenges. Leaders that might plan to leave their organizations through retirement or might to seek better jobs or through death in the following ten years might outnumber the leaders that would gain employment in nonprofits.

Faith-based nonprofit leaders in preparation for leaders' departure needed to develop their next generation of leaders to meet the turnover challenge. An effective succession plan which integrated leadership development enabled the nonprofit board of directors in avoiding reliance on a replacement process (Hall-Ellis, 2015). Nonprofit leaders could not undervalue loss of tribal knowledge or organizational memory. There was a shortage of talented personnel in nonprofits and for-profit organizations; therefore,

finding talent for leadership positions in nonprofits was not a stress-free feat (Tafti et al., 2017). Succession planning enabled nonprofit leaders to address the talent gap in the organizational setting for leadership sustainability.

The development and implementation of effective succession planning strategies were significant to positive social change, given the expensiveness of executive search or recruitment of top external talent (Valentine et al., 2017). The foresight in developing and retaining top talent in an organization, as well as ensuring that top talents had the appropriate experiences and competencies in preparedness for the future was an essential strategy. Senior leadership platform in nonprofit organizations entailed complexities that demanded expert attention (Valentine et al., 2017). The preparation of leading talent to take on the challenging roles of leadership through effective succession plans was quintessential to organizational success in accomplishing goals and mission sustainably.

The selection of most qualified as well as well-prepared candidates for leadership positions in nonprofits was a vital decision considering its impact on present and future organizational performance. Faith-based nonprofits were beneficiaries whenever transition and professional development became an opportunity for embedding succession planning into the organizational culture (Valentine et al., 2017). Establishment of succession plans in faith-based nonprofit organizations reinforces relationships as well as the flow of information between the board members and senior organizational leaders via regular contact that was part of the board members' review of successor candidates.

## Summary and Transition

Chapter 1 contained the background of the study, problem statement, purpose of the study, research questions, conceptual framework, nature of the study, operational definitions of terms used in the research, assumptions, delimitations, limitations, and significance of the study to theory, practice, and social change. The general problem was that nonprofit leaders did not implement effective succession planning strategies to enable success in achieving organizational goals and mission. The specific problem was that faith-based nonprofit leaders often did not implement effective succession planning strategies to enable success in achieving organizational goals and mission.

The purpose of this qualitative comparative study was to obtain an understanding of the strategies that leaders of faith-based nonprofits in Maryland and Pennsylvania implemented to attain success in accomplishing organizational goals and mission. The central research question was: what strategies did faith-based nonprofit leaders implement to succeed in achieving organizational goals and mission? Chapter 2 contained a review of literature relevant to the study.

# Chapter 2: Literature Review

Faith-based nonprofit leaders frequently did not develop and implement succession planning (Torry, 2017), although formal succession plans eased high financial performance for sustainable success in the accomplishment of organizational goals and mission (Santora et al., 2015). Succession planning strategies are significant to faith-based nonprofit leaders because they enable such leaders to make informed operational decisions as well as strategic plans (McKee & Froelich, 2016; Santora et al., 2015). The purpose of this study was to generate an understanding of the effective succession planning strategies that faith-based nonprofit leaders of two organizations in Maryland and Pennsylvania develop and implemented to enable success in achieving organizational goals and mission.

The literature of this study entailed conceptualization of succession planning and description of the challenges of succession planning. Also discussed are the roles of leaders and leadership development in the implementation of succession planning, as well as the frameworks of expectancy and leadership pipeline and their applications in nonprofit succession planning.

## Literature Search Strategy

The literature exploration strategy for the identification of the peer-reviewed journal articles, books, and edited books, for the literature review entailed accessing Walden University library databases, such as the Thoreau database, Business Source Complete/Premier, Emerald, ProQuest, Ebsco, PubMed, and ScienceDirect. Moreover, the use of Google Scholar facilitated access to relevant publications that were useful in

the literature review. The keywords used for the literature searches were *succession planning*, *strategies, nonprofit success, nonprofit goals, nonprofit mission, servant leadership, transformational leadership, and goal setting theory.* Searches for the peer-reviewed journals range from 2014 to 2019 to enable procurement of recently published works to underpin the literature review. However, searches for classic literature related to nonprofit succession planning was not subject to time limitations.

## Conceptual Framework

Nonprofit leaders, including faith-based nonprofits, had low interest, intent, or an understanding of the impact of succession planning on executive leadership, and therefore, were not prepared in implementing succession planning (Richins, 2018). Faith-based nonprofit leaders' sustainable achievement of organizational mission and goals were contingent on effective succession planning (Bryson, 2018; Valentinov & Vaceková, 2015). Renz and Herman (2016) recognized that having a clear and suitable purpose, ensuring retention of talent, generating economic value from social benefit, and instituting mutual accountability lead to sustained operations for effective succession planning in organizations.

Faith-based nonprofit leaders played a role in individual and collective lives; hence, successful succession planning for achieving sustainable organizational goals and mission represents an essential ingredient for national development (Bryson, 2018; Renz & Herman, 2016). Vroom's (1964) expectancy framework and the leadership pipeline framework of Charan et al. (2011) served as guides in this qualitative comparative case study because the two frameworks provided an understanding of strategies for

succession planning in accomplishing organizational goals and mission. Vroom's (1964) expectancy theory primarily hinged on workers' motivation in the work setting being dependent on three factors, namely expectancy, instrumentality, and valence.

Vroom (1964) developed and utilized a formula for the calculation of motivational force: Motivational force = Expectancy x Instrumentality x Valence. Vroom (1964) suggested that when employees embarked on making choices in their work environment, they would typically choose what motivated them the most. In his expectancy framework, Vroom (1964) framed the cognitive processes of succession planning and motivation.

Vroom ascribed a prospective leader's decision to exit an organization on the impact of three cognitive constructs related to the motivational forces that affected behavioral decisions (Chen, Ellis, & Suresh, 2016; Purvis, Zagenczyk & McCray, 2015). Vroom's framework applied to the individualistic nature of planning for the sustainable achievement of goals and mission pertinent to this study. The leadership pipeline referred to a systematic developmental process that involved senior organizational leader training of potential leaders or internal candidates in preparedness to undertake leadership roles (Charan et al., 2011).

Charan et al. (2011) developed a six-step leadership pipeline model in enabling the creation of the next generation of organizational leaders by outlining a leadership development program from junior positions to senior executive leaders. The six steps of the leadership pipeline, to wit, managing self to managing others, managing others to leading managers, leading managers to functional managers, functional manager to

business manager, business manager to group manager, and group manager to enterprise manager (Charan et al., 2011). The leadership pipeline is a pragmatic model in which Charan et al. (2011) outlined principles to facilitate the attainment of potential leaders' desired leadership roles.

Charan et al. (2011) sought to ensure that organizations had effective leadership that results from internal leadership development as against looking out for external leaders to fill organizational leadership position when the need arose. As applied to this research study, the leadership pipeline served as an organizational asset in enabling succession planning. Charan et al. (2011) recognized the identification of leaders and potential leaders, assessment of leaders' competencies, leadership development planning, and measurement of the leadership pipeline effectiveness, to enable the implementation of succession planning strategies.

Payne, Hovarter, Howell, Draws, and Gieryn (2018) offered a proactive approach to the long-standing benefits of succession planning by addressing continuity, costs, and compliance. According to Payne et al. (2018), an organization's success in attaining goals, mission, and sustainability were contingent on leadership continuity. In addition, continuity impacted cost associated with turnover and accreditation compliance.

The intentional or unintentional exit of nonprofit leaders might disrupt transferring essential knowledge to a successor. Faith-based nonprofit leaders could mitigate the risk factors of the leaving of a nonprofit leader through effective succession planning. Identification of leaders with appropriate competencies, leadership pipeline development, capture as well as the transfer of vital knowledge, and measurement,

monitoring, and evaluation of metrics were indispensable to the development of an effective succession plan and operational sustainability (Payne et al., 2018).

The application of the leadership pipeline model enabled some Indian organizational leaders to fix talented and prepared employees in leadership positions in sustaining operational continuity (Pandey & Sharma, 2014). Taylor and Youngs (2018) sought to understand leadership demographics as well as presumptions to ascertain the need for strategic planning in identifying and addressing leaky pipelines. Taylor and Youngs (2018) suggested that many leaders were not aware of four critical areas that contribute to the talent pool of aspiring leaders.

The four regions were prioritization of family; safeguarding of health; concerns relating to bureaucracy, paperwork, and workload; as well as reluctance to abandon teaching. The identification of leadership aspirants was informal because there were no formal succession plans. Taylor and Youngs (2018) asserted that nonprofit education industry would have a leadership crisis because no succession plans were in place.

A crisis in leadership was contingent on broad quasi-dysfunctionality in an organization rather than an individual's failed action or a person's singular leadership incompetency (Charan et al., 2011). Sourcing for a perfect external chief executive officer did not necessarily provide a long-time solution to the leadership crisis in the organization. Even seeking out an ideal senior leader from within the organization to fill a vacant position did not create a sustainable solution to an organizational leadership crisis.

Charan et al. (2011) asserted that seeking an external candidate to fill a vacant leadership position equivalent to an acceptance of failure in leadership development in the organization. There was a high probability of an external hire not achieving success in attaining organizational goals and mission sustainably. The hiring of a foreign chief executive officer was a sign that the organization had not adopted leadership pipeline development to address leadership challenges (Charan et al., 2011).

## Literature Review

The purpose of this literature review was to analyze and synthesize the leadership and organizational change literature with a view to decoding a gap, thus enabling the researcher to contribute to the management domain. This chapter contains a review of the leadership and organizational change literature pertinent to strategies for the implementation of succession planning in faith-based nonprofit organizations to enable success in the accomplishment of organizational goals and mission. The chapter consisted of succession planning in nonprofits, expectancy theory (Vroom, 1964), and leadership pipeline (Charan et al., 2011). The succession planning in nonprofits section consisted of a discussion on succession planning in nonprofit organizations, challenges to succession planning, the leader's role in succession planning, and application of leadership development in succession planning. After a review of theories that underpinned the study, I identified the gap in the leadership and organizational change literature that led to this research.

**Succession Planning in Nonprofits**

Succession planning referred to a process of identifying and developing potential leadership successors in organizations through systematic appraisal and training (Carbo & Storm, 2018; Gordon & Overbey, 2018; Wilson, 2018). According to Wilson (2018) and Loomis (2018) *s*uccession planning was an essential component of a faith-based nonprofit's strategic planning process. Succession planning linked faith-based nonprofit leaders to the organization's long-term goals and objectives; facilitated the mitigation of turnover risks, and nurtured existing organizational talent through the matching of outstanding employees with imminent needs of an organization *(*Carbo & Storm, 2018; Gordon & Overbey, 2018; Homer, 2016). Researchers asserted that succession planning was principally predictive in considering an individual suitable for a position that would be vacant as a result of a leader's departure (Carbo & Storm, 2018; Gordon & Overbey, 2018; Wilson, 2018).

Gordon and Overbey (2018) and Weisblat (2018) concurred that succession planning - beginning with identification of a potential successor, - included seeking out an individual that possessed the right qualifications for the position. Weisblat (2018) asserted that succession planning entailed transitioning of the current leader's position to the successor; determining how to set up the leadership transition and safeguarding effective communication and ensuring a collaborative bond of affinity between the current leader and successor. Succession planning contributed to organizational sustainability through the identification and retention of talented servant and transformational leaders, whose tool was setting high goals through leadership

development (Gordon & Overbey, 2018; Keller, 2018; Richins, 2018).

When a succession plan was set up in a nonprofit organization, there was an expectation of a crisis regarding the looming loss of an organizational servant and/or transformational leader (Gordon & Overbey, 2018). Predicted scarcities of nonprofit leaders ensuing from baby boomer leaders' retirement coupled with increasing economic value and the social importance of nonprofit organizations, made it necessary for faith-based nonprofit leaders to have succession planning to enable sustainable success in achieving organizational goals and mission (McKee & Froelich, 2016). Besides, a globalized era of rising complexities for nonprofit operations in an ever-changing environment required faith-based nonprofit leaders to set up succession plans, to facilitate sustainable success in achieving organizational goals and mission (Huynh, 2016; Torry, 2017).

**Challenges to Succession Planning**

For many nonprofit leaders, the greatest challenge was knowing when to enable someone else to take the reins of leadership and stepped aside with dignity (Bacq, Janssen & Noël, 2017; Bassous, 2015; Gordon & Overbey, 2018). Many nonprofit leaders liked power and control, which militated against succession planning (Prabhupada, 2018). Of course, power could be intoxicating for many leaders (Prabhupada, 2018). The proclivity for power and control was endemic in nonprofit leaders, given that humans have the intrinsic tendency to control other entities and to exploit resources (Bhakti-Tirtha, 2018; Prabhupada, 2018).

Faith-based nonprofit leaders' lack of appropriate competencies in succession planning was a hindrance to the development and implementation of effective strategies for succession planning (McKee & Froelich, 2016). Faith-based nonprofit leaders left their organizational leadership positions for various intentional, for instance, retirement and acquisition of new employment; and unintentional, for example, demise and job termination, reasons (Santora & Bozer, 2015). Many nonprofit organizational leaders, particularly those who served in small and inadequately funded faith-based nonprofits, could only hire new executives from other organizations on the inevitable departure of their leaders due to deficiency of succession planning or development of leadership programs (Santora & Bozer, 2015).

The findings from 11 independent surveys from 2006-2015 showed that an average of 24% nonprofits had set up succession planning (Santora & Bozer, 2015). One contributive factor to the deficiency of succession planning in faith-based nonprofit organizations was that many faith-based nonprofit leaders had the tendency to forget that imminent death would force them to eventually vacate their leadership positions (Prabhupada, 2018; Santora & Bozer, 2015). Some faith-based nonprofit leaders had the operational mindset that they would not die and thus would not set up succession plans (Agarwalla, Seshadri, & Krishnan, 2015; Prabhupada, 2018).

Faith-based nonprofit leaders that persistently ignored the idea that they were mortals who could die at any time had a lackadaisical approach to succession plans (Prabhupada, 2018). Some nonprofit leaders would not teach employees leadership development skills in preparation for leadership roles in time of need (Bozer et al.,

2015; Santora & Bozer, 2015; Vrenthas, Freiwirth, Benatti, Hill, & Yurasek, 2018). Many nonprofit leaders, faith-based nonprofit leaders inclusive, claimed that they did not have the financial resources to initiate development of leadership programs to help their employees benefit from practical leadership skills for their organizations' sustainable success in the achievement of goals and mission (Bozer et al., 2015; Santora & Bozer, 2015). Faith-based nonprofit leaders' selection of the most competent, responsible, and smart candidate for a successor was a critical decision, considering its significant impact on contemporary and future accomplishments of organizational goals and mission (Hall-Ellis, 2015; Torry, 2017). Boards of directors and executive directors of nonprofit organizations must acknowledge and address succession planning challenges instead of maintaining a lukewarm attitude toward the necessity of succession planning for sustainable success in the attainment of organizational goals and mission (Bozer et al., 2015; Santora & Bozer, 2015).

Succession planning failed in many nonprofit organizations as a result of nonprofit leaders not understanding and appreciating the difference between control and responsibility (Santora et al., 2014). A leadership style that required flexibility and broad-mindedness devoid of undue command and control was suitable for succession planning. Servant nonprofit leaders were flexible, tolerant, and responsible without the excessive exercise of control over staff and volunteers (Northouse, 2018).

A servant/transformational leader that released control and nurtured the succession process enabled successful succession plans (Roberts, 2015; Torry, 2017).

A small faith-based nonprofit organization that was not an agency of a big organization displayed lessened engagement regarding recruitment/retention roles, for example, leadership training (Torry, 2017). Faith-based nonprofit leaders who did not have competencies in talent retention might create succession planning challenge for the organization or even closure, at the departure of the founding generation.

Four types of founder-leader profiles were discernible in nonprofit organizations (Santora, Sarros, & Esposito, 2014). The destructive founder-leader identified and undermined the successor by dint of his/her autocratic control (Santora et al., 2014). The conscientious serving founder-leader identified and mentored the successor by involving the board of directors and utilizing autocratic control (Santora et al., 2014).

The maverick founder-leader did not offer leadership development to potential candidates and selected an external candidate utilizing autocratic control (Santora et al., 2014). The controller founder-leader supervised the succession planning process utilizing strict control, thereby creating a challenge to achieving success in the leadership successor process (McMullen & Warnick, 2015; Santora et al., 2014). Santora et al. (2014) asserted that only the nonprofit conscientious founder-leader succeeded in the leadership successor process.

Many nonprofit founder-leaders had the tendency to give the verdict on the successor selection (Santora et al., 2014). A self-centric founder-leader might embark on an act just for the preservation of leadership legacy; also, the continuous presence of some founder-leaders was a hindrance to successful leadership

succession (Santora et al., 2014). The essential components of succession necessitated identification of critical positions, identification of necessary competencies, assessment of staff, the creation of development plans, and evaluation of the team (Gordon & Overbey, 2018; Holt, Hall, & Gilley, 2018; Rothwell et al., 2015).

The inclusion of stakeholders in goal setting strategy of succession planning might motivate interested groups or individuals to make a meaningful contribution to the organization's leadership succession plans. Nonprofit and for-profit organizational leaders' burnout negatively impacted on succession planning (Frost & Laing, 2015; Gill, Nathans, Seidel, & Greenberg, 2017; Sirén, Patel, Örtqvist., & Wincent, 2018). Psychology historiographers recognized Herbert Freudenberger being the psychologist that coined the terminology of burnout in the 1970s (Hoffarth, 2016; Patti, Schlottmann, & Sarr, 2018; Samaraweera, Hamid, Khatibi, Azam, & Dharmaratne, 2018).

Freudenberger described burnout as a progressive emotional diminution and motivational loss in his observation of aid organization volunteers in New York (Freudenberger, 1974). Burnout affected a nonprofit organizational leader's strategic planning efforts, which impacted succession planning, which was part of strategic planning (Frost & Laing, 2015; Olinske & Hellman, 2017). A nonprofit founder or leader who emphasized their status claimed the collective team effort and impact as theirs and were too self-egoistic to build on others' ideas was a heropreneur (Pap-Thornton, 2016).

Heropreneurship wreaked havoc on the collective efforts of succession planning in nonprofit organizations because a heropreneur, who might not have succession planning skills, would not likely recognize and empower a staff that possessed the

appropriate talent to help with the leadership task (McCormack, Brinkley-Rubinstein, & Craven, 2014; Pap-Thornton, 2016). Heropreneurship referred to the promotion of hero-worship of an entrepreneur as the ultimate sign of success, which led to a proliferation of repeated and disjointed efforts where people were not likely to offer their best inputs to revamp and redirect the organization for sustainable success in the attainment of organizational goals and mission (Pap-Thornton, 2016). Notwithstanding practical organizational consequences, astonishingly little theory explicated the processes of executive succession planning in faith-based nonprofit organizations.

Faith-based nonprofit's boards of directors had the fiduciary duty of the selection of chief executive officers. Historically, faith-based nonprofit boards had not met this responsibility (Torry, 2017). Nonprofit board of directors' focused concentration on corporate governance had impelled board of directors to be more involved in organizational management.

Torry (2017) suggested that a nonprofit board of directors should facilitate the collection and processing of information for success in achieving organizational goals and mission. Nonprofit board of directors' effective formal processes intended to gather vital information about executive succession candidates facilitate a leadership succession plan (Torry, 2017). Discernibly, these processes enabled excellence and high numbers of executive leadership succession candidates (Torry, 2017).

In an era of unparalleled disruption and complexities, nonprofit board of directors and executive directors seemed inadequately prepared for the predictable exit of senior-level leaders as result of retirements as well as short-lived tenures

(Barton, 2019). Shatilwe and Amukugo (2016) recognized factors that affected the successful implementation of succession planning, to wit: unwillingness of leaders to address succession plans, and leaders' assumption that succession planning was outside of their job description. Inadequacy of data on leadership succession plans, shortage of resources and unwarranted cost and resource deficiency, staffing and substitution, and a gap of well-defined valuation criteria and challenges regarding in-house change resistance affect the successful implementation of succession planning.

**Leaders' Role in Succession Planning**

The personnel of human resources departments could be actively involved in the evolving succession plans along with the board of directors and executive directors (Torry, 2017). The committed team of succession planners should set up SMART goals to be achieved in a metacognitive time frame and revisit the plan annually to guarantee the efficacy of the project in achieving organizational goals and mission (Torry, 2017). The concept of specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART) goals is significant in setting up succession plans for sustainable success in the achievement of organizational goals and mission.

Locke and Latham's (2013) SMART goals enabled nonprofit leaders to define their succession planning strategies and track the results to facilitate success in the attainment of organizational goals and mission. Nonprofit boards of directors and executive directors must commit to a leadership development planning strategy (Bozer et al., 2015). Succession planners in faith-based nonprofits could face

financial challenges when developing leadership programs for talented staff preparation for organizational leadership roles when the need arose.

Human resources leadership/management played a significant role in succession planning even in small faith-based nonprofits where management function (for instance, finance) subsumed human resources (Torry, 2017). Researchers have provided nonprofit leaders alternate strategies for dependable non-financial, but often expensive leadership development programs (Bozer et al., 2015; Santora et al., 2014). Faith-based nonprofit boards of directors and executive leaders must made pragmatic strategic decisions regarding employing insiders or outsiders as successors.

Bozer et al. (2015) asserted that hiring an insider signified the maintenance of organizational status quo, whereas employing an outsider hinted on a change in the nonprofit organizational strategy (Bozer et al., 2015). Indubitably, such a change in strategy depends on several factors, including the performance of the organization, organizational size, and whether or not there were qualified candidates internally (Santora & Bozer, 2015). Faith-based nonprofit boards of directors and executive directors must identify and proclaim their philosophy, whether they were grounded in talent development or exogenous procurement of talent in their leadership transition efforts (Torry, 2017).

The former approach (talent development) enabled employees to appreciate an opportunity for the advancement of their careers, while the later - which was not regularly applied in small non-profit faith-based organizations - implied that career

progression or advancement was not forthcoming (Santora & Bozer, 2015). The hiring of an outsider might lead to organizational talent brain-drain of internal staff (Santora & Bozer, 2015). Procurement of an external talent implied that the organizational strategic plan had failed (Tichy, 2015).

Nonprofit's human resource personnel play a significant role in facilitating a leadership transition with the external or internal successor and its aftermath (Torry, 2017). The human resources served as a tool for harmonizing relations between a successor and the staff while preparing the successor and the board to comprehensive existing policies to guarantee smooth imminent successions (Bang, 2015; Carbo & Storm, 2018; Santora & Bozer, 2015). As far as succession planning in nonprofits was concerned, boards of directors and executive leaders must set goals designed to resolve probable conflicts between their faith-based organizational needs and personal/family needs; in this way, nonprofit leaders could have a smooth succession (Torry, 2017).

**The Role of Board Members in Succession Planning**

An indispensable responsibility of nonprofit board members included ensuring that a competent executive was developed in-house to fit into the executive leadership role on the exit of the incumbent leader (Leblanc & Fraser, 2016). Even if the incumbent executive leader was at her or his highest leadership proficiency, the board of directors must ensure there was someone handy to step into the executive position should the current executive leave the organization. Nonprofit board members should consider proactive steps they would take in preparedness to addressing leadership transition. Faith-based nonprofit leaders should develop a short-term succession plan for their

organizations (Torry, 2017). The short-term plan should entail an outline of the leadership provision process of the nonprofit at an unanticipated or anticipated short-term unavailability of the chief executive officer (CEO).

**Proactive planning for leadership succession.** The members of a nonprofit board of directors were cautious regarding preparation for the inevitable transition because they were uncomfortable that it might send a signal to the incumbent executive director that the board members were ready for a change in executive leadership (Leblanc & Fraser, 2016). Nonetheless, if the members of the board of directors clarified their intent to proactively plan for the organization's leadership succession planning, the executive directors would resonate with their conscious intention. Chairs of a nonprofit board of directors and executives should periodically deliberate on the executive director's metacognitive timeframe of tenure.

In the planning or commencement stage of the leadership succession process, open communication was indispensable to trust-building in succession planning (Leblanc & Fraser, 2016). Meticulous planning for leadership succession reduced the anxiety associated with sudden departures and assists succession planners to focus on critical decisions they were expected to make at a leadership transition (Torry, 2017). Board members and the exiting executive director benefited in smooth leadership succession.

The information-processing systems between nonprofit nominating committees, current executives, chairs of the board of directors, and shareholders affected the inclusiveness of executive succession procedures (Walther, Calabro, & Morner, 2017). Walther et al. (2017) identified four major information-processing

determinants of inclusiveness in the succession processes. They were the effectiveness of nominating committee in the sharing of information; absorption of disagreement and incorporation of varied opinions; and, leadership of the board of directors, to wit, a trainee board of director leadership structure in connection with openness to ideas of the board chair. The quality and quantity of information sharing between executives and nominating committees, and the controlling potency of shareholders impacted the leadership succession processes.

**Strategic readiness.** Nonprofit board members that were operating effectively in strategic readiness were at a great advantage regarding leadership succession planning because they integrated succession plan implementation with strategic plans, in accomplishing long-term organizational goals and mission (Leblanc & Fraser, 2016; Wheelen, Hunger, Hoffman, & Bamford, 2015). Board members' commitment to enhanced functionality and cooperation or team spirit with the executive director facilitated the successful implementation of the succession plan. High performance and high trust of board members were essential strategic readiness factors of succession planning in organizational settings (Leblanc & Fraser, 2016; Wheelen et al., 2015).

The fundamental practices of board members that created an avenue for a successful executive leadership succession included an effective review of the annual performance of the nonprofit executive director; an annual board members self-assessment, and a continuing board development plan (Leblanc & Fraser, 2016; Wheelen et al., 2015). An effective organizational planning initiative and strong bond of affinity between board members and executive leadership as partners in progress are significant

board member practices. An executive director must ensure the grooming of future leaders to step into the leadership roles of exiting leaders (Leblanc & Fraser, 2016; Wheelen et al., 2015). The executive director must prioritize the development of internal leadership.

Although the nonprofit executive director's prerogative was not the selection of the next organizational leader, she or he should develop internal leaders to enable consideration for future executive role whenever a leadership succession transpired (Leblanc & Fraser, 2016; Wheelen et al., 2015). Besides the individual and independent effort of a nonprofit executive director in developing internal leaders, board members should support her or his efforts through open communication. Board members should ask the executive director to update the executive committee periodically on the readiness of prospective candidates, to facilitate the establishment of leadership preparedness.

A major advantage of the board members' involvement in succession planning was connected with identification of strategy as to the availability of competent candidates whenever leadership succession needs transpired (Leblanc & Fraser, 2016). Additionally, executive leaders and board members should set up many competent candidates in place for consideration to the executive leadership role. The availability of many qualified candidates developed internally increased the chance for board members to select an internal candidate as a successor to a departing executive leader.

## Application of Leadership Development in Succession Planning

Rudimentarily, leadership development implied teaching the qualities of leadership such as effective communication, ways to motivate and inspire people, and

personnel management in an individual or the group who might use such competencies and skills in a leadership position (Bozer et al., 2015). The irony of a written down succession plan was that planning without leadership development did not produce the required value-added competencies, leadership capabilities, specialized knowledge, and performance-based success in achieving organizational goals and mission of prospective successors **(**Johnson, Pepper, Adkins, Alexius, & Emejom, 2018). Faith-based nonprofit leaders' attainment of sustainable success in achieving organizational goals and mission necessitated the integration of leadership development programs with succession planning (Torry, 2017).

An effective strategy for succession planning required integration of a robust leadership development program, and effective integration of leadership development and succession planning enhanced an adaptable succession plan (Carbo & Storm, 2018; Gordon & Overbey, 2018; Wilson, 2018). Nonprofit leaders' success in accomplishing organizational goals and mission depended on effective talent management as well as development planning (Bozer et al., 2015). Identifying potential leaders and developing a leadership transition plan was critical to guaranteeing nonprofit organizational leadership readiness for contemporary and future challenges (Wilson, 2018).

Nonprofit leaders' focused identification of potential lapses in talented personnel and generating programs to meet their needs ensured that nonprofit leaders utilized the organizational intellectual capital to create a pool of leadership candidates imbued with a talent for leadership succession (Gordon & Overbey, 2018; Odengo & Bett, 2016; Wilson, 2018). Leadership development in nonprofit organizations enabled increased

leadership capacity and a pool of talent for succession planning. Nonprofit leaders' competency to manage the plan for succession created a provision for concatenation while developing the skills of potential successors as well as enhancing the potential of committed and ambitious staff (Bottomley, 2018).

Nonprofit leaders should make provision for related development initiatives that could prepare prospective leaders for more responsible engagements (Gordon & Overbey, 2018). A time-tested management witticism brought to bear that investment on staff yielded competitive organizational edge. Succession planning promoted strong leadership development by creating upward mobility of employees' competencies and skills, to enable success in the organization's achievement of strategic goals and mission accomplishment (Gordon & Overbey, 2018).

Nonprofit leaders should design leadership programs as developmental systems that enhanced the experience of their potential successors to attain organizational strategy by guaranteeing that the development programs were relevant to leadership succession (Gordon & Overbey, 2018). There was a need for nonprofit leaders to support staff who were on leadership development programs, to enable translation of learned skills into practice, given that a common pitfall in the development of initiatives is the inadequate support of the positive change of behavioral patterns and actions of leadership development participants in return to their offices (Gordon & Overbey, 2018). An ingeniously designed and expertly managed succession plan that incorporated leadership development could enable nonprofit leaders to circumvent dependence on

a replacement process which narrowly focused on a search of a novel type of the departed leader (Hall-Ellis, 2015).

Nonprofit succession planners should consider the leadership development prospects available to high-potential employees, talented staff and business-critical workforces (Gordon & Overbey, 2018). Faith-based nonprofit leaders should identify and utilize opportunities to reinforce leadership capacity, especially about strategic priorities (Torry, 2017). Nonprofit leaders must communicate their commitment to enabling the facilitation of employees' career development through a variety of opportunities (Gordon & Overbey, 2018) given that commitment enabled the accomplishment of specific set of goals (Locke & Latham, 2013; Latham, 2016).

Nonprofit leaders must spell out unequivocal messages about their commitment to leadership development, to instill a spirit of leadership learning commitment of prospective leaders (Gordon & Overbey, 2018). Nonprofit leaders must be confident in their coping capacity to leaders' departure from the organization or long-standing absence of principal leaders of the team (Hall-Ellis, 2015). Leadership development in nonprofit organizations was most successful in accomplishing organizational succession planning goals when the succession planners designed it with an understanding of the specific needs of the nonprofit, each leader's personal development needs, and the anticipation that the leaders would assimilate the leadership learning and translate it into working practice (Bozer et al., 2015).

The agreed upon succession plan was a collective effort and constituted a commitment between workers and leaders with the prime objective of nurturing the

workers' focused development competencies (Bozer et al., 2015). An effective leadership development program grounded on comprehensive organizational needs analysis; additionally, leadership competencies should focus on specific high goals of learning that aligned with intramural systems and procedural methodologies, to promote expedited embeddedness in the organizational culture. A balance of nonprofit organizational needs and each leader's personal needs was essential to succeed in the delivery of leadership development because it enabled achievement of organizational goals and mission (Hall-Ellis, 2015). Generally, there should be a link between structured career management, servant/transformational leadership development, and programs of succession planning that aligned professional, personal, and corporate objectives to the advantage of all parties concerned (Hall-Ellis, 2015).

## Expectancy Theory

In his expectancy theory, Vroom (1964) focused on human behavioral changes in the work environment based on motivation. Vroom (1964) asserted that a worker would employ more effort when they had the conviction that a positive reward would be the outcome of the increased energy. The expectancy theory facilitated the understanding of leaders about decision drives (Chen et al., 2016). Based on Vroom's expectancy theory, behavioral patterns that influenced an employee's decision to exit an organization depended on motivational forces (Baumann & Bonner, 2017; Chen et al., 2016; Lloyd, & Mertens, 2018). Three constructs constituted the motivational forces: (a) instrumentality, (b) expectancy, and (c) valence (Acikgoz & Sumer, 2018; Chen et al., 2016; Purvis et al., 2015).

V*alence* referred to the perceived worth of an outcome such as reward (Vroom, 1964). For instance, if any employee had value for a specific reward, then there was a high probability of their making effort in improving performance to achieve the reward. Instrumentality referred to the possibility that one outcome led to another; for instance, greater rewards resulting in higher job satisfaction. Expectancy refers to the high probability of behavior, leading to a productive outcome such as working harder in generating a greater reward.

The constructs of motivational forces captured an individual's imperceptible evaluation of success, the effort essential to achieve success, and the rewards enticement that came with success (Purvis et al., 2015). Nonprofit leaders should integrate competencies with all the three constructs in a goal behavior model such as succession planning to enable the creation of the appropriate motivational forces (Wood, Logar, & Riley, 2015). The appropriate integration of motivational forces to enable any prospective leader to contribute to the sustainability of a nonprofit organization was contingent on his or her self-interest (Purvis et al., 2015) and their propensity to exclusively engage in behavior with achievable goals and rewards (Wood et al., 2015).

Vroom (1964) quantified motivational forces (MF) as MF = E x I x V, where E represented expectancy, I was instrumentality, and V was valence. The constructs served various purposes in decisions regarding behavior. Instrumentality and valence correlated with a prospective leader's understanding of intrinsic and extraneous outcomes (Tarmann, 2017; Rheinberg & Engeser, 2018). Expectancy was employees' intrinsic perceptions regarding the ability for goal achievement (Purvis et al., 2015). The

Expectancy-Instrumentality-Valence (E-I-V) scores enabled the assessment of behavioral decisions.

In the purview of Vroom's expectancy theory, intentional separation was a deliberate and rational action as against the reactive paths in the emerging model of voluntary turnover (Tarmann, 2017). Dominant extraneous weight as against the intrinsic nature of the emerging model of voluntary turnover was discernible in the expectancy theory (Tarmann, 2017). Consequently, decision making regarding behavioral patterns lay credence to external rewards in mitigating turnover. Purvis et al. (2015) suggested that resources, reward/punishment systems, as well as organizational leaders' support, could influence the expectancy of workers and psychological climate of the workplace.

## Leadership Pipeline

The leadership pipeline entailed training of internal candidates who were stepping into leadership positions whenever the need arose, thus facilitating leadership continuity (Charan, Drotter, & Noel, 2011). The leadership pipeline enabled the new leader's understanding of the culture of the organization and business direction. The leadership pipeline facilitated experience acquisition for specific leadership positions, and this ensured an effective succession plan.

Leadership historiography lay credence on Walter Mahler being the originator of the leadership pipeline model in the published framework Critical Career Crossroads of his research findings at General Electric company in the 1970s (Charan et al., 2011). Mahler contended that there was a need for work values-shift at varying stages of the organization, to guarantee leadership sustainability in accomplishing organizational

goals. Charan et al. (2011) further developed the work of Mahler in a six-stage leadership pipeline model in developing the next generation of leaders by outlining a leadership development framework from junior positions to senior executive leaders.

Charan et al. (2011) sought to ensure that organizations had effective leadership that resulted from internal leadership development as against looking out for external leaders to fill organizational leadership positions when the need arose. The leadership pipeline model enabled an internal promotional ladder that facilitated the movement of eligible leadership candidates from one level to another. Charan et al. (2011) recognized the identification of leaders and potential leaders, assessment of leaders' competencies, leadership development planning, and measurement of the leadership pipeline effectiveness to enable the implementation of succession planning strategies. Charan et al. (2011) underscored the challenges that prospective leaders must overcome in a bid finding themselves in the desired leadership position.

**The Six Steps of Leadership Pipeline Model**

**Step One: Managing self to managing others.** The first step included the employees, with still comparatively little leadership experience (Charan et al., 2011). The employees were usually prepared with technical as well as professional skills but had not fundamentally improved the skills required to lead or manage other employees. The step aimed to hone and broaden individual skills, with the capability to comprehend and resonate with the organizational culture at the top list of the skills that mentors needed to teach the employee.

Throughout the preliminary process, employees' primary responsibilities were enhanced and ultimately found themselves on the platform of first-line management. The preliminary stage of leadership transition could be the most challenging given that it involved value-based shift or a change in behavioral patterns (Charan et al., 2011). The skills that mentors should teach employees throughout the preliminary step included work planning, work assigning, motivational and coaching skills, and employee assessment (Charan et al., 2011). The emphasis was on fundamental management functions, for instance, reallocation of time as well as other resources.

The ability of the employee or prospective leader to effectively manage time for the accomplishment of organizational goals was crucial to her or his development (Charan et al., 2011). The capability of the leader for time reallocation was imperative to organizational development. There was an emphasis not only in positive behavioral changes but the employee's attitudinal positive change from tolerance of management to valuing the importance of management (Charan et al., 2011). There was a paradigm shift from individualism mindset to team effort and control. Although first level management entailed tasks and individual responsibilities, first level managers needed to gradually embrace managing others mindset too.

**Step Two: Managing others to leading managers.** Charan et al. (2011) contended that leaders mostly neglected the second step of the leadership pipeline framework in organizational settings. However, the second stage that entailed managing others to leading managers was most critical to leadership development for effective succession planning. Second level managers built the management foundation of the

organization and selected and trained future managers of the organization (Charan et al., 2011). On the onset, the dissimilarity to the preceding step was not as discernable; however, there was task variation to level one and level two managements. The level two manager should divest herself or himself from the individual tasks to managing other employees.

Skills development focus was assessment and selection of employees for first-level roles, assigning and facilitating their managerial work, and measuring the attained progress in the new position (Charan et al. (2011). Essentially, the first-level managers became mentors on stage two. In pursuance to the workability of the leadership pipeline model, the second-level candidates needed to comprehend managers' value-based requirements. Charan et al. (2011) asserted that one challenging responsibility of second level managers of managers was in returning employees to the role of an individual-contributor if there was no shift in value and behavior of the first-line manager.

Many people at the apex of performance had resistance to change, given that they liked performing those activities that enabled the achievement of their goals (Charan et al., 2011). Many people transitioned jobs without transition in behavior and values. Coaching was another valuable skillset in preparation for second-level management (Charan et al., 2011). The coaching of first-line managers was not free from limitations; therefore, second-level managers should make provisions for feedback of performance. Besides, the emphasis should begin shifting slowly to the significance of mentorship and moving away from solely processes focus.

**Step Three: Leading managers to functional manager.** Development of leadership communication was the fundamental skill set that enabled functional management. (Charan et al., 2011). A functional manager required broad-based comprehension of organizational needs beyond performances and tasks that she or he needed to accomplish. Understanding of organizational needs was imperative for a functional manager, considering that she or he would lead other managers to functional managers.

The essential skills for development at the third-level management platform were ability for team participation – communication as well as comprehending the needs of team members and their concerns (Charan et al., 2011). Charan et al. (2011) suggested that the functional manager should simultaneously maintain site operational needs and compete for resources. The developmental focus should lean toward the strategic capabilities of third-level potential managers and enhancement of task delegation to other employees and managers. The emphasis shifted to managerial maturity, or long-term strategy, meaning, the capability of creating a functional plan that allowed for better performance. Functional managers looked beyond the current moment and generated strategies for a sustainable competitive organizational edge.

**Step Four: Functional manager to business manager.** One who attained the fourth level of management was considered to have made significant strides on the leadership scale. Organizational managers on the fourth level of governance needed to perform under more considerable pressure, as their autonomy in decision making expanded further (Charan et al., 2011). Senior organizational leaders are expected to

identify competent employees for training and empowerment for the position because real leadership skills are imperative for prospective candidates.

The fourth-level management platform entailed a significant positive change in the leadership pipeline model, given that individual skillsets began shifting from management to leadership (Charan et al., 2011). Beside strategic thinking skills and improvement in the allocation of time and resources, the manager needed to develop a deeper functionality comprehension and its influence on profits, the focus on growth should shift to the improvement of the working ability of managers and their ability to inspire and control team members.

The fourth-level business managers must possess skills in comprehending the operational variation of employees and improve their abilities in understanding workers on an emotional level (Charan et al., 2011). Additionally, the business managers' development of high emotional intelligence served a useful purpose in improving the employee-manager relationship. Besides the development of expertise in managing different employees, the manager must develop the skill in team building despite the differences in individuals.

On the fourth-level management platform, the emphasis is on the strategic trade-off between present needs and organizational future goals (Charan et al., 2019). Ensuring that operations were going on smoothly, meeting with financial requirements was another essential obligation of the business manager. Instead of the allocation of time and resources, the fourth-level managers invested most of their time on reflection and analysis of the past, present, as well as future organizational performance. Charan et al.

(2011) asserted that the fourth passage might lead to challenges in the leadership pipeline model. For the passage to work correctly, it was incumbent on business managers to develop trust and acceptance of advice and adapt to receiving feedback in good faith from all functional managers.

**Step Five: Business manager to group manager.** The value that a business manager put in various businesses was the primary determinant of his or her shifting from business management level to group management platform (Charan et al., 2011). Whereas business managers would continue to focus on their teams' accomplishments, group managers focused on satisfaction from others' achievements. The emphasis in this passage was on the discovery of enablers of other managers in attaining excellence as against self-perfection. The development of four skillsets were requisites in this passage (Charan et al., 2011).

First, the emphasis was on evaluating skillsets as well as planning of strategy that focused on capital allocation and deployment. Identification of the right data, data analysis, as well as application of the appropriate corporate strategies in any circumstance were the operational capabilities required of group managers (Charan et al., 2011). The second skillset entailed managers' development by the group manager. Though mentoring was vital in all the preceding passages, identifying and supporting the right talent was critical in the fifth level of the leadership pipeline model (Charan et al., 2011).

The third requisite skill of the group manager was that she or he should have the ability to view the broader business needs of the organization regarding expansion and growth of the business operations (Charan et al., 2011). Group managers must have

creative and critical thinking skills and the capability to innovate unique projects and discard non-working old operations; this included operations that were counterproductive to organizational profit generation. Charan et al. (2011) suggested that group managers should develop enhanced self-actualization. Moreover, leadership was a holistic practice at the group management level of the leadership pipeline model.

**Step Six: Group manager to enterprise manager.** The entrepreneurial management level of the leadership pipeline model was value-based rather than skill-based (Charan et al., 2011). The establishment of the practical application of the leader's technical skillsets in generating positive change would be imperative, and the leader focused on the values of her or his leadership strategy as well as success in accomplishing organizational goals. The enterprise manager focuses more on strategic or long-term vision, though she or he still maintained short-term operations.

Principally, the final passage leader focused outwards in her or his leadership approach. The sixth stage of the leadership pipeline development emphasis was on visionary instead of strategic thinking (Charan et at., 2011). Entrepreneurial leaders think big and had a pragmatic vision for the organizational future; micromanagement was not her or his watchword, considering that she or he operated based on trusting, inspiring, motivating, and empowering managers. The sixth-level leader communicated her or his vision clearly to enable ultimate success in accomplishing organizational goals (Charan et at., 2011).

**Application of Leadership Pipeline in Succession Planning**

In a bid to achieving effective succession planning in nonprofits by the application of leadership pipeline model, there was a need for transparency (Rayburn, Grigsby, & Brubaker, 2016). Honesty must be the watchword, and employees should understand the succession planning process as well as the setting of clear guidelines for participation in the leadership succession planning. Besides, leaders should seek the input of employees, to enhance the effectiveness of succession planning.

Succession planners benefited if they shared the leadership options and selection criteria regarding succession planning with their employees (Barton, 2019; Gill & France, 2019; Payne, Hovarter, Howell, Draws, & Gieryn, 2018; Torry, 2017). Moreover, leaders should educate employees on the hiring process for leadership positions, and they should set standards for selection for each leadership position. If faith-based leaders made changes in the selection criteria, they should communicate the same to organizational members and the rationale of the revisions based on fairness (Torry, 2017).

By focusing on transparency, succession planners ensured that employees were motivated and behaved transparently (Friedman, 2017). Ali and Mehreen (2019) reported the existence of a bond of affinity between succession planning and turnover intentions and offered a mediation mechanism regarding job security and professional attitude for the mitigation of bank employees' turnover through succession planning. LeCounte, Prieto, and Phipps (2017) examined the significance of talent management policies and practices concerning leadership pipelines and provided a

conceptual framework that organizational leaders could adapt to guarantee preparedness for chief executive succession in maintaining a competitive edge.

Charan et al. (2011) contended that if the leadership pipeline of any organizations was consistent and without obstruction, organizational leaders had the potential to develop a factory of leadership talent. Charan et al. (2011) asserted that the leadership mentors of the organization needed to structure the leadership pipeline pragmatically and consciously, to enable commitment and positive outcome. Trainers should implement the leadership pipeline at all the leadership levels. The implementers of the leadership pipeline at faith-based nonprofit setting must be transformational (Torry, 2017).

Nonprofit succession planners must break out of the circumscription of merely identifying the successor candidates; they should rather develop in-house talent to take the challenge of leading the impending organizational change (Rothwell et al., 2015). Leadership pipeline implementation enabled the provision of a vibrant and impartial overview of prospective successors and facilitates the establishment of dependable succession plans. Implementation of a leadership pipeline enabled faith-based nonprofit leaders to work on succession planning on three platforms or levels, to wit: operational, tactical, and strategic succession planning.

**Operational succession planning.** On the operational level of succession planning, succession planners and implementers should have a list of immediate prospective successors aspiring for respective senior leadership roles and important positions (Charan et al., 2011). The listing exercise facilitated the management of unanticipated resignations. Frequently, succession plans were simply paperwork or list of

names set out on Microsoft Excel sheets referred to as operational succession planning (Charan et al., 2011). Nevertheless, when there was a vacancy that required a qualified person to step into the role of leadership, someone else whose name did not appear on the list of potential candidates had the great fortune to take over the leadership responsibility (Charan et al., 2011). One factor responsible for the oversight in the operational succession planning level was connected with outdated lists of potential leadership candidates or lack of requisite qualification of the individuals on the list. Unqualified individuals were put on the potential leadership candidates list due to lack of thoroughness and rigor of the enlisting process (Charan et al., 2011).

**Tactical succession planning.** Tactical succession planning was tailored toward a time prospect of one to five years. On this level, nonprofit leaders, including faith-based nonprofit leaders, should strategically envision three to five years and commence planning on prospective candidates that were eligible for different positions (Charan et al., 2011). Nonprofit leaders should utilize organizational positions in developing and preparing potential candidates. The leadership pipeline framework eased discussion that aimed at addressing the training of potential leaders for different situations.

**Strategic succession planning.** Strategic succession planning was within the metacognitive timeframe of five to ten years or more (Leadership Pipeline Institute, n.d.). Succession planning strategists built the leadership pipeline framework into their recruitment process, and performance management, as well as development processes. Many nonprofit executive leaders embraced the challenges of succession planning in good faith to enable sustainable organizational growth. Often, many lower level leaders

did not receive adequate support for the transition to higher levels. Skipping of standards was a common practice that led to inadequate skills development, to enable addressing leadership problems (Charan et al., 2011).

Many nonprofit leaders confirmed that they did not have sufficient potential candidates for expected vacant senior leadership positions (Leadership Pipeline Institute, n.d.). The attributable factor to lack of potential leadership candidates at the organizational setting was that recruiters failed to pay attention to people who possessed executive potential (Charan et al., 2011). Leadership development experts were undoubtedly capable of developing all types of leaders but could not establish all leaders into effective executives. Recruiters should hire with a bigger picture in mind for the organization's sustainable development.

Implementation of the leadership pipeline framework was essential at all the stages of succession planning. The leadership pipeline framework was particularly indispensable to the strategic and tactical levels of succession planning. Leadership Pipeline Institute (n.d.) suggested that the following initiatives facilitated the implementation of the leadership pipeline framework in succession planning at all three levels:

- Nonprofit leaders should use the leadership pipeline framework as their architectural plan in assessing and developing leaders.
- Nonprofit leaders should use the leadership pipeline framework as a tool for performance management.

- Recruitment should be structured and rigorous and align with modest succession planning prediction (Leadership Pipeline Institute, n.d.).

A succession plan that was based on clear intentions most often yielded a successful outcome (Ghee, Ibrahim, & Abdul-Halim, 2015; Peters-Hawkins, Reed, & Kingsberry, 2018). Succession planning facilitated the planning of development initiative for leadership successors as well as management of resignation risk of senior leaders in strategic positions. Succession planners must, in the circumstance, take the value of succession planning with good intent and meticulousness (Leadership Pipeline Institute, n.d.).

## Summary and Conclusions

The indispensability of succession planning correlated with sustainable achievement of organizational goals and mission in faith-based nonprofit organizations. However, succession planners faced several challenges. In Chapter 2, I conceptualized succession planning and described the challenges that nonprofit leaders faced in the succession planning process. I discussed, leaders' role and leadership development role in setting up successful succession planning. I presented the expectancy theory as well as the framework of the leadership pipeline and its application in effective succession planning in nonprofit organizations.

Although nonprofit succession planning research was abundant in the management literature, the existing studies were mainly quantitative. This study might fill the gap in literature from a qualitative comparative study perspective. In Chapter 3, I would present a comprehensive description of the study's design. The discussion would

entail the research approach, sample and population, data collection method, data management, data analysis plan, quality and ethical considerations, the role of the researcher, researcher bias, and protection of participants.

# Chapter 3: Research Method

The purpose of this qualitative comparative case study was to compare the effective succession planning strategies of faith-based nonprofit leaders in Maryland and Pennsylvania in the achievement of their organizational goals and mission. The need for the study was to bridge the gap in existing literature in the area of succession planning strategies in faith-based nonprofits from a comparative perspective. Chapter 3 entailed a description of the research design, sample of the study and population, method of data collection and procedures, management of data and procedures, method of data analysis, as well as ethical concerns.

## Research Design and Rationale

The overarching research question that served as guidance in this qualitative comparative study was: How do the succession planning strategies of faith-based nonprofit leaders in Maryland and Pennsylvania compare in their ability to achieve organizational goals and their mission?

The sub-questions were:

1. What succession planning strategies do faith-based nonprofit leaders implement to enable success in achieving their organizational goals and mission?
2. How does the implementation of succession planning strategies help faith-based nonprofit leaders to successfully attain organizational goals and mission?
3. What succession planning strategies, if any, work best to achieve

organizational goals and mission?

The results of the study might lead to an understanding of the strategies that faith-based nonprofit leaders implemented to enable sustainable success in attaining organizational goals and mission. This segment entailed a description of the research design that would be utilized in this study comprising of the research method, sample and population, data collection strategies, method of data analysis, research report structure, ethical concerns and the issue of quality, the researcher's role and bias, as well as protection of participants.

**Theoretical Method of Inquiry**

I chose the qualitative comparative case study for this research. Researchers distinguished between the theoretical and philosophical assumptions that underpinned research methods. The philosophical presumptions could be ontological, epistemological, axiological, rhetorical, or methodological (Victor, 2017). In the ontological philosophical assumption, the accentuation was on reality or the essence of reality. In epistemological assumption, the emphasis was on the bond of affinity between the researcher and the object of research; in axiological, the emphasis was on the value-drives of the investigative study (Victor, 2017).

The rhetorical assumption was focused on the researcher's persuasion of the reader about the worthwhileness of his/her presentation whereas in methodological assumption the stress was on the procedural methodologies of the researcher (Victor, 2017). The methodological philosophical assumption featured prominently in this study.

Researchers utilized three principal methods in research namely, quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods (Yin, 2018).

In the social sciences, quantitative research entailed a systematic empirical study of perceptible phenomena through mathematical, computational, or statistical techniques (Victor, 2017). Quantitative researchers commenced the utilization of quantitative method in the 19th century, and it extended into the late 20th century at a period that the main worldview on investigative studies was postpositivist (Victor, 2017). The quantitative research method was traditionally quasi-experimental or experimental in design. Quantitative researchers in the social sciences frequently depended on surveys for their data collection.

Qualitative research referred to an investigative study of the meaning that groups or individuals assign to social phenomena (Yin, 2016, 2018). Qualitative researchers have been using the qualitative method since the 1990s, and it became comparatively a more contemporary research method than the quantitative method (Victor, 2017). Qualitative researchers were driven by the participatory, constructivist, and advocacy worldviews, and rely on the experiences of research participants.

The principal qualitative research approaches, to wit: ethnography, case studies, grounded research, narrative research, and phenomenological research (Yin, 2016). Comparative case study researchers endeavored to compare the quintessence of participants' perception of a phenomenon through description. A comparative case study entailed studying a limited number of participants via an extensive and profound engagement in an effort to generate patterns and meaningful bond of affinities. In

comparative case study, the researcher subdued his/her own experience in a bid to understanding the participants' perceptions.

Mixed research method was not as popular as the qualitative and quantitative methods. Researchers started using the mixed methods after Campbell and Fisk applied the mixed methods to assess psychological traits validity in 1959 (Victor, 2017). The mixed research method referred to a multimethod research or an integration of quantitative and qualitative methods, which involved the utilization of multiple methods of data collection techniques and analysis (Yin, 2016, 2018). A typical instance of the utilization of the mixed methods in research would be the conjoining of quantitative surveys with qualitative interviews and observations.

In qualitative research, the researcher typically used open-ended questions whereas in quantitative research, the investigative inquirer utilized closed-ended questions (Yin, 2016). Qualitative data examination was subject to researchers' comprehension and has an adaptable configuration, whereas quantitative data investigation was statistically driven with a fixed structure and comprising hypothesis testing (Yin, 2016)

A researcher could investigate the same research problem from a quantitative or qualitative perspective (Yin, 2016). A researcher might choose to explore the problem's depth as a phenomenon (qualitative methodology) or investigate the variable associations to evaluate their influences on phenomena (quantitative methodology). In the evaluation process to ascertain the appropriate methodology to utilize in a study, the researcher often employed the research questions' context for guidance. I sought to understand the

phenomenon of succession planning through the exploration of the perspectives of faith-based nonprofit leaders, so the qualitative research design was most appropriate in this study.

**Rationale for Comparative Study**

The comparative case study approach was designed to enable researchers to examine the features and compare two or more cases of specific phenomena in profound details from the quintessence of participants' perspectives (Yin, 2016). Yin (2016) identified five main qualitative research approaches namely, case studies, grounded theory, ethnography, narratology or narrative research, and phenomenology. A researcher's selection of an appropriate approach was contingent on the purpose and research data type he/she would collect.

**Narrative research approach.** In narrative research, the inquirer studied individuals' lives (Yin, 2016, 2018).The focus of the narrative researcher was on the tale of a particular experience, and researchers used the narrative approach across disciplines, for instance, in social sciences and humanities including anthropology, sociology, psychology, literature, and history (Yin, 2016, 2018) The archetypical approach that narrative researchers used was to study one person in a metacognitive timeframe (Victor, 2017). Narrative researchers normally relied on interviews and review of documents to generate data; they evaluated the data in a bid to conveying tales and advance themes utilizing events sequences. The main goal of the narrative study was to generate an account of an individual's life, the chronological narration of events within a metacognitive timeframe.

**Phenomenological research approach.** Researchers utilized phenomenology to procure an understanding of the quintessence of an individual's lived experience (Yin, 2016, 2018). Phenomenology had its origin in psychology, education, and philosophy. In general, phenomenological researchers explored numerous individuals with shared experience.

Phenomenologists often used interviews to generate data from participants (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Besides, phenomenological researchers might also review relevant documents and images and embarked on observations to procure data for analysis. The overarching focus of phenomenologists might also be to comprehend phenomena that trigger human experiences.

**Grounded theory research approach.** In grounded theory research, the inquirer developed a theory through the utilization of data generated from participants' perspectives. The grounded theory approach had its root in sociology (Yin, 2016, 2018). Grounded theory researchers explored processes, actions, or interactions that connect numerous people. The goal of grounded theory researchers was to generate a theory through a synthesis of results concerning their behavioral patterns.

Grounded theory researchers utilized interviews as the primary data collection method, characteristically from 20 to 60 research participants in a study (Victor, 2017). The data analysis in grounded theory research comprised of open, axial, and selective coding techniques. Gentles, Charles, Ploeg, and McKibbon (2015) utilized grounded theory in exploring the analytical viewpoints to reflexivity and established that the

utilization of reflexivity and its integration in grounded theory research was at an embryonic stage, which revealed the ongoing development of grounded theory research.

**Ethnographic research approach.** Ethnographers focused on the description and interpretation of the behavioral patterns of a cultural group (Walcott, 2016). Ethnographic researchers utilized anthropological and sociological techniques to facilitate a better understanding of cultural groups of people. Ethnographers utilize interviews and observations as primary data collection instruments and also collect data from other sources during protracted periods of their fieldwork.

**Case-study research approach.** In case study research, the investigative inquirer focused on in-depth explication and analysis of single or multiple cases (Yin, 2018). The case study researchers drew techniques from political science, medicine, law, and psychology to explore events, programs, and activities, or an individual. Interviews, observations, documents review, and artifacts were the main techniques of data collection in case study research.

**Summary.** These five main approaches to qualitative research proved useful for resolving different research problems. For example, ethnography might be suitable to resolve a particular research problem, whereas phenomenology might be more suitable to address another research problem. Researchers have provided a valuable comparative analysis of the distinct physiognomies of the five approaches of qualitative research grounded on emphasis, nature of issue that constituted the best fit for each design, background of the discipline, investigation unit, data collection techniques, approaches for data analysis, research report, and the study's organizational structure.

Narrative research was most suitable for a research problem which required a story of an individual's experience; phenomenology was most appropriate for describing the quintessence of lived experiences of participants. Furthermore, grounded theory research was most valuable for the grounding of a theory from the participants' perspectives; ethnography was the best approach when the researcher had to tell and explain shared cultural patterns of groups of people. The case study was the most suitable approach when the researcher intended to build an in-depth comprehension of multiple cases or a single case. In the circumstances, the five primary approaches of the qualitative method were characteristically distinct. The comparative case study was the most suitable research design for this study, considering that it enabled the researcher to compare the perceptions of participants. The objects of comparison were the data or results from the two faith-based nonprofit organizations.

Researchers utilized case study to investigate a contemporary phenomenon in depth and in a natural setting, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and context were unclear (Yin, 2018). Using a case study design enabled the researcher to collect data impartially from a real-world scenario and asked questions that related to what, how, and why (Yin, 2018). Exploring succession planning strategies that faith-based nonprofit leaders implemented to achieve success in attaining organizational goals and mission through case study constituted the most suitable approach for this inquiry based on Yin's (2018) description.

The comparative case study enabled the researcher to examine context and features of succession planning strategies that faith-based nonprofit leaders implemented

in attaining success in organizational goals and mission. In this comparative inquiry, I used interviews to generate data. The comparative case study was appropriate to understand the perspectives and experiences of faith-based nonprofit leaders regarding implementation of succession planning strategies for nonprofit success in achieving organizational goals and mission.

## Role of the Researcher

I conducted the complete research throughout the stages of data collection and analysis and writing of the research report. I traveled to partner organizations workplaces whenever required to enable the conduction of the face-to-face interviews with research participants. I conducted some of the interviews remotely, via telephone technology for time effectiveness and participant's preference. Janesick (2015) suggested that qualitative investigative interviewers should commence by writing specific fundamental, descriptive, and insightful questions.

Janesick (2015) asserted that interviewers should create comfortability and conduciveness of atmosphere and pace during interview sessions. Interviewers must lucidly explicate to the participants the rationale for conducting the interview; they should genuinely display interest in participants and possibly smile. I have competency in interviewing that facilitated the eliciting of valuable information from interviewees. I commenced the interview process after obtaining approvals from Walden University Institutional Review Board - 12-04-19-0182678.

The researcher's role in interview protocol refinement was significant to supporting the improvement of data quality (Castillo-Montoya, 2016). Castillo-Montoya

(2016) recognized four phases of interview protocol refinement: guaranteeing the alignment of interview questions (see Appendix A) with research questions, building a conversation that was inquiry oriented, accepting interview protocol feedbacks, and directing the interview protocol. I adopted the four phases of the interview protocol refinement for enhancement of data quality. I embarked on data analysis after the collection of data, and subsequently proceeded with the research report. Google search strategy facilitated the selection of faith-based nonprofit organizations that participated in the study. I did not have any relationship with partner organizations. I utilized bracketing and a reflexive journal to mitigate bias. I utilized data that were free from researcher's bias by portraying the research situation correctly.

## Methodology

### Participant Selection Logic

This section entailed an overview of sampling design and description of the sampling procedures and strategies for the selection of the participants, sample characteristics, the sample size, and procedures for gaining access to the participants.

**Overview of sampling design.** A sample referred to a population subset (Bell, Bryman, & Harley, 2018; Etikan, Musa, & Alkassim, 2016). Sampling was a significant research component, considering that it was virtually impractical for a researcher to study an entire population, due to economic and time constraints (Bell et al., 2018). Sampling enabled a researcher to choose a population subset for an investigative study, to facilitate a foundation for the generalization to a more significant population. I selected participants to form a sample on the basis that such research participants could contribute

to the understanding of succession planning strategies in faith-based nonprofit organizations**.**

Researchers suggested varied approaches of sampling: theory-based, homogenous, critical case, typical case, politically important, extreme or deviant case, snowball or chain, intensity, confirming and disconfirming cases, random purposeful, maximum variation, criterion, combination or mixed, opportunistic, and convenience (Bell, Bryman et al., 2018; Etikan et al., 2016). The varied sampling approaches offered researchers choices for the conduction of their studies.

A researcher selected the sampling approach that best suited his/her needs by evaluating how the sampling strategy could generate a suitable sample that enabled the researcher to tackle the research questions (Victor, 2017). The purpose of sampling in qualitative research was to gain insight of a phenomenon. The target population of this study was faith-based nonprofit leaders in Maryland and Pennsylvania.

I used purposeful snowball sampling to select faith-based nonprofit leaders in Maryland and Pennsylvania in this research. Purposeful sampling referred to the selection of participants who could provide insight on phenomenon (Etikan et al., 2016; Gentles et al., 2015). Snowball sampling, subsumed in a purposeful sampling referred to where research participants recruited other participants amongst their acquaintances (Bell et al., 2018; Gentles et al., 2015). The principal goal of purposeful sampling was to enable researchers to focus on specific characteristics of a population of interest, which would best facilitate the answering of research questions.

I utilized purposeful snowball sampling to generate a sample size of six faith-based nonprofit leaders from each of the two organizations to attain data saturation to broaden the range of possible data and form a better picture for analysis. I utilized Google search strategy to enable purposeful selection of the two faith-based nonprofit organizations that participated in the study. The key words for the organizational searches were faith-based nonprofits, social service providers, faith-based food aid. The two organizations were selected because they fitted into organizations selection criteria: faith-based nonprofits, social service providers, and faith-based food aid.

President Dwight David Eisenhower, the 34th president of the United States, signed into law the legislation that eventually became known as Food for Peace Act on July 10, 1954 (USAID, 2019). In alignment with President Eisenhower's law, the two organizations have been providing food aid to their communities for over thirty years. After recruiting the initial participant, I requested them to send me the contact information of their acquaintances and colleagues who might be interested in participating in the research so that I could email them the invitation for participation. The sample consisted of faith-based nonprofit leaders or board members, directors, and executive directors, considering that they were the implementers of succession planning strategies for nonprofit success in achieving organizational goals and mission.

**Sample size.** The sample size is the number of research participants in a study that a researcher drew from a population (Bell et al., 2018; Palinkas et al., 2015). The determination of sample size was crucial inasmuch as an adequate sample facilitated the

establishment of satisfactory evidence to support the research results. Qualitative research required a small sample size with in-depth exploration.

The determination of a sample size in qualitative research was contingent on the data type that the investigator intended to collect and the type of comprehension that the inquirer wanted to establish (Bell et al., 2018; Gentles et al., 2015; Palinkas et al., 2015). The basic consideration for the choice of an appropriate sample size was to determine what the investigative inquirer intended to report as aftermath of the research. In other words, choosing an emphasis of depth over breadth was the drive of a researcher's selection of sample size (Parker, 2018).

Researchers who desired to accentuate depth over breadth chose a smaller sample size whereas inquirers that wished to stress breadth over depth selected a bigger sample size. Inappropriate sampling and inadequate sample size could generate a non-representative sample of participants that brought forth data of non-representative events and non-representative processes (Bell et al., 2018; Gentles et al., 2015). Qualitative researchers should be absorbed in the collection of deep minutiae concerning participants (Parker, 2018).

The focus of the qualitative researcher should be on profound development of insight on the particular phenomenon being studied because the accentuation in qualitive research was not on generalization of results (Parker, 2018). Victor (2017) suggested different sample sizes for unique qualitative approaches. Narrative investigative inquirers characteristically recruited one or two participants whereas phenomenological researchers could recruit from one to 325 research participants, though a sample size between three

and ten participants prevails in the literature. Grounded theory researchers commonly invite between 20 and 30 participants to enable the development of a saturated theory.

Ethnographers typically focused on a cultural group whereas in case studies the researcher concentrated on a sample size between one and five cases (Button, Crabtree, Rouncefield, & Tolmie, 2015; Hammersley, 2016). The distinct emphasis of specific research approach determined the inconsistent sample sizes. I collected data from a sample of five faith-based nonprofit leaders from each nonprofit organization, to enable the attainment of data saturation. The faith-based nonprofit leaders were suitable for data collection because they were the implementers of succession planning strategies. The sample size emphasized depth over breadth regarding the nature of the phenomenon.

## Instrumentation

A qualitative researcher was the primary instrument for data collection (Antwi & Hamza, 2015). Research historiography lay credence on Lincoln and Guba (1985) who introduced the idea that the investigative inquirer acted as a research instrument to convey the distinctiveness of the researcher's role in qualitative data collection and data analysis process; that was because only a human being could provide the responsiveness, sensitivity, and flexibility necessary for a scientific inquiry. Other data collection instruments that might facilitate answering research questions included interviewees, a questionnaire that subsumed interview questions, interview protocols, and smartphone audio recorder (Eckerdal & Hagström, 2017; Wilkinson, Mackenzie, & Smith, 2019; Travers, 2019).

Interviews were sufficient to generate data, to enable the answering of research questions (Jorgensen, 2015; Quinlan, Babin, Carr, & Griffin, 2019; Victor, 2017). I utilized semi-structured interviews to gain understanding from participants' perspectives on succession planning strategies that faith-based nonprofit leaders implemented to attain organizational goals and mission. Semi-structured interviews, as a data collection instrument, have many advantages. One advantage of semi-structured interviews was that they enabled the pre-planning and organization of questions to guide participants through the varied features of the phenomenon (Yin, 2016).

Another advantage of semi-structured interviews stemmed from the interviewee's capability in focusing on the case study topic (Yin, 2016). Lastly, semi-structured interviews enabled the provision of insightful evidence and personal understandings such as attitudes, meaning, and perception (Yin, 2016). Antithetically, the quality of semi-structured interview data depended on the interviewer's expertise. Potential bias existed in interview responses resulting from feebly articulated research questions as well as reflexivity, where the interviewee presented what the interviewer anticipated or wished to know. The investigative inquirer had the responsibility to pinpoint essential themes and frequency in interview responses, which could be detrimental to the interview (Yin, 2016).

I used the interview protocol (see Appendix C) as an instrument of inquiry with respect to specific questions relating to the purpose of this study, per the recommendation of Merriam and Grenier (2019). I also utilized the interview protocol as an instrument of conversation regarding the development and implementation of succession planning

strategies in faith-based nonprofit organizations. The structured interview protocol enhanced the quality and insights of investigative interviews with participants (Castillo-Montoya, 2016).

Yin (2016) asserted that effective utilization of the interview protocol enhanced the credibility of instruments and served as a critical aspect of data accuracy and quality. I used the interview protocol to improve data credibility, and I maintained consistency by utilizing the same sequence of interview questions for each participant. The development of the interview protocol that entailed a ten-step guide to the face-to-face interview was based on the description conveyed in the interview protocol of Byers (2016). Byers (2016) used a ten-step interview protocol as an instrument of inquiry of specific questions that related to the purpose of her study on succession planning strategies in faith-based organizations.

Step one entailed introducing the researcher to the participant and also thanking them for the voluntary acceptance to participate in the interview. Step two necessitated telling the participant the purpose of the interview: to ask questions relating to effective succession planning strategies they implemented to attain organizational goals and mission success.

In step three, I described the rationale for participation in the interview: served as a means for the provision of practical knowledge for faith-based nonprofit leaders, to utilize as a guide for successful succession planning strategies in attaining organizational goals and mission. The interview participation also enabled a partial fulfillment for the Doctor of Philosophy at Walden University. Step four entailed a description of the

benefits that accrued from participation in the interview. The study's benefit hinged on gaining a more profound understanding of succession planning strategies for sustainable faith-based nonprofits.

Step five conveyed ethical discussion on the importance of protection of participants' privacy and the seeking of permission to record the interview. In step six, I discussed confidentiality: the interview content would be confidential, and data would be subject to password protection. After five years, the interview data would be subject to destruction. The interview data would be used solely for the study.

Step seven entailed asking participant if he or she needed clarification of any points discussed. Step eight conveyed a transition to interview, and the interview commenced in step nine by the researcher asking probing questions. Lastly, step ten was a wrap-up (See Appendix C).

Setting up the interview protocol was an avenue to help the qualitative interviewer in preparing for the interview and ensuring that he or she not only knew what to ask generally but also determined the essential information that the researcher was attempting to procure (Castillo-Montoya, 2016). The interview protocol helped ensure that qualitative interviewers remembered essential points they wanted to or must address throughout the interview. Interview protocols served in reminding the interviewer to communicate important information to the interviewee, such as stating (or reiterating) the purpose of the interview, what would transpire to the data procured, and any confidentiality concerns (Castillo-Montoya, 2016).

Interview protocol enabled the interviewer to prudently decide how best to utilize the limited time available for an interview (Patton, 2015). The interview protocol allowed the researcher to interview several different people more systematically and comprehensively by delimiting in advance the issues to be explored. An interview protocol was essential in conducting face-to-face interviews because it facilitated the focused interactions between interviewer and interviewee while allowing interviewees' perspectives to emerge. With an interview protocol in hand, the researcher had an agenda which would facilitate the administration of the interview (Patton, 2015).

**Field Test**

Field tests are strategies for checking the validity of a data collection instrument (University of Phoenix, 2015). I conducted a field test (see Appendix D) to ensure the appropriateness of the study's interview questions in a bid to establishing content validity. I field tested the interview protocol by strategically selecting two management experts to provide feedback on the appropriateness of the interview questions based on the recommendation of Budworth, Latham, and Manroop (2015). The field test entailed giving the study's research questions, purpose statement, and specific problem, along with the interview questions, to the two management experts to provide feedback on the appropriateness of the interview questions. In the inquiries section of the field test (see Appendix D), I asked four questions for each of the two management experts to provide feedback:

1. Are the interview questions for the study understandable?
2. Can the interview questions be used to answer the research questions?

3. Are the interview questions appropriate, given the design?
4. Are the interview questions appropriate, given the prospective participants of the study?

Both management experts replied in the affirmative to each of the four questions.

**Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection**

The primary step that enabled gaining of access to the faith-based nonprofit leaders of the participating organizations was through the email invitation (See Appendix B). First, I used a mailing list of the faith-based nonprofit organizations to purposefully select faith-based nonprofit leaders who might be willing to participate in the research. I obtained the emailing lists of the two faith-based nonprofit organizations from their websites.

Google search strategy facilitated the selection of faith-based nonprofits that partnered in the research. The human service provider organizations performed food aid service to the communities of operation. The keywords used for the generation of the organizations for selection to partner in the research were "food aid faith-based nonprofits" and "human service providers." The two organizations have been serving free food to their communities of operation for over thirty years.

The invitation for research participation email enabled recruitment of participants. Individuals who were interested in participating in the study assented to the informed consent form that accompanied the invitation and returned the consented informed consent form via email to the researcher. I also requested the primary participants to recruit their acquaintances/colleagues to participate in the study to enable sufficient

participants for the attainment of data saturation. I communicated with participants and informed them of their responsibilities and rights in the process of the research via e-mail.

The researcher's establishment of a good bond of affinity with participants was essential in interview research (Frankfort-Nachmias et al., 2015). Good fieldwork was contingent on the discovery of social relations, as building working relationships with participants enabled the achievement of good rapport with participants (Frankfort-Nachmias et al., 2015). Comparative case study could be successful when researchers establish good bond of affinity with participants in a manner that inspired the participants to share their real experiences in the phase of data collection. Collection of valid data through the development of rapport and trust building with research participants was essential in qualitative research (Northouse, 2018). I explained to the participants that they were free to withdraw from the research at any time they deemed fit.

**Data Collection**

The primary data collection strategy of this study was open-ended, in-depth questions through face-to-face semi-structured interviews and telephone interviews. Interview protocol (see Appendix C) was an essential interview guide in the study. The purpose of the interview data collection was to enable the answering of the study's central research question and evaluation of the outcome (Sulton & Austin, 2015). The primary data collection from participants was in an interactive setting, to allow for exploration of participants' perspectives. I collected data from participants to the point of data saturation. Participants were free to exit the research at any time they deemed fit.

Qualitative comparative case study researchers used wide-ranging data collection techniques; face-to-face interviews were a superlatively effective technique of data collection (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2019; Duncan & Fiske, 2015; Roghanizad, & Bohns, 2017). Utilization of in-depth interview questions enabled a researcher to interrelate closely with participants, to procure enriched valuable data with unique descriptions of the research participants' perceptions (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2019) (see Appendix A). Responses by interviewees were valuable in qualitative comparative case study because the interest of the researcher was an exploration of participants' perceptions of the phenomenon (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2019).

I utilized the telephone to interview participants whenever in-person interviews prove to be logistically challenging or impractical. The telephone interview has been proven to be cost and time effective because there would not be a need to travel, and interviews could fit into daily work (Zhang, Kuchinke, Wound, Velten, & Margraf, 2017). Telephone interview enabled an interviewee to communicate with the interviewer comfortably without tension.

Telephone or in-person interviews enabled the interviewer to ask follow-up questions from the interviewee when the need arose (Oltmann, 2016; Zhang et al., 2017). In-person interviews enabled the interviewee to focus on the interview. The face-to-face interview has been proven beyond reasonable doubt to be 34 times more effective than electronic mail interview (Roghanizad & Bohns, 2017). E-mails would deprive the researcher of instantaneous follow-up questions for respondents' clarifications (Victor,

2017). Face-to-face interviews facilitated the creation of a lively interactive setting (Zhang et al., 2017).

The interviews took place in a setting that was consensual to the interviewee and interviewer, such as at after work hours at their workplace. I set up the interviews via email communication. Qualitative researchers should focus on understanding the research setting instead of engaging in speculation and control of the setting (Victor, 2017). In qualitative research, instrumentation might seem to be of little value except the researcher used specific strategies in support of the open-ended interviews.

Qualitative researchers recommended the utilization of procedural actions, for instance, recording of interviews with audio, note taking, and transcription of the interviews (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2019; Yin, 2018, 2016). Research interviewing required that the researcher should make advanced preparation for the recording and transcription of interviews (Yin, 2016). I audio-recorded the face-to-face interviews. I used the telephone whenever it was impractical to do the face-to-face interviews. Participants could exit the investigative inquiry at any time they deemed fit.

The study's primary data consisted of interview transcripts. I transcribed the audio recording of the interviews. I employed member-checking strategy for the establishment of content validity and advancement of accuracy, credibility, and validity of the study. After interviewing participants and synthesizing interview data, I provided emailed a version of the synthesis to each participant and inquired from participants if the synthesis represented their responses. I also provided participants with the analysis of the interview data and requested for their comments on the adequacy of the analyzed interview data. If

a participant failed to return their transcripts, I sent an email reminding them and assumed that the transcript was correct if they did not return it in a week. I collected and analyzed data for Organization A and Organization B separately and triangulated as well as compare the results of the two organizations.

## Data Analysis

The data analysis of the study comprised of acquisition, validation, storage, protection, and processing of required data to guarantee accessibility, reliability, and appropriateness of the data's use in the research (Quinlan et al., 2019). Qualitative data procedures comprised data management, reading, description, categorization, and interpretation of results (Quinlan et al., 2019). The study's primary data consisted of in-depth interview transcriptions. Researchers suggested that the investigative inquirer be familiar with interview transcriptions through working with recorded in-depth interview data (Janesick, 2015; Quinlan et al., 2019). I familiarized myself with interview data by operationalizing recorded interview data.

### Constant Comparative Method

The constant comparative method is a strategy of coding data inductively for categorizing and comparing qualitative data for analysis (Glaser,1965). In constant comparative method, the investigative inquirer coded and analyzed data in a bid to develop concepts; by repeatedly comparing specific units and incidents in the data, the researcher refined these concepts, identified their properties, explored their bond of affinity to each other, and integrated them into an intelligible explanatory model (Glaser,

1965; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Data analysis was by the constant comparative method that enabled the identification of emerging themes for each of the two nonprofits.

I conducted an audio record interview with the first interviewee, transcribed the interview, analyzed the interview transcript beginning with coding inductively, and identified themes related to the study's research question that emerged from the interview and kept the analyzed data aside. I used color coding manually for matching patterns that enabled easy identification of themes related to succession planning strategies based on the recommendation of Cole and Harbour (2015). I matched and clustered similar expressions and identified relevant themes from the interview transcription content.

Next, I conducted an interview with the second participant, transcribed and analyzed it, and then compared it to the analysis of the first interview in a bid to creating a composite analysis of the themes related to the research question from both interviews. I then had a composite analysis with a list of themes that emerged from both interviews, as well as a list of themes that emerged from only one of the interviews.

Next, I conducted an interview with the third participant, transcribed and analyzed it. I compared the generated themes to the composite of the first two interviews and created a new composite of three interviews with themes that emerges from all three interviews at the top of the list of themes, seconded by themes that were generated from only one of the three interviews. I repeated the data collection and analysis sequence until I got to a point where each new interview did not yield novel main themes – point of data saturation (Olson, McAllister, Grinnell, Walters, & Appunn, 2016).

In the end, I had a composite list of themes in order of highest frequency to least frequency from each of the two organizations. The themes with highest frequencies best explained the phenomenon of succession planning strategies in each of the two organizations. The data analysis for Organization A and Organization B were separate and I triangulated the two results as well as compared the two organizations.

### Data Saturation

Data saturation is reached when new data tend to be superfluous of data already collected (Aldiabat & Le Navenec, 2018; Saunders et al., 2018). Data saturation referred to a point in data collection when the investigative inquirer commenced hearing the same comments repeatedly; that implied the time that data collection terminated to begin data analysis of the information the researcher has collected.

### Discrepant Cases

I was open to discrepant cases in this study, given that an interviewee's perceptions that contrasted the primary research evidence enabled distinctive and subtle analysis (Merriam & Grenier, 2019). The explication of the discrepant case would strengthen the overall explanation of the typical case (Merriam & Grenier, 2019).

## Issues of Trustworthiness

I reviewed/assessed all sources of useable information in this study scrupulously and impartially, to ensure quality. Evaluation of scholarly research and work with divergent viewpoints of succession planning experts objectively, to enable unbiased academic research was vital in this qualitative research (Torry, 2017). The ability of a

researcher to critically review the work of other researchers to enable the identification of a gap in the literature might form a basis for a new study (Victor, 2017).

Researchers recognized deficiencies in the work of scholars by reference to numerous inadequacies to enable robustness of the need to embark a new study (Victor, 2017). Precise detection of shortcomings in other scholarly works/studies enabled the need to embark on this investigative inquiry. Focus on areas that other researchers ignored eased the consideration on how a future investigative study might fill the current gap, and contribution to scholarly literature (Victor, 2017).

Researching with diverse and even opposing viewpoints of scholars on succession planning enabled the recognition of areas that investigative inquirers ignored, thus facilitating the establishment of a gap in the literature for developing new research (Miles et al., 2014). Researchers required expertise for assessing research methods systematically, to wit: operational knowledge regarding development of hypothesis, testing procedures, sampling techniques, study design, instrumentation, data collection and management, statistics (Al-Atiyyat & Naga, 2014), and interpretation of results (Calabrò, Minichilli, Amore, & Brogi, 2017; Sarma, 2015). I utilized these skillsets in this study. In a bid to establishing internal validity, researchers should ascertain whether vicissitudes in a dependent variable generated a change in the independent variable (Frankfort-Nachmias et al., 2015).

Frankfort-Nachmias et al. (2015) contended that the investigative inquirer's determination for validity attainment was crucial to research design and implementation; in the circumstance, therefore, internal validity was indispensable in research design. The

researcher's choice of design and threat to validity assessment were critical to the successful completion of a study. I implemented strategies to guarantee external and internal validity in this investigative study, to enable the achievement of a good quality research product. The study's internal validity strategies included prolonged and quality engagement with research participants, triangulation, and member checking. I endeavored to accomplish credibility, dependability, transferability, and confirmability in this research.

**Credibility**

Credibility in qualitative research referred to the extent to which the research report was accurate and appropriate, based on the agreement level of research participants and the investigative inquirer (Abdalla, Oliveira, Azevedo, & Gonzalez, **2018**; Stewart, Gapp, & Harwood, 2017). In this investigative inquiry, I used semi-structured interviews because it facilitated flexibility with participants for a better interactive rapport in an informal setting. Good rapport between researcher and participants facilitated a smooth flow of information sharing and illumined interviewees' perspectives on the phenomenon of study (Abdalla et al., 2018). The study's credibility was also enhanced by data triangulation, field test, and member checking (Birt, Scott, Cavers, Campbell, & Walter, 2016).

**Transferability**

Transferability referred to the extent to which qualitative research findings could be transferrable or generalized to other settings or contexts (Korstjens & Moser, 2017; Victor, 2017). In qualitative research, transferability was mainly the responsibility of the

individual who was generalizing. Thick description referred to an expression that characterized paying attention to contextual details to the observation and interpretation of social meaning in qualitative research. I used thick description to enhance transferability in this research.

Historiographically, Ryle (1949) was the first scholar to use the expression "thick descriptions," and subsequently, Geertz (1973) applied it in ethnographic research. Lincoln and Guba (1985) delineated that thick description referred to a strategy for achieving external validity of some sort. By providing adequate descriptive details on a phenomenon, an individual could appraise the extent to which a study's conclusions could be transferable to other settings, times, people, and situations (Aguirre, 2017; Ridder, 2017). I provided in-depth account of descriptive data, such as the context in which the research would be conducted, research setting, sample, sample size, sample strategy, demographic, inclusion and exclusion criteria, interview procedure, interview questions, and interview protocol to enable transferability judgment by potential appliers.

**Dependability**

Dependability was indispensable to trustworthiness given that it characterized the establishment of consistency and repeatability of an investigative inquiry's findings, thus enabling the reliability of the research (Abdalla et al., 2018; Gill, Gill, & Roulet, 2018). I employed an audit trail to establish dependability in this research. An audit trail entailed a transparent description of steps taken in the research from commencement to the development and reporting of research results.

## Confirmability

Confirmability referred to the degree to which research findings were contingent on the participants but not on the bias of the investigative inquirer, the researcher's interest, or motivation (Miles et al., 2014). Enhancement of confirmability facilitated objectivity of the study (Korstjens & Moser, 2017). I ensured that the research findings emerged from the data for confirmability by relying on participants' perspectives.

## Ethical Procedures

The study was conducted only after procuring the appropriate authorization from the Walden University Institutional Review Board. Walden University's approval number for this study was 12-04-19-0182678. Research participants' protection was indispensable to the successful completion of this research. Qualitative researchers recognized the ethical considerations of informed consent; confidentiality and privacy; gains and overheads of the research; harms and threats to the research; integrity and excellence; conflicts and quandaries, and utilization and misrepresentation of research findings (Miles et al., 2014; Olesen, Amin, & Mahadi, 2018; Smith & McGannon, 2018). These ethical concerns were thought-provoking as regards to how the experienced and novice researcher alike could design their studies with practical strategies, to address ethical considerations and enabled the generation of rich data.

Researchers suggested the setting up of research participant agreement to enable the development of a framework that could facilitate the ethical protection of participants (Blaikie & Priest, 2019; Miles et al., 2014; Saunders & Townsend, 2016). The informed consent included information on the timeframe and effort of participants' involvement in

the research and data collection type (Miles et al., 2014). The informed consent encompassed a statement on voluntarism of research participation, designer of the study, confidential treatment of participants' research materials, and benefits of participation in the research (Miles et al., 2014). Based on the recommendation of Miles et al. (2014), the informed consent disclosed the purpose of the study, potential risks of participation, type of data to be collected, and the right of participants to discontinue participation in the research at any time.

The Walden University Review Board's approval number for the research was stated on the consent form for participants' reference. I incorporated the participant agreement framework in my interaction with research participants to facilitate lucid communication of the study's expectations to participants. The goal of the informed consent procedure was to provide adequate information so that participants could make an informed decision regarding whether they would participate in the research or not or keep on participating in the study. Participants received the informed consent through email and returned it to me through email.

The pragmatic approach to protecting research participants in this study entailed honesty with participants and clear communication of the anticipated challenges and expectations of the study to participants. I treated all information from participants confidentially and carefully and respected the participants' privacy. I adopted the principle of zero-harm to participants in the course of the research based on the recommendation of Miles et al. (2014). I made conscious efforts to uphold the zero-harm

to participants through strategies that could facilitate the protection of the participants ethically, including respect and maintenance of confidentiality of the participants' data.

Strategies to achieve confidentiality included creating folders designed for research data storage on my laptop and storing the audio data from the audio recorder as well as all other research materials including data transcriptions in the research folders. I used a coding structure that comprised of participants' first name and surname. Data was subject to password protection.

The password-protected research data was backed-up on my external hard disk. The interview data was solely for the study. The research data including audio recordings and related materials stored in folders on the laptop computer and external hard drive would be subject to destruction after five years of completing the research with the aid of Permanent Eraser, a software application designed for the removal of data from storage devices (Rutgers, 2019; University of Virginia, 2019).

## Summary

In Chapter 3, I discussed the study's method of inquiry and design. In this investigative inquiry, I explored the succession planning strategies that faith-based nonprofit leaders implemented to enable success in the accomplishment of organizational goals and mission. The comparative case study approach that accentuated the perspectives of faith-based nonprofit leaders, was the most suitable design given that it aligned with the purpose of the study.

In-depth semi-structured interviews were the sources of data. The interviews entailed open-ended, semi-structured questions. The sampling strategy was purposeful

snowball sampling (Palinkas et al., 2015) to generate a sample of five faith-based nonprofit leaders from Organization A and Organization B respectively that enabled data saturation.

I commenced the data analysis by coding the data from each interview transcript inductively and identified themes related to the study's research question that emerged from the interview transcript. I used color coding manually for matching patterns to enable easy identification of themes related to succession planning strategies. I matched and clustered similar expressions and identified relevant themes from the interview transcription content. I used the constant comparative method to identify emerging themes for each of the two nonprofits. In a final step, I compared the themes of each nonprofit to develop the final results of the study.

I validated research results through the use of multiple sources of data, peer review, and member checking. Confidentiality assurances might allow for participants' protection with regard to the information that they provided in the research. This procedural methodology might facilitate an understanding on succession planning strategies that faith-based nonprofit leaders implemented, to succeed in the achievement of organizational goals and mission.

# Chapter 4: Results

In Chapter 4, I present the results of the study. The purpose of the study was to compare the effective succession planning strategies that faith-based nonprofit leaders in Maryland and Pennsylvania implemented to enable success in achieving organizational goals and mission. Consequently, I utilized a comparative case study design. The overarching research question that served as guidance in the study was: How do succession planning strategies of faith-based nonprofit leaders in Maryland and Pennsylvania compare in their ability to enable success in achieving organizational goals and mission?

The sub-questions were:

1. What succession planning strategies do faith-based nonprofit leaders in Maryland and Pennsylvania implement to enable achievement of organizational goals and mission?
2. How does the implementation of succession planning strategies help faith-based nonprofit leaders to attain organizational goals and mission?
3. What succession planning strategies, if any, work best to achieve goals and mission?

The organization of the chapter shows the field test, study setting, participant demographics, data collection, data analysis, evidence of trustworthiness, and results.

## Field Test

I conducted a field test (see Appendix D) to ensure the appropriateness of the study's interview questions to enable establishment of content validity as recommended by University of Phoenix (2015). I field tested the interview protocol by strategically selecting two management experts to provide feedback on the appropriateness of the interview questions based on the recommendation of Budworth, Latham, and Manroop (2015). The field test entailed giving the study's research questions, purpose statement, and specific problem along with the interview questions, to two management experts to provide feedback on the appropriateness of the interview questions.

In the inquiries section of the field test (see Appendix D), I asked four questions for each of the two management experts to provide feedback:

1. Are the interview questions for the study understandable?
2. Can the interview questions be used to answer the research questions?
3. Are the interview questions appropriate, given the design?
4. Are the interview questions appropriate, given the prospective participants of the study?

Both management experts replied in the affirmative to each of the four questions.

## Research Setting

Research participants that responded to the invitation for participation in the study were leaders of two food-aid faith-based nonprofit organizations in Maryland and Pennsylvania. The criteria for selection of participants included faith-based nonprofit leaders experienced in the development and implementation of succession plan. I

specified the participation criteria in the enlistment tool. All the faith-based nonprofit leaders that participated in the research met the inclusion criteria of the study with experience in succession planning strategies and have served in their organizations for at least five years. The researcher and participants' consensual agreement to conduct the face-to-face interviews in an office enhanced privacy. The setting of the interview scene was serene, in a low-density population area, and under the auspices of the mode of goodness for enhanced focus (Prabhupada, 2018). The criteria for selection of participants included faith-based nonprofit leaders experienced in the development and implementation of succession plan. I specified the participation criteria in the enlistment tool. Interviewees participated in their comfort settings.

## Participant Demographics for Organization A

The participants comprised of varied ethnic background and races to wit: Caucasian, African American, and Asian American. The research participants in Organization A consisted of two (33%) of the female faith-based nonprofit leaders and four (67%) of the male faith-based nonprofit leaders (see Table 4.1). One of the two female participants was an African American whereas one was an Asian American. Of the four male participants, one was a Caucasian, two were Asian American, and one was an African American. Of the six participants that participated in Organization A, two (33%) were board members, three (50%) were directors, and one (17%) was a chief executive.

Table 1

*Coding, Demographics, and Ethnicities of Organization A Participants*

| Participant | Gender | Leadership Level | Ethnicity |
|---|---|---|---|
| CS | Male | Board Member | Caucasian |
| DN | Male | Director | African American |
| KS | Female | Director | African American |
| NC | Male | Director | Asian American |
| PP | Male | Chief Executive | Asian American |
| RR | Female | Director | Asian American |

**Participant Demographics for Organization B**

Research participants comprised of three or 50% females and three 50% male faith-based nonprofit leaders in Organization B (see Table 4.2). The three females that participated in the Organization B constituted of one or 17% White American or Caucasian and two or 33% Asian American. The three-male faith-based nonprofit leaders participants constituted of one or 17% White American and two or 33% Asian American. Of the six participants interviewed, two or 33% were board members, three or 50% directors, and one or 17% chief executive officer.

Table 2

*Coding, Demographics, and Ethnicities of Organization B Participants*

| Participant | Gender | Leadership Level | Ethnicities |
|---|---|---|---|
| AK | Male | Director | African American |
| AR | Female | Board Member | Asian American |
| DD | Male | Chief Executive | Caucasian |
| GT | Female | Director | Caucasian |
| PD | Female | Director | Asian American |
| SD | Male | Board Member | Asian American |

## Data Collection

In December 2019, I enlisted the primary participants for the research that afterward sent me names/contacts of their professional colleagues and acquaintances interested in the study to enable emailing them the invitation along with informed consent form. The primary participants were enlisted through email from the participating organizations' websites. The interview settings were face-to-face, or telephone interviews based on the preference of the participant.

I interviewed 12 faith-based nonprofit leaders: six from Organization A and six from Organization B respectively and attained data saturation. Five of the interviews were conducted via telephone because of participants' challenges regarding

transportation to interview location. I learned new ideas with each interviewee on succession planning strategies in faith-based nonprofit organizations.

In this investigative study, I utilized purposeful snowball sampling in the recruitment of participants – faith-based nonprofit leaders – to enable the contribution of meaningful data given that they were the developers and implementers of succession planning strategies in their organizations. I reached out to the primary participants by emailing them the study's participation invitation and informed consent form through their organizations' websites. On December 4, 2019 I e-mailed an invitation for participation in the research to the participants (see Appendix B) along with the consent form. The individuals who decided to participate in the research provided their approval in the consent form via email to wit, "I consent." I then set up the interviews through email and conducted the face-to-face and telephone interviews with the volunteers. The face-to-face interviews were conducted at the interview location in an office during their break time.

I built confidence with the participants through explication of the study's goals and objectives and response to questions on participation that they posed to me specifically about the process of the interview. Majority of the participants' questions hinged on the timeframe of the process of the interview in which I responded that it would be of about 25 minutes duration. The average time for the interviews was 20 minutes per session, and the lengthiest interview was 32 minutes due to the low speaking speed of the interviewee. In broad-spectrum, participants deemed the research necessary

and cooperatively and willingly shared their perspectives on succession planning strategies in faith-based nonprofits.

I used semi-structured open-ended interviews which enabled follow-up questions that clarified points that were ambiguous. I set up the interview questions prior to the interview day which served as interview guide. I modified the interview questions based on the participants' responses. The recorder in this research interviews was iPhone employing the service Voice Memos for in-person interviews. The transcription of interview audio files was made possible through the use of TranscribeMe software application. After perfecting the audio files transcriptions, I spent much time to replay every one of the audio files and compared the content to the transcribed files to corroborate the interview transcripts' accurateness and wholeness.

## Data Analysis

Data analysis included acquisition, validation, storage, protection, and processing of data to enable accessibility, reliability, and appropriateness of the data's use in the research (Quinlan et al., 2019). Qualitative data procedures comprised data management, reading, description, categorization, and interpretation (Quinlan et al., 2019). The study's primary data consisted of in-depth interview transcriptions. Researchers suggested that the investigative inquirer be familiar with interview transcriptions through working with recorded in-depth interview data (Janesick, 2015; Quinlan et al., 2019). I listened to the recorded interviews to be familiar with the content.

The constant comparative method is a strategy of coding data inductively for categorizing and comparing qualitative data for analysis (Glaser,1965). In constant

comparative method, the investigative inquirer coded and analyzed data in a bid to develop concepts; by repeatedly comparing specific units and incidents in the data, the researcher refined these concepts, identified their properties, explored their bond of affinity to each other, and integrated them into an intelligible explanatory model (Glaser, 1965; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Data analysis was by the constant comparative method that enabled the identification of emerging themes for each of the two nonprofits.

**Organization A.** I utilized constant comparative analysis to ease coding and analysis of each interview data on Microsoft Excel spreadsheet. I coded participants' names in letters to avoid personal identification, in pursuance to the privacy provisions compliance of the consent form that was provided to the participants. I used a coding structure that comprised of participants' first name and forename. Consequently, I coded the participants, to wit: CS, DN, KK, NC, PP, and RR. Table 1 displays the coding and demographics of the participants. Table 2 displays the ethnicities of the participants.

I conducted and recorded the first interview with interviewee CS, transcribed and analyzed the interview transcript beginning with coding, identified themes related to the study's research question that emerged from the interview, and I kept the analysis aside. I used color coding manually for matching patterns that enabled easy identification of themes related to succession planning strategies based on the recommendation of Cole and Harbour (2015). I matched and clustered similar expressions and identified relevant themes from the interview transcription content. Next, I conducted the second interview with interviewee DN, transcribed and analyzed it, and then compared it to the analysis of the first interview in a bid to creating a composite analysis of the themes related to the

research from both interviews.

I then had a composite analysis with a list of themes that emerged from both interviews, as well as a list of themes that emerged from only one of the interviews. Next, I conducted the third interview with interviewee KS, transcribed and analyzed it, and compared the generated themes to the composite of the first two interviews and created a novel composite of the three interviews with themes that emerged from all three interviews at the top of the list of themes, seconded by themes that were generated from only one of the three interviews. Next, I interviewed the fourth participant NC, transcribed and analyzed it, and compared the generated themes to the composite of the first three interviews and created a novel composite of the four interviews with themes that emerged from all four interviews at the top of the list of themes, seconded by themes that were generated from only one of the four interviews.

Following, I interviewed the fifth participant PP, transcribed and analyzed it, and compared the generated themes to the composite of the first four interviews and created a novel composite of the five interviews with themes that emerged from all five interviews at the top of the list of themes, seconded by themes that were generated from only one of the five interviews. Following, I interviewed the sixth participant RR. Then, followed the transcription and analysis of the transcription content. Subsequently, I compared the generated themes to the composite of the first five interviews and created a new composite of the six interviews with themes that emerged from all six interviews at the top of the list of themes, seconded by themes that were generated from only one of the six interviews.

After the sixth interview, data saturation was attained - a point where each new interview did not yield new main themes (Olson, McAllister, Grinnell, Walters, & Appunn, 2016). At the end, I had a composite list of themes in order of highest frequency to least frequency from Organization A. The themes with highest frequencies best explained the phenomenon of succession planning strategies in faith-based nonprofit Organization A.

Data saturation is reached when new data tend to be superfluous of data already collected (Aldiabat & Le Navenec, 2018; Saunders et al., 2018). Data saturation referred to a point in data collection when the investigative inquirer commenced hearing the same comments repeatedly; that implied the time that data collection terminated to begin data analysis of the information the researcher has collected.

**Organization B.** I used constant comparative analysis to facilitate coding and analysis of each interview data on Microsoft Excel spreadsheet. I coded participants' names in letters to prevent personal identification, in pursuance to the privacy provisions compliance of the consent form that was provided to the participants. I utilized a coding structure that constituted of the first name and surname of participants. So, I coded the participants as: AK, AR, DD, GT, PD, and SD. Table 3 displays the coding and demographics of the Organization B participants. Table 4 displays the ethnicities of the Organization B participants.

I conducted and recorded the first interview with interviewee AK, transcribed and analyzed the interview transcript beginning with coding, identified themes related to the study's research question that emerged from the interview, and I kept the analysis aside. I

used color coding manually for matching patterns that enabled easy identification of themes related to succession planning strategies based on the recommendation of Cole and Harbour (2015). I matched and clustered similar expressions and identified relevant themes from the interview transcription content.

Next, I conducted the second interview with interviewee AR, transcribed and analyzed it, and then compared it to the analysis of the first interview in a bid to creating a composite analysis of the themes related to the research from both interviews. I then had a composite analysis with a list of themes that emerged from both interviews, as well as a list of themes that emerged from only one of the interviews. Next, I conducted the third interview with interviewee DD, transcribed and analyzed it, and compared the generated themes to the composite of the first two interviews and created a novel composite of the three interviews with themes that emerged from all three interviews at the top of the list of themes, seconded by themes that were generated from only one of the three interviews.

Following, I interviewed the fourth participant GT, transcribed and analyzed it, and compared the generated themes to the composite of the first three interviews and created a novel composite of the four interviews with themes that emerged from all four interviews at the top of the list of themes, seconded by themes that were generated from only one of the four interviews. Then, I interviewed the fifth participant PD, transcribed and analyzed it, and compared the generated themes to the composite of the first four interviews and created a novel composite of the five interviews with themes that emerged

from all five interviews at the top of the list of themes, seconded by themes that were generated from only one of the five interviews.

Following, I interviewed the sixth participant SD, transcribed and analyzed the transcription content, and compared the generated themes to the composite of the first five interviews and created a new composite of the six interviews with themes that emerged from all six interviews at the top of the list of themes, seconded by themes that were generated from only one of the six interviews. After the sixth interview, data saturation was attained - a point where each new interview did not yield new main themes (Olson, McAllister, Grinnell, Walters, & Appunn, 2016). At the end, I had a composite list of themes in order of highest frequency to least frequency from Organization A as well as Organization B.

The themes with highest frequencies best explained the phenomenon of succession planning strategies in faith-based nonprofit organizations. I then compared and triangulated the results from Organization A with Organization B revealing that the succession planning strategies of Organization A and Organization B compared 100% based on the three common themes that emerged from the data analysis of both organizations.

## Evidence of Trustworthiness

I implemented the trustworthiness strategies stated in Chapter 3 for the study's credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.

## Credibility

In this investigative inquiry, I used semi-structured interviews because it facilitated flexibility with participants for a better interactive rapport in an informal setting. Good rapport between researcher and participants facilitated a smooth flow of information sharing and illumined interviewees' perspectives on succession planning strategies in faith faith-based nonprofits. The study's credibility was also enhanced by data triangulation, field test, and member checking as recommended by Birt et al. (2016). Credibility in qualitative research referred to the extent to which the research report was accurate and appropriate, based on the agreement level of research participants and the investigative inquirer (Abdalla, Oliveira, Azevedo, & Gonzalez, 2018**;** Stewart, Gapp, & Harwood, 2017).

## Transferability

I used thick description to enhance transferability in this research. By providing adequate descriptive details on succession planning strategies in nonprofits, an individual could appraise the extent to which the study's conclusions could be transferable to other settings, times, people, and situations as suggested by Aguirre (2017) and Ridder (2017). I provided in-depth account of descriptive data, such as the context in which the research would be conducted, research setting, sample, sample size, sample strategy, demographic, inclusion and exclusion criteria, interview procedure, interview questions, and interview protocol to enable transferability judgment by potential appliers.

### Dependability

I utilized an audit trail to facilitate the establishment of dependability in this research as recommended by Haven and Grootel (2019) by providing a transparent description of steps taken in the study from commencement to the development and reporting of research results.

### Confirmability

I ensured that the research findings generated from the data for confirmability by relying on participants' viewpoints as recommended by Korstjens and Moser (2017). Confirmability referred to the degree to which research findings were contingent on the participants but not on the bias of the investigative inquirer, the researcher's interest, or motivation (Miles et al., 2014).

## Study Results

### Research Question 1

Research Question 1 was "How do the succession planning strategies of faith-based nonprofit leaders in Maryland and Pennsylvania compare in their ability to achieve organizational goals and their mission?" Data analysis of interview transcriptions of both Organization A in Maryland and Organization B in Pennsylvania respectively resulted in the emergence of three common themes; namely, investment in human capital, retention of leadership pipeline talent, as well as trust and empowerment of potential leaders (see Table 3). In other words, the succession planning strategies that faith-based nonprofit leaders implemented in Maryland and Pennsylvania compared 100% in their ability to achieve organizational goals and mission.

Table 3

*Themes and Percentage Frequency from Organization A and Organization B Showing How Their Succession Planning Strategies Compared*

| Theme | Percentage - Org. A | Percentage – Org. B |
|---|---|---|
| Human Capital Investment | 100% | 100% |
| Leadership Pipeline Talent Retention | 83% | 67% |
| Trust and Empowering Potential Leaders | 67% | 83% |

**Research Question 2**

Research Question 2 was: "What succession planning strategies do faith-based nonprofit leaders in Maryland and Pennsylvania implement to enable achievement of organizational goals and mission?" Question 2 was intended to elicit from participants the strategies that faith-based profit leaders developed and implemented to accomplish organizational goals and mission.

**Organization A**. Succession planning strategies that emerged from the data analysis of Organization A included human capital investment, trust and empowerment of potential leaders, and retention of leadership pipeline talent. Participants CS, DN, NC, KS, PP, and RR or 100% of Organization A recognized that human capital investment is a component of succession planning strategies of faith-based nonprofit leaders of Maryland (see Table 3). CS asserted that investing in professional development of faith-based nonprofit employees led to greater job satisfaction and focus on succession

plans.

Furthermore, CS asserted that investment in employees' professional development enable the acquisition of the requisite theoretical and practical knowledge, competencies, and skill to lead change when the incumbent leaders allowed such workers to serve in leadership positions. According to CS, senior leaders' mentoring of prospective leaders in preparation for taking up leadership was helpful in the implementation of succession planning strategies. Participant KS said that investment in professional development helped employees to improve their engagement in the implementation of succession planning strategies. Furthermore, KS said that investment in leadership development enabled enriched information flow throughout the faith-based nonprofit organization in the development and implementation of succession plan.

Participant DN said, "Volunteers and employees' knowledge, competencies, and skills enhanced through education and training helps in succession plans." According to DN, investment in education and training also enhanced faith-based nonprofit employees' engagement for sustained workforce quality in leadership development. Participant PP asserted, "Education and training enables talent development for succession plans as well as facilitates faith-based employees' job satisfaction for higher performance and leadership opportunities placement in faith-based nonprofits."

Participant PP said that professional development improved communication that allowed faith-based nonprofit leaders to discover employees and volunteers that were insufficiently equipped with communication skills and assisted them in remedying the situation for an enhanced succession plan. According to PP, the bond of affinities that

forged through a mentorship program led to enhanced lines of communication between superiors and subordinates that never would have existed otherwise in his organization.

Participant NC said that faith-based nonprofit leaders' provision of staff career advancement opportunities and investment in their development facilitated productive work engagement in succession plan implementation. Investment in human capital improved nonprofit organizational culture. According to participant NC, human capital investment enhanced employee satisfaction, engagement, and communication and so added value to overall corporate culture for succession plan implementation.

Participants CS, DN, NC, PP and RR or 83% of Organization A identified retention of leadership pipeline talent as a component of faith-based leaders' succession planning strategies in Maryland. Participant DN said: "The future leaders of the organization that results from implementing the leadership pipeline must be retained to fulfill the purpose of the leadership pipeline." Participants CS, DN, NC, and PP or 67% of Organization A asserted that trusting and empowering of potential leaders by incumbent leaders is a component of succession planning strategies of faith-based nonprofit leaders in Maryland for the accomplishment of organizational goals and mission.

Participant CS said that leaders of the faith-based organization must have the courage to trust and empower young potential leaders to facilitate a sustainable nonprofit leadership and services to their communities of operation. Participant PP asserted that incumbent leaders should enthusiastically be courageous in trusting and empowering employees with leadership competencies and aspirant leaders to enable a sense of

belonging that facilitates higher performance in the development and implementation of succession planning strategies in achieving the goals and mission of the organization.

**Organization B**. Succession planning strategies that emerged from the data analysis of Organization B included human capital investment, trust and empowerment of potential leaders, and retention of leadership pipeline talent.

AK, AR, DD, GT, PD, and SD (100% of the participants of Organization B) asserted that human capital investment facilitated succession plan for the achievement of organizational goals and mission. Participants AK and PD said that they used the agile application to facilitate the training of employees in competencies and skills development for the succession plan. Participant PD asserted that when faith-based staff attained improved strategic planning skills through training and education, they were more effective and happier in the execution of their services in the succession plan.

Participant GT posited that succession planning strategies included training a new hire with an eye toward the future and the organizational mission and goals. During the hiring process, the hiring manager needed to gauge the candidate's interest and commitment to the organization, as well as their personal, professional goals for the future. In doing so, the hiring manager would make an informed decision in hiring an individual whose individual goals aligned with the organizational goals, thus ensuring – or increasing the chances – that the candidate would stay in the organization for the long run and grow with the organization.

Additionally, GT said that provision of ongoing training and support to current employees, as well as maintaining accurate archives and training documents, facilitated

the succession planning process. “For instance, we try to maintain records and workflow documents of every one of our projects and save them in a shared platform, wherein various employees may access them.” Furthermore, GT asserted that in the event that an employee transitioned out of the organization, the onboarding and project workflow documents, served as a guide to the new employee, who would be able to perform duties with regard to said projects simply by reviewing the step-by-step processes as outlined in those documents, and with minimal supervision and training by other organizational employees.

Participant SD said that the faith-based employee benefited from higher earnings through education and training, and the human capital investment improved the nonprofit workers’ economy and facilitated focus for the succession planning engagement. SD asserted that investment in professional development enabled information sharing that facilitated the implementation of succession planning strategies. Participant DD said that shared information that helped in the implementation of succession planning strategies through the investment in education and training is a tool that experienced senior leaders had passed down to their trainees.

The data analysis showed that participants AK, DD, GT, PD, and SD, 83% of Organization B, identified trust in and potential leaders’ empowerment as a component of faith-based nonprofit leaders’ succession planning strategies in Pennsylvania. DD said: “Trusting relationship between management and employees as well as empowering prospective leaders helps employees to be at their best in the succession planning process.” Participant PD asserted that trusting the understudy and empowering them

plays a significant role in creating enthusiasm and high performance in the succession plans. SD said that from her nonprofit experience, the empowerment of prospective leaders has a positive and significant impact on employees' performance and alignment with the goals and mission of the organization for an effective succession plan.

Participants AK, DD, GT, PD, and SD 83% of Organization B said that retention of leadership pipeline talent added value to succession planning strategies of faith-based nonprofit leaders of Organization B in Pennsylvania. SD asserted that leaders of his organization in Pennsylvania implemented the leadership pipeline model and retained the leaders that accrued from the leadership pipeline implementation for effective succession plan.

**Research Question 3**

Research Question 3 was: **"**How does the implementation of succession planning strategies help faith-based nonprofit leaders to successfully attain organizational goals and mission?" Research Question 3 was meant to facilitate elicitation from participants regarding the ways that developing and implementing succession plans enhanced the accomplishment of the mission and goals of their organizations.

**Organization A**. In addressing research question 3, participants CS, DN, NC, KS, PP, and RR or 100% posited that the implementation of succession planning strategies to a great extent facilitated faith-based nonprofit organizational leaders in the execution of the mission and vision of their organization (see Table 4). For instance, participant PP said that with the implementation of succession planning strategies, the continuity of the organization is viable, and nonprofit leaders could continue to work to fulfill their organization's mission

Table 4

*Helpfulness of Strategy in Achieving Organizational Goals and Mission: Percentage Frequency from Organization A and Organization B*

| Succession Planning Strategy | Percentage - Org. A | Percentage – Org. B |
|---|---|---|
| Human Capital Investment | 100% | 100% |
| Leadership Pipeline Talent Retention | 100% | 83% |
| Trust and Empowering Potential leaders | 83% | 67% |

statement and vision. Participant CS said that strategic plans for leadership succession form a guidepost for the sustainability of organizations since effective leadership is the fulcrum of any organizational success.

**Organization B**. Participants AK, AR, DD, GT, PD, and SD or 100% said that the implementation of human capital investment facilitated faith-based nonprofit

organizational leaders in focused execution of their organization's mission and goals sustainably. GT said that in the event of a departure of an employee, succession plans facilitated uninterrupted running of operations. On the other hand, when there was interruption, delays, and other setbacks due to an employee's departure, the protracted time frame in the process of a new hire's onboarding, organizational leaders might find themselves in despair, as they have to spend time, money, and resources in covering the gap that was left behind by the former employee.

Furthermore, GT asserted that the remainder of the staff might suffer greatly, as they often have to cover cases and projects until a new hire came on board. According to GT:

> All this leads to frustration, a negative impact on interpersonal relationships, financial loss, and of course, a possible deviation from the organizational mission and goals, as the new goal becomes to find a new employee to cover the gap that was left behind.

GT posited that therefore, it is important to implement succession planning strategies, to ensure that the organizational leaders continue to focus on carrying out the organizational mission in an efficient and successful manner. Eighty-three percent of participants asserted that when implemented, trust and empowering of potential leaders helped in high performance and productivity in the accomplishment of organizational goals and mission. Sixty-seven percent of participants said that implementing leadership pipeline talent retention, facilitated higher rate of leadership development in pursuance to accomplishing organizational goals and mission.

**Research Question 4**

Research Question 4 was: "What succession planning strategies, if any, work best to achieve organizational goals and mission? Research Question 4 was to enable the provision of participants' perspectives on the successful strategies that best meet their needs regarding the sustainable accomplishment of the goals and mission of their organizations.

**Organization A.** In addressing research question 4, participants CS, DN, NC, KS, PP, and RR or 100% posited that human capital investment as well as retention of leadership pipeline talent worked best in enabling the achievement of organizational goals and mission (see Table 5).

Table 4

*Succession Planning Strategies that Work Best to Achieve Organizational Goals and Mission: Percentage Frequency from Organization A and Organization B*

| Succession Planning Strategy | Percentage – Org. A | Percentage – Org. B. |
|---|---|---|
| Human Capital Investment | 100% | 100% |
| Leadership Pipeline Talent Retention | 100% | |

**Organization B**. The data analysis of interview transcripts showed that in the attending to research question 4, participants AK, AR, DD, GT, PD, and SD (100%)

asserted that human capital investment worked best in facilitating the achievement of organizational goals and mission (see Table 5).

## Summary

In Chapter 4, I provided a description of the research execution and provided the results that emerged from the data analysis. Research Question 1 was designed to explore on how succession planning strategies of faith-based nonprofit leaders in Maryland and Pennsylvania compare in their ability to achieve organizational goals and their mission. I found from the data analysis of the interview transcripts of Organization A and Organization B that faith-based succession planning strategies in Maryland and Pennsylvania compared favorably at 100%.

Research Question 2 was intended to explore succession planning strategies that faith-based nonprofit leaders in Maryland and Pennsylvania implemented to enable achievement of organizational goals and mission. Analysis of the transcripts of interview data revealed the emergence of three common themes of succession planning strategies namely human capital investment, retention of leadership pipeline talent, as well as trust and empowerment of potential leaders from A and B organizations. Research Question 3 involved how the implementation of succession planning strategies facilitated faith-based nonprofit leaders to attain organizational goals and mission success.

The data analysis of interview transcriptions of Organization A in Maryland and Organization B in Pennsylvania showed that implementation of succession planning strategies to a great extent facilitated faith-based nonprofit organizational leaders in the execution of the mission and vision of their organizations sustainably. Research Question

4 was intended to elicit faith-based nonprofit leaders' succession planning strategies that best worked in facilitating the achievement of organizational goals and mission. The data analysis of interview transcriptions showed that human capital investment, as well as retention of leadership pipeline talent, worked best in enabling the achievement of organizational goals and mission for Organization A. In contrast, only human capital investment worked best in facilitating the achievement of organizational goals and mission for Organization B**.** Chapter 5 entail a discussion of the emerging themes with reference to the literature on succession planning strategies in faith-based nonprofit organizations in Maryland and Pennsylvania, recommendations, limitations of the study, and implications of the research.

# Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

The purpose of this qualitative study was to compare the effective succession planning strategies that faith-based nonprofit leaders in Maryland and Pennsylvania implemented to enable the attainment of their organizational goals and mission. In that connection, I detailed on how faith-based nonprofit leaders developed and implemented succession planning strategies for the accomplishment of their organizational goals and mission. The need for the study was to bridge the gap in leadership and organizational change literature in the area of succession planning from a comparative case study perspective.

I generated the following four research questions to facilitate guidance of the study:

1. How do the succession planning strategies of faith-based nonprofit leaders in Maryland and Pennsylvania compare in their ability to achieve organizational goals and their mission?
2. What succession planning strategies do faith-based nonprofit leaders implement to enable success in achieving their organizational goals and mission?
3. How does the implementation of succession planning strategies help faith-based nonprofit leaders to successfully attain organizational goals and mission?
4. What succession planning strategies, if any, work best to achieve organizational goals and mission?

## Interpretation of Findings

### Research Question 1

Research Question 1 was, "How do the succession planning strategies of faith-based nonprofit leaders in Maryland and Pennsylvania compare in their ability to achieve organizational goals and their mission?" Data analysis of interview transcriptions of both Organization A in Maryland and Organization B in Pennsylvania respectively resulted in the emergence of three common themes, namely, investment in human capital, retention of leadership pipeline talent, as well as trust and empowerment of potential leaders (see Table 3). In other words, the succession planning strategies of faith-based nonprofit leaders in Maryland and Pennsylvania compared at 100% in their ability to achieve organizational goals and mission.

### Research Question 2

Research Question 2 was, "What succession planning strategies do faith-based nonprofit leaders in Maryland and Pennsylvania implement to enable achievement of organizational goals and mission?" Three common themes emerged from data analysis of interview transcriptions from Organizations A and B respectively revealing that succession planning strategies of the two organizations compared at 100% in their ability to enable achievement of organizational goals and mission. The emerged themes from Organization A in Maryland and Organization B in Pennsylvania respectively included human capital investment, trust and empowerment of prospective leaders, and retention of leadership pipeline talent. These succession planning strategies added value to the leadership of faith-based nonprofit organizations A and B in Maryland and Pennsylvania,

respectively. This information added value to nonprofit succession planning strategies.

**Human capital investment.** Answers to Research Question 2 revealed that human capital investment was a component of succession planning strategies in faith-based nonprofits for organizational goals and mission accomplishment in Organization A - Maryland and Organization B – Pennsylvania. Human capital is intangible and comprises the skills and experiences of employees, and employers utilize human capital for organizational goals attainment (Vidotto, Ferenhof, Selig, & Bastos, 2017). Four components were discernible in the core theme - education and training, leadership development, mentoring, and professional development.

***Education and training***. Education and training are important constituents of human capital investment in the implementation of succession planning strategies (Wenzel, 2017). An investment in human capital implied the provision of education or some on-the-job training for the improvement of workforce quality, and such investments added value to the employee's strategic skills geared toward the implementation of succession planning strategies for the sustainable achievement of organizational goals and mission (Subramony et al., 2018). The assertion of participants AK and PD that they utilized agile application to facilitate the training of employees in competencies and skills development for the succession plan confirmed the prior research of Subramony et al. (2018) and Wenzel (2017). When nonprofit employees attained improved strategic planning skills through training and education, they were happier in their efforts for engagement in the succession plan taking a cue from the assertion of participant PP and corroborated by Subramony et al. (2018). Education and training facilitated employees'

job satisfaction for higher performance and leadership opportunities placement based on the assertion of participant PP and corroborated by prior research (Delery & Roumpi, 2017; LeCounte et al. 2017; Wenzel, 2017).

Participant GT posited that succession planning strategies included training a new hire with an eye toward the future and the organizational mission as well as goals and corroborated the prior report of Subramony et al. (2018). According to GT, during the hiring process, the hiring manager needed to gauge the candidate's interest and commitment to the organization, as well as their personal, professional goals for the future. In doing so, the hiring manager would make an informed decision in hiring an individual whose individual goals aligned with the organizational goals, thus ensuring – or increasing the chances – that the candidate would stay in the organization for the long run and grow with the organization.

Additionally, GT said that provision of ongoing training and support to current employees, as well as maintaining accurate archives and training documents, facilitated the succession planning process. "For instance, we try to maintain records and workflow documents of every one of our projects and save them in a shared platform, wherein various employees may access them."

Furthermore, GT asserted that in the event that an employee transitioned out of the organization, the onboarding and project workflow documents, served as a guide to the new employee, who would be able to perform duties with regard to said projects simply by reviewing the step-by-step processes as outlined in those documents, and with minimal supervision and training by other organizational employees. Participant DN

said: “Volunteers and employees’ knowledge, competencies, and skills enhanced through education and training helps in succession plans.” According to DN, investment in education and training also enhanced faith-based nonprofit employees’ engagement for sustained workforce quality in leadership development.

Participant PP asserted that education and training enabled talent development for succession plans as well as facilitated faith-based employees’ job satisfaction for higher performance and leadership opportunities placement in faith-based nonprofits. Participant SD said that the faith-based employee benefited from higher earnings through education and training, and the human capital investment improved the nonprofit workers’ economy and facilitated focus for the succession planning engagement.

***Leadership development.*** Leadership development is an essential component of human capital investment for the implementation of succession plans **(**LeCounte, Prieto, & Phipps, 2017**).** According to participant DN, investment in human capital enhanced faith-based nonprofit employees’ engagement for sustained workforce quality in leadership development. An adequately developed leader should be good at information sharing to better the lots of her or his team (Hu et al., 2018). The perspective of participants KS that investment in leadership development enabled enriched information flow throughout the faith-based nonprofit organization in the development and implementation of succession plan corroborated prior research of LeCounte et al. (2017) and Hu et al. (2018).

***Mentoring.*** Mentoring, as well as on-the-job training, are contingent on a collaboration between competently experienced leaders and followers in a learning

setting that is favorable for the parties involved (Snowden & Halsall, 2019). Mentoring is a popular leadership development strategy that facilitates strategic effectiveness, and at the same time, it is cost-effective. According to participant CS, senior leaders' mentoring of prospective leaders in preparation for taking up leadership was helpful in the implementation of succession planning strategies and confirmed prior research of Snowden and Halsall (2019).

SD asserted that a leader's expertise in mentoring and grooming an understudy for future leadership deployment is an essential succession planning strategy as corroborated by Snowden and Halsall (2019). PP asserted that the bond of affinities that forged through a mentorship program led to enhanced lines of communication between superiors and subordinates that never would have existed otherwise and confirmed the report of Bortnowska and Seiler (2019).

***Professional development***. The assertion of participant CS that effective use of professional programs to generate a succession planning process to enable choosing competent leaders to fix in the appropriate positions is essential to continuity of organizational operations corroborated the research findings of Fusarelli, Fusarelli, and Riddick (2018), as well as Peters-Hawkins, Reed, and Kingsberry (2018). Organizational leaders' investment in their employees' professional development, enable the acquisition of the requisite theoretical and practical knowledge, competencies, and skill to lead change when the incumbent leaders allowed such workers to serve in leadership positions taking a cue from the assertion of CS and corroborated in prior

research of Fusarelli et al. (2018), Peters-Hawkins et al. (2018), as well as Sharma and Sengupta (2018). According to CS, investing in professional development of faith-based nonprofit employees led to greater job satisfaction and focus on succession plans and corroborated the research of Sharma and Sengupta (2018).

Participant PP's assertion that investment in professional development improved communication and enabled faith-based leaders to discover employees and volunteers that were insufficiently equipped with communication skills and assisted them in remedying the situation for an enhanced succession plan confirmed the prior study of Atwood (2020). The collective value of faith-based nonprofit employees' knowledge, competencies, and skills enhanced through professional development facilitated the implementation of succession planning strategies for the sustainable attainment of organizational goals and mission taking a cue from the assertion of CS and PP, and in confirmation of prior research (Subramony, Segers, Chadwick, & Shyamsunder, 2018).

According to participant CS of Organization A, investing in professional development in employees of Organization A led to greater job satisfaction and focus on succession plans which confirmed prior study of Atwood (2020). Job satisfaction was a motivating factor of succession planners' higher performance. Investment in professional development that helped employees to improve their engagement based on the assertion of participant KS facilitated the implementation of succession plan for organizational goals and mission attainment and confirmed prior research of Delery and Roumpi (2017).

Participant NC of Organization A asserted that faith-based nonprofit leaders' provision of staff career advancement opportunities and investment in their development

facilitated productive work engagement in succession plan implementation. Investment in human capital improved nonprofit organizational culture. According to participant NC, human capital investment enhanced employee satisfaction, engagement, and communication and so added value to overall corporate culture for succession plan implementation.

Investment in professional development facilitated effective communication through the improvement of information sharing based on the assertion of PP was in confirmation of prior study (Torry, 2017). In summary, responses from research participants answered Research Question 2 regarding strategies that faith-based nonprofit leaders implemented to facilitate their succession plans.

**Trust and empowerment of potential leaders.** Responses from participants to Research Question 2 revealed that the empowerment of prospective faith-based nonprofit leaders in Maryland and Pennsylvania helped in improving employees' performance in the implementation of succession planning strategies as confirmed by prior research (Gautam & Ghimire, 2017; Salari & Abedini, 2017; Santora, Bozer, Kooskora, 2019). For instance, SD said that from her nonprofit experience, the empowerment of prospective leaders has a positive and significant impact on employees' performance and alignment with the goals and mission of the organization for an effective succession plan, and confirmed prior research (Gautam & Ghimire, 2017; Salari & Abedini, 2017; Santora et al., 2019).

Participant CS' assertion that leaders of the faith-based organization must have the courage to trust and empower young potential leaders to facilitate a sustainable

nonprofit leadership and services to their communities of operation confirmed the prior research of Gautam and Ghimire (2017), as well as Salari and Abedini (2017). Participant PP's assertion that incumbent leaders should enthusiastically be courageous in trusting and empowering employees with leadership competencies to enable a sense of belonging that facilitates higher performance for succession plan implementation confirmed the prior research of Santora et al. (2019), as well as Word and Sowa (2017).

The assertion of DD that "trusting relationship between management and employees as well as empowering prospective leaders helps employees to be at their best in the succession planning process" confirmed prior research (Santora et al., 2019; Word & Sowa, 2017). Participant PD's perspective that "trusting the understudy and empowering them plays a significant role in creating enthusiasm and high performance in the succession plans" corroborated prior research (Torry, 2017).

In summary, responses from research participants answered Research Question 2 regarding strategies that faith-based nonprofit leaders implemented to facilitate their succession plans.

**Leadership pipeline talent retention.** Retention of leadership pipeline talent strategy comprised two components, to wit, leadership pipeline talent and retention. Regarding leadership pipeline talent, participant DN of Organization A in Maryland asserted that implementation of the leadership pipeline strategy helped in the facilitation of generating a pool of leadership talent in preparation for succession plan execution. As far as retention is concern, DN's assertion that the future leaders of the organization that results from implementing the leadership pipeline must be retained to fulfill the purpose

of the leadership pipeline strategy confirmed prior research of Adebola (2019), as well as Pandita and Ray (2018). SD's assertion that leaders of his organization in Pennsylvania implemented the leadership pipeline model and retained the leaders that accrued from the leadership pipeline implementation for effective succession plan confirmed prior research of Leadership Pipeline Institute (n.d.).

Participant SD's assertion that "Leadership is the foundation for attaining organizational goals and mission, and retention of leadership pipeline talent for future leadership positions enhance succession planning" was corroborated by Adebola (2019). Furthermore, SD's perspective that leaders of his organization in Pennsylvania implemented the leadership pipeline model and retained the leaders that accrued from the leadership pipeline implementation for effective succession plan confirmed previous research of Leadership Pipeline Institute (n.d.).

**Research Question 3**

Research Question 3 was: **"**How does the implementation of succession planning strategies help faith-based nonprofit leaders to successfully attain organizational goals and mission?" Participants from Organization A in Maryland and Organization B in Pennsylvania concurred that the implementation of succession planning strategies to a great extent facilitated faith-based nonprofit organizational leaders in the execution of the mission and vision of their organization. For instance, participant PP of Organization A said that with the implementation of succession planning strategies, the continuity of the organization is viable, and nonprofit leaders could continue to work to fulfill their

organization's mission statement and vision as confirmed by the prior research of Torry (2017).

Strategic plans for leadership succession form a guidepost for the sustainability of organizations since effective leadership is the fulcrum of any organizational success (Peters-Hawkins et al., 2018). GT's assertion that in the event of a departure of an employee, succession plans facilitated uninterrupted running of operations confirmed the previous research of Torry (2017) and Peters-Hawkins et al. (2018). Contrarily, participant GT of Organization B pointed out that when there was interruption, delays, and other setbacks due to an employee's departure, the protracted time frame in the process of a new hire's onboarding, organizational leaders might find themselves in despair, as they have to spend time, money, and resources in covering the gap that was left behind by the former employee.

GT asserted that the remainder of the staff might suffer greatly, as they often have to cover cases and projects until a new hire came on board. According to GT:

> All this leads to frustration, a negative impact on interpersonal relationships, financial loss, and of course, a possible deviation from the organizational mission and goals, as the new goal becomes to find a new employee to cover the gap that was left behind.

Implementation of succession planning strategies, to ensure that the organizational leaders continue to focus on carrying out the organizational mission in an efficient and successful manner becomes imperative. In summary, participants' responses answered Research Question 3.

**Research Question 4**

Research Question 4 was: **"**What succession planning strategies, if any, work best to achieve goals and mission?" Participants from Organization A agreed that human capital investment as well as retention of leadership pipeline talent worked best in enabling the achievement of organizational goals and mission**.** Participants CS, DN, NC, KS, PP, and RR or 100% of Organization A posited that "human capital investment as well as retention of leadership pipeline talent worked best in enabling the achievement of organizational goals and mission." However, participants from Organization B concurred that the achievement of organizational goals and mission was driven best with human capital investment. Participants AK, AR, DD, GT, PD, and SD or 100% of Organization B asserted that "human capital investment worked best in facilitating the achievement of organizational goals and mission." The effectiveness of human investment strategy in the implementation of succession planning found in this research confirmed the previous research of LeCounte et al. (2017). In summary, responses from participants from Organization A and Organization B respectively answered Research Question 4.

**Comparing Succession Planning Strategies of A and B Organizations**

Data analysis of interview transcriptions of both Organization A in Maryland and Organization B in Pennsylvania respectively enabled the emergence of three common themes, namely, investment in human capital, retention of leadership pipeline talent, as well as trust and empowerment of potential leaders. In other words, the succession planning strategies that faith-based nonprofit leaders implemented in Maryland and

Pennsylvania compared at 100% in their ability to achieve organizational goals and mission.

## Limitations of the Study

One significant point on evaluating the limitations of a qualitative study was whether or not an event was within the control of the researcher (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2019; Merriam & Grenier, 2019). If an event was beyond the control of the researcher, it would probably have limited the study (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2019). Some of the limitations in this study were beyond my control. Respondents might choose to not contribute to their full capacity during the semi-structured interviews as to their insights on the effective succession planning strategies in faith-based nonprofits. There was an attempt in persuading prospective interviewees to provide insightful and truthful information during the interviews, given that the results of the study might promote their own faith-based nonprofit organizations' leadership transition.

Faith-based nonprofit leaders' burnout resulting from pressure from their management or pressure from their heavy workload could have hindered the sharing of insightful information (Kim & Park, 2017; Lee et al., 2018; Zang, Zhou, & Zhang, 2016). The participants might have received instructions from their leaders to be cautious in sharing information on succession planning strategies for nonprofit success in achieving their organizational goals and mission, which might have created a limitation to the study. Before the interviews, there was an encouragement for the interviewees to be candid in providing insightful and sincere thoughts on the interview questions, as the

objective of the research was to facilitate higher sustainable success in leadership transition in their faith-based nonprofit organizations.

## Recommendations

I recommend that leaders of nonprofits attend the conferences of the Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action (ARNOVA), considering that a number of the nonprofit leaders interviewed in this study were not conversant with the obtainable succession planning strategies of other organizations, neither in the same state nor other states. Enriched learning through nonprofit conference attendance facilitated leaders' understanding of succession plan reports of other, nonprofit organizations (Sharma & Sengupta, 2017). Nonprofit conference attendance facilitated the opportunity of networking with other nonprofit leaders of different organizations and succession planning strategists who had researched on other nonprofits to enable the gaining of understanding on succession planning strategies implemented in other nonprofits (Sousa & Clark, 2017).

With established professional relationships gained through conference attendance, the faith-based nonprofit leader could invite her or his expert acquaintance for presentation to present on how to overcome the challenges of succession planning at her or his organization without much difficulty. Networking strategies at conferences include talking to presenters and other attendees after presentations, going to the social events of the conference, handing out contact information to other conference, and spending quality time with professionals in one's field with shared ideas (Sousa & Clark, 2017).

Networking with professionals/experts does not end at the conference. The faith-

based nonprofit leader interested in gaining a deeper and broader understanding of succession planning strategies in other nonprofits must work as hard on networking with succession planning strategists after the conference. Networking after a conference has the potential of enabling succession planning strategists to remember the individual nonprofit leader and heighten the likelihood of collaboration to facilitate the understanding of succession planning strategies obtainable in other nonprofits (Sousa, & Clark, 2017).

There is a shortage of comparative case study in succession plans in the nonprofit literature. I recommend that future research should focus on comparing nonprofits in the same state and other states for a better understanding of the challenges and succession planning strategies of leaders in the third sector. In this study, I compared the succession planning strategies of two organizations in two states on the East Coast. I recommend that future research should focus on comparing three to four nonprofits in the West Coast to enable a better understanding of the value of the regional differences to the succession planning strategies in the third sector. There is a scarcity of comparative phenomenological studies of succession planning strategies in the nonprofit literature. I recommend that future research should focus on comparing succession planning strategies in faith-based nonprofits using a phenomenological design.

I recommend that future investigative inquirers on succession planning strategies utilize different conceptual frameworks for quantitative and qualitative research methods in their effort to identify added succession planning strategies for accomplishing organizational goals and mission. The different conceptual frameworks in quantitative

and qualitative investigative inquiries have the potential to provide comprehension of strategies that faith-based nonprofit leaders utilize to recruit and train leaders for succession planning. Another recommendation for future research involves the exploration of the explicit and implicit knowledge transfer strategies for the enablement of succession planning through mentoring in faith-based nonprofit organizations since there is shortage of such research in the nonprofit literature.

Leaders of Organization A in Maryland and Organization B in Pennsylvania did not mention their funding sources in meeting the financial requirements of developing and implementing effective succession planning strategies. I recommend that future research should focus on financial leadership in succession planning. Implementation of formal volunteers' training, especially volunteers that have attained high performance, might facilitate the identification of potential organizational leaders for succession planning. I recommend that future researchers should explore volunteer succession planning and the role of volunteers in executive succession planning. Organization A and Organization faith-based leaders have been executing their food-aid program to their communities of operation for three decades. The faith-based leaders' implementation of succession planning strategies was to facilitate the sustainability of their valuable services to society. I recommend that future investigative inquirers explore strategies for funding of faith-based food-aid programs for the enablement of the achievement of their organizational goals and mission sustainably.

Literature review revealed that one of the challenges to succession planning in nonprofits is heropreneurship (Pap-Thornton, 2016). Heropreneurship wreaked havoc on

the collective efforts of succession planning in nonprofit organizations because a heropreneur, who might not have succession planning skills, would not likely recognize and empower a staff that possessed the appropriate talent to help with the leadership task (McCormack et al., 2014; Pap-Thornton, 2016). I recommend that future research should focus on exploring strategies to mitigate heropreneurship in faith-based nonprofit organizations.

Burnout resulting from pressure from their management or pressure from their heavy workload could have hindered the sharing of insightful information by the faith-based leaders of Organization A and Organization B. Burnout of leaders hindered the sharing of organizational information, as reported by Lee et al. (2018). I recommend that future researchers explore strategies to mitigate burnout of faith-based nonprofit leaders to facilitate information sharing in research.

Review of succession planning literature revealed that many nonprofit leaders liked power and control, which militated against succession planning (Prabhupada, 2018). Of course, power could be intoxicating for many leaders (Prabhupada, 2018). The proclivity for power and control was endemic in nonprofit leaders, given that humans have the intrinsic tendency to control other entities and to exploit resources (Bhakti-Tirtha, 2018; Prabhupada, 2018). I recommend that future investigative inquiries should concentrate on strategies to mitigate power and control for the enablement of successful development and implementation of succession planning strategies.

# Implications

## Implication for Social Change

The findings of this study, recommendations, and implementation might lead to positive social change in the form of social responsibility and social capital. Social change is the enhancement of human or social conditions by promoting the development of individuals, communities, or organizations (O'Cass & Griffin, 2015). Social responsibility entailed individuals' or organizations' service to society that enables a balance of economic growth and societal welfare (Lins, Servaes, & Tamayo, 2017; Petrenko, Aime, Ridge, & Hill, 2016; Wang, Tong, Takeuchi, & George, 2016).

Social capital consisted of the networks of the bond of affinities of people who worked and lived in a specific society, which promoted societal functional effectiveness (Santora et al., 2015; Pedersen et al., 2018; Williams & Mullane, 2019). Implications for positive social change included the potential for the provision of retention of leadership pipeline talent, trusting in and empowering of young prospective leaders, and human capital investment for facilitating the implementation of succession planning strategies. In other words, faith-based leaders' greater focus on human capital investment, trust in and empowering young potential leaders, and leadership pipeline talent retention might facilitate positive social change in the form of greater social responsibility and enhanced social capital as a result of the knowledge gained from the study.

Succession plans contribute to positive change given that at the core of the leadership pipeline talent retention was to ensure that talented employees with appropriate capabilities and experiences were retained and fixed in the right positions

whenever the need arose. Hall-Ellis (2015) asserted that the turnover of nonprofit leaders created organizational challenges. Leaders that might plan to leave their organizations through retirement or to seek better jobs or through death by 2025 might outnumber the leaders that would gain employment in nonprofits (Hall-Ellis, 2015). Faith-based nonprofit leaders in preparation for leaders' departure needed to develop their next generation of leaders to meet the turnover challenge. Implementation of effective succession planning strategies, to wit: human capital investment, leadership pipeline talent retention, and trust in and empowerment of potential leaders facilitate the forestalling of turnover challenge.

The development and implementation of effective succession planning strategies were significant to positive social change, given the expensiveness of executive search or recruitment of top external talent (Valentine et al., 2017). Leadership pipeline talent retention in preparedness for the future was an essential strategy. Implementation of succession planning strategies such as human capital investment, as well as trust in and empowerment of young potential leaders in faith-based nonprofit organizations, reinforces uninterrupted operations.

**Implication for Theory**

This study's implication for theory is that it might bridge the gap in existing literature in the area of effective succession planning strategies that faith-based nonprofit leaders implemented to facilitate the attainment of organizational goals and mission. Previous studies on nonprofit success for the realization of organizational goals and

mission had mainly been quantitative. The qualitative data from this study might provide a needed addition to the literature.

The study results might provide insight into the impact of nonprofit leaders' effective succession planning strategies in achieving success in the accomplishment of organizational goals and mission. Knowledge from the findings of the study might enable the development of evidence-based succession planning strategies and provide a basis for future intervention research, including nonprofit leadership development.

### Implications for Practice

The results of this study might provide faith-based nonprofit leaders with a deeper understanding of succession planning strategies for success in achieving nonprofit organizational goals and mission, and the contributing factors to that success. Through this knowledge, faith-based nonprofit leaders might benefit and improve their decision-making process on succession planning strategies to attain success in the achievement of organizational goals and mission.

## Conclusions

The purpose of this qualitative study was to compare the effective succession planning strategies that faith-based nonprofit leaders in Maryland and Pennsylvania developed and implemented for the achievement of organizational goals and mission. The research involved the perspectives of six faith-based nonprofit leaders, respectively, from Organization A in Maryland and Organization B in Pennsylvania through interviews. Data analysis generated three common themes, to wit: human capital investment, retention of leadership pipeline talent, as well as trust and empowerment of potential

leaders, showing that succession planning strategies in those two organizations compared at 100%.

Implications for positive social change included the potential for the provision of retention of leadership pipeline talent, trusting in and empowering of young prospective leaders, and human capital investment for facilitating the implementation of succession planning. Faith-based leaders' greater focus on human capital investment, trust in and empowering young potential leaders, and leadership pipeline talent retention might facilitate positive social change in the form of greater social responsibility, enhanced social capital, and advancement of beneficial community partnerships.

The implementation of succession planning strategies to a great extent facilitated faith-based nonprofit organizational leaders in the execution of the mission and vision of their organization. For instance, participant PP of Organization A said that with the implementation of succession planning strategies, the continuity of the organization is viable, and nonprofit leaders could continue to work to fulfill their organization's mission statement and vision. The research results revealed that the succession planning strategies that worked best for Organization A were human capital investment and leadership pipeline talent retention while human capital investment worked best for Organization B.

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# Appendix A: Interview Questions

1. What effective succession planning strategies do you implement in achieving organizational goals and mission?
2. What succession planning strategies, if any, work best to achieve organizational goals and mission?
3. How does the implementation of succession planning strategies help faith-based nonprofit leaders in your organization to attain organizational goals and mission?
4. What would you like to add, if any, that would be helpful in implementing succession planning strategies to enable success in achieving faith-based nonprofit goals and mission?

Appendix B: E-mail Invitation for Research Participation - Transcript.

Hi,

I hope this email finds you well. I am reaching out to invite you to participate in a research that seeks to understand the succession planning strategies of faith-based nonprofit leaders. The research will be conducted by Vasudev Das, a doctoral student of Walden University. You will be interviewed for about 35 minutes as part of the data collection process of the research.

Your answers to the interview questions will be incorporated in the study and will help the researcher understand effective succession planning strategies that faith-based nonprofit leaders in New York and Maryland implement, to facilitate success in achieving organizational goals and mission. The required age of interested participants is 18 years old or over.

Should you be interested to participate in the study, kindly review the attached consent form and provide your consent for participation with the annotation, “I consent.” Thank you.

Sincerely,

Vasudev Das
Doctoral Student
Walden University

Appendix C: Interview Protocol

| Succession Planning Strategies | | |
|---|---|---|
| Date, time, location | | |
| Interviewee number | | |
| Step 1 | Introduction | Hi, my name is Vasudev Das. I appreciate your voluntary acceptance to participate in this interview. |
| Step 2 | Purpose | I want to ask a few questions relating to effective succession planning strategies you've implemented to attain organizational goals and mission success. |
| Step 3 | Describe the rationale for participation | Your participation serves as a means for the provision of practical knowledge for faith-based nonprofit leaders to utilize as a guide for successful succession planning strategies in attaining organizational goals and mission. Besides, interview participation enables a partial fulfillment for the Doctor of Philosophy at Walden University. |
| Step 4 | Describe the benefit of participating in the interview | The study's benefit hinges on gaining deeper understanding of succession planning strategies for sustainable faith-based nonprofits. |
| Step 5 | Discuss ethics | Protection of participants' privacy is essential in this interview. I seek permission to record the interview. |
| Step 6 | Discuss confidentiality | The interview content will be confidential. Data will be subject to password protection. After five years, the interview data will be subject to destruction. The interview data will solely be for the study. |
| Step 7 | Ask if the participant has any question | Do you need clarification of any points discussed? |
| Step 8 | Transition to interview questions | We will now start the semi-structured interview. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Step 9 | Conduct the interview<br><br>Ask probing questions as required. | 1. What effective succession planning strategies do you implement in achieving organizational goals and mission?<br>2. What succession planning strategies, if any, work best to achieve organizational goals and mission?<br>3. How does the implementation of succession planning strategies help faith-based nonprofit leaders in your organization to attain organizational goals and mission?<br>4. What would you like to add, if any, that would be helpful in implementing succession planning strategies to enable success in achieving faith-based nonprofit goals and mission? |
| Step 10 | Wrap up | Thank you for participating in the research interview. I want to schedule a day for member checking for you to review the interview data and analysis to ensure accuracy and resonance with your perceptions. Would you like me to contact you for any clarification if the need arises? Do you prefer any method of communication?<br>Thank you for volunteering to participate in the member checking process. |

# Appendix D: Field Test

## Field Test

Succession Planning Strategies in Faith-based Nonprofits: A Comparative Case Study

by

Vasudev Das

## Field Test

Field tests are strategies for checking the validity of a data collection instrument (University of Phoenix, 2015). The field test entails giving the study's research questions, purpose statement, and specific problem along with the interview questions, to two management experts on nonprofit leadership to provide feedback on the appropriateness of the interview questions (Budworth, Latham, & Manroop, 2015). In the inquiries section below, I ask whether the interview questions are understandable and can be used to answer the research questions. I also ask whether the questions are appropriate given the design and the participants.

### Research Questions

The overarching research question that will serve as guidance in this qualitative comparative study is: How do the succession planning strategies of faith-based nonprofit leaders in Maryland and Pennsylvania compare in their ability to achieve organizational goals and their mission?

The sub-questions are:

1. What effective succession planning strategies do faith-based nonprofit leaders implement in achieving organizational goals and mission?
2. How does the implementation of succession planning strategies help faith-based nonprofit leaders to successfully attain organizational goals and mission?
3. What succession planning strategies, if any, work best to achieve organizational goals and mission?

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this proposed qualitative study, using a comparative case study design, is to compare the effective succession planning strategies that faith-based nonprofit leaders in Maryland and Pennsylvania implement to enable success in achieving organizational goals and mission.

**Specific Problem**

The specific problem is that faith-based nonprofit leaders often do not implement effective succession planning strategies to enable success in achieving organizational goals and mission (Barton, 2019).

**Interview Questions**

1. What effective succession planning strategies do you implement in achieving organizational goals and mission?
2. What succession planning strategies, if any, work best to achieve organizational goals and mission?
3. How does the implementation of succession planning strategies help faith-based nonprofit leaders in your organization to attain organizational goals and mission?
4. What would you like to add, if any, that would be helpful in implementing succession planning strategies to enable success in achieving faith-based nonprofit goals and mission?

**Inquiries**

1. Are the interview questions for the study understandable?

2. Can the interview questions be used to answer the research questions?
3. Are the interview questions appropriate, given the design?
4. Are the interview questions appropriate, given the prospective participants of the study?