

Succession and Strategic Employee Planning as Predictors of Teachers' Job Commitment in Secondary Schools in Bayelsa State

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Abstract: The study investigated succession and strategic employee planning as predictors of teachers' job commitment in secondary schools in Bayelsa State. Two research questions and two hypotheses guided the study. The design employed for the study was correlation survey. The population of the study consisted of 3,477 respondents out of which 490 respondents were sampled for the study using random sampling technique. Instrument used for data collection was questionnaire titled "Successive and Strategic Employee Planning Scale" (SSEPS) with 20-items for collecting data on the independent variables of the study and 20-items questionnaire tagged "Teachers Job Commitment Scale" (TJCS) used for data collection on the dependent variables of the study. The questionnaires were face and content validated by two experts in Measurement and Evaluation. Cronbach alpha statistics was used to determine the reliability of the instrument with the values of Succession Planning (SP) and Strategic Employee Planning (SEP) as 0.87 and 0.88 while the reliability of TJCS was 0.90. There were 490 copies of the questionnaire administered out of which 472 copies were retrieved which implied a 96.3% retrieval rate. Research questions raised were answered using simple regression analysis while the hypotheses were tested using t-test associated with simple regression at 0.05 level of significance. Findings of the study showed that succession planning has a high positive relationship of $r=0.79$ while strategic employee planning has a low positive relationship of $r=0.30$ with teachers' job commitment in secondary schools in Bayelsa State. It was recommended that school administrators should delegate responsibilities to promote succession planning in the schools.

Keywords: Succession Employee Planning, Strategic Planning, Teachers' Job Commitment, Secondary School, Bayelsa State.

INTRODUCTION

Teachers' job commitment among other teacher related factors is essential for the growth and development of the learner as well as the actualization of the goals and objectives of secondary education in Bayelsa State and the country at large. According to Igbogi (2018), teachers' commitment refers to the professional attitude as well as sense of devotion to duty which is displayed by a teacher on the job. Teachers' commitment is therefore determined by how well a teacher is involved and willing to sacrifice for the attainment of the goals and objectives of the school. The commitment of the teacher is seen from the angle of his or her dedication to the values, goals, projects and philosophy of the school. The teachers' commitment is also seen from the angle of the extent of sacrifice that the teacher is able to make for the success of the school. Educational researchers have also revealed that the commitment of the teacher can be affective, continuance or normative which means that the commitment of the teacher can be as a result of an emotional attraction to the school, fear of losing investments made in the school as well as due to the regard for ethical principles guiding the school profession. Irrespective of the kind of commitment driving the teacher, the bottom line is that the teacher is able to give in their best of service for the progress of the school.

If teachers must stay satisfied and committed on the job, their values, abilities and competence must be identified, appreciated and properly managed by their superiors such as the principal, government or departmental head. Similarly, since teachers come to the school with different level of competence in the form of their talent, personality and experience, these abilities and resources must be properly managed for the school to make meaningful progress and

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development as well as to promote the satisfaction and commitment of the teacher on the job. Teachers no doubt come to the school with several abilities known as talents which must be harnessed for the teacher to remain satisfied on the job and contribute also to school goals and objectives. Talents are natural skills and abilities and often differ from one individual to another. It is the ability to carry out a particular task in a particular way that is not common to everyone. This is why the management of teachers' talent is fundamental to the growth of the school as it provides essential resources which can be used to the advantage of the school as well as contribute to on-the-job satisfaction and commitment of the teacher.

Talent management involves the careful identification, management and development of employees in an organization who possess the skills and abilities required for the organization to make progress and compete favourably. The concept of talent management involves series of activities which must be put in place in an organization to ensure that employees who possess the best skill sets are preserved for the future plan of the organization. It also involves putting in place policies, processes and resources that will help to ensure that the organization is able to meet up with its future goals and objectives using available employees with exceptional abilities. The concept of talent management was carved from the practice of human resource management. The difference in these concepts is that talent management focuses on identifying those with skills and competence that an organization require for its future plan and ensuring that these employees are preserved as part of the future of the organization. Similarly, Azotani *et al.* (2020) as well as Mangusho *et al.* (2015) identified that talent management practices that are used to achieve these objectives includes succession planning as well as strategic employee planning among other factors.

One of the problems of formal organizations in this 21st century is identifying future leaders who will contribute to the future of the organization. This is where the need for succession planning as a talent management strategy comes to play. This perception was supported by Hanover Research (2014) as it was pointed out that anticipating future needs is the secret to succession planning. In the process of talent management, the organization must be able to identify and plan with talents who will contribute to the future of the organization. Sambrook (2005) stated that succession planning requires planning for the quality and key skilled staffs so as to cover for death, critical illness, retirement and/or promotion and any new roles created in future organization planning. Succession planning is a strategy provided to make preparation for takeover of future roles by those who are qualified to do so in an organization.

The essence of succession planning is to make plans for those who will succeed outgoing employees and bring in the best skill sets for the future goals of the organization. The process of succession planning is to ensure that capable leaders are recognized among the existing talent pool in the organization and that they are developed and prepared to participate in the leadership of the organization (Farashah *et al.*, 2011). Succession planning helps to ensure that new leadership opportunities are provided for existing employees. Similarly, succession planning helps in ensuring continuity in any organization or department. In this process, employees are given opportunity to display their talents and necessary suggestions are made on how to meet the future needs of the organization.

Kim as cited in Armugam *et al.* (2019:205) stated that "succession planning is purposeful, continuous and systematic and involves identification of qualified employees for leadership to improve performance and commitments". Therefore, employees who are not captured as part of the future of the organization may not show sufficient commitment as they do not see a future with the organization as a result of their exclusion in the future plan of the organization. Succession planning involves transmitting requisite knowledge that will enable an employee becomes a solution to the future of the organization. Knowledge transfer is a fundamental part of succession planning (Ejokpomewhe, 2017) and an organization that wish to meet her goals and objectives must have an open door policy for knowledge to be transferable among its employees. This is beneficial to both the employee and the employer in the long run.

In order for a worker to fit into the succession plan of an organization, they must be able to show some level of competence (talent) and this will make it easy for them to be incorporated as part of the future of the organization. Employee must have shown some level of dependability, trustworthiness and loyalty to be part of the succession plan of the organization where they work and this will make it easy to chart a new course for the goals and objectives of the organization. Johnson (2018) state that the essence of succession planning is for quality leadership and this must be done carefully in any organization including the school system.

Furthermore, Peters-Hawkins *et al.* (2017) stated that three elements are included within succession planning and this includes forecasting, sustaining leadership, and planning. Therefore, any organization that must meet its present and future goals must be able to evaluate existing talents and forecast their relevance to the future goals and objectives of the organization as well as plan for the sustenance of this plan so as to ensure that the future goals and objectives of the organization are achieved and the commitment of the employee is not lost in the process.

Furthermore, there are no two organizations that is entirely the same and as such no two organization requires the same type or set of employees to meet its goals and objectives. As a result of these differences, each organization is expected to plan based on its unique needs if it must succeed in the face of stiff competition. Organizations have certain areas of differences which when harnessed can serve as an advantage in the long run and this is the essence of strategic planning in an organization. In the school system, strategic planning cannot be ignored when it comes to planning for employees as a result of differences in learners need, educational objectives and interest as well as differences in access and availability of learning and teaching resources. School administrators must therefore engage in strategic employee planning in order to meet their unique needs as well as achieve educational goals and objectives.

According to Toorani (2012) strategic planning is so important in the school system that it must be incorporated into daily school performance objective. Similarly, Kiprof and Kanyiri (2012) quipped that since school plans involve practical guidelines, precise goals and objectives as well as a timetable for attainment of school goals, strategic employee planning is simply ensuring that teachers are put into perspective in the midst of all of these activities. Explaining further, Kariuki *et al.* (2016:100) stated that “strategic planning aims at making strategic decisions or strategic choices through formulation of mission and vision, setting of policies, goals and objectives and identifying means of achieving those objectives”. The success of this plan however depends on the involvement of the workforce in all of these activities and this is the essence of strategic employee planning.

Strategic employee planning focuses on engaging and utilizing the services of workers in achieving the goals and objectives of the school in the most productive way. This will require providing regular information to the worker as well as giving objective directives which will allow the employee discharge his or her responsibility productively. Strategic employee planning like other strategic plans reported by Chukwumah (2015) should capture the following components such as a vision statement, a mission statement, an outline of goals and objectives, a set of activities, an assessment of existing resources in the organization as well as a strategic analysis of existing situation. The strategic employee plan must ensure that the worker is informed about all of these plans, programmes, and policies as well as have the right resources to meet these objectives. Strategic planning helps to ensure that an employee is part and parcel of the activities of the organization and is contributing their own quota to the success of the organization.

Strategic employee planning cannot be overemphasized in a school system where the teacher is instrumental to the success of what happens in the classroom and the school at large. Yaakob *et al.* (2019:3) quipped that strategic planning as a tool for explaining some of the goals and strategies related to education policies, programming activities, timing and disclosing the resources needed. If the teacher is not synchronized into all of these activities, there will be delay in decision making processes and quality of educational outcome. Similarly, Akinyi (2010) said that strategic planning is instrumental to academic and non-academic activities in the school and as such all employees in the school including the teacher must be oriented, empowered and given the support to achieve these objectives.

Strategic employee planning is useful in the selection of strategies that enable organizations to best allocate and exploit their resources and strengths in relation to the opportunities in their external environmental (Akinyi, 2010) and the school administrators must bear this in mind and ensure that the teachers are part of the design of this plan so that they can be able to defend the interest of the school where the need arises. On their part, Albon, *et al.* (2016:210) identified some of the benefits of employee strategic planning to include:

- providing a vision, road map, and focus for the institution’s future; where it wants to go and the routes to get there;
- encouraging input and ideas from all parts of the organization on what can be done to ensure future success and eliminate potential barriers to that success; building ownership in the plan;
- recognizing opportunities as they emerge; being alert, responsive, and flexible to change;
- prioritizing the crucial strategic tasks necessary to actualize the institution’s vision, and making decisions supported by context-specific evidence;
- coordinating the actions of diverse and separate parts of the organization to accomplish strategic tasks, thereby generating a sense of community within the university;
- allowing proactive allocation of resources available for growth and change to critical programs and activities;
- establishing measures of success so that progress of the organization can be evaluated; and
- Generating commitment to implement the plan by involving all parts of the organization and its people in the development, and fostering stakeholder participation and buy-in related to the plan development, implementation, and success.

In schools where strategic employee planning is practiced, teaching and learning activities go on seamlessly because all employees are aware of their responsibilities and are supported to discharge the best service which can be carried out with or without supervision. Shah (2013) also asserted that strategic planning is helpful for clarifying future directions in an organization, for developing a coherent basis for decision-making, establishing priorities and for

improving organizational performance. Employee strategic planning exists for the purpose of giving responsibilities and ensuring that targets are met when due.

There is no doubt that there are organizations that make strategic employee plans but fail to implement it. This is either as a result of lack of resources or lack of commitment from the administrators. It is better for a strategic employee plan not to exist than for it not to be implemented as it can lead to wastage of resources as well as lead to loss of direction. Commitment to plans provided for workers in the discharge of their duties is therefore important for the success of any organization.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of the study was to investigate succession and strategic employee planning as predictors of teachers' job commitment in secondary schools in Bayelsa State. In specific terms, the objectives of the study were to:

1. Examine the relationship between succession planning and teachers' job commitment in secondary schools in Bayelsa State.
2. Examine the relationship between strategic employee planning and teachers' job commitment in secondary schools in Bayelsa State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the relationship between succession planning and teachers' job commitment in secondary schools in Bayelsa State?
2. What is the relationship between strategic employee planning and teachers' job commitment in secondary schools in Bayelsa State?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant relationship between succession planning and teachers' job commitment in secondary schools in Bayelsa State.
2. There is no significant relationship between strategic employee planning and teachers' job commitment in secondary schools in Bayelsa State.

METHODOLOGY

Design adopted for the study was correlation survey. Population of the study was 3,477 respondents consisting of 202 principals and 3,275 teachers in the 202 public secondary schools in Bayelsa State. The sample for the study was 490 respondents which comprised 134 principals and 356 teachers in the 202 public senior secondary schools in Bayelsa State. The sampling technique that was used is the random sampling technique as this gave all the elements equal opportunity of being selected as sample for the study. The instrument used for data collection was questionnaire. Two questionnaires were developed for the study so as to enable the researcher collect data on the independent and dependent variables of the study. The first questionnaire which was used to collect data on the independent variables of the study was a 20-items questionnaire titled "Successive and Strategic Employee Planning Scale" (SSEPS) while the second questionnaire which was used to collect data on the dependent variables of the study was a 20 items questionnaire titled "Teachers Job Commitment Scale" (TJCS). The two questionnaires were responded to by the principals and teachers respectively based on a four point modified Likert scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) and these responses were scored 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively as their weights. The two questionnaires SSEPS and TJCS were face and content validated by two experts from Measurement and Evaluation in the Department of Educational Psychology, Guidance and Counseling, University of Port Harcourt. The internal consistency of the instruments namely SSPE and TJCS was determined using Cronbach alpha statistics. There were 20 respondents comprising ten principals and ten teachers in the public secondary schools in Bayelsa State who were not part of the sample selected for this study and they were administered copies of the questionnaires and their responses were used to determine the reliability of the questionnaires. The reliability index of the clusters such as Succession Planning (SP) and Strategic Employee Planning (SEP) were 0.87 and 0.88 respectively while the reliability of the TJCS was 0.90. The researcher as well as five trained research assistants engaged in the administration of the copies of the questionnaire. The 490 copies of the questionnaire were administered accordingly but 472 copies of the instruments were collected at the date agreed and this implied a 96.3% retrieval rate which was adequate for the study. The research questions were answered using simple regression analysis while the hypotheses were tested using t-test associated with simple regression at 0.05 level of significance.

RESULTS

Answer to Research Questions

Research Question One: What is the relationship between succession planning and teachers' job commitment in secondary schools in Bayelsa State?

Table-1: Simple Regression on the Relationship between Succession Planning and Teachers' Job Commitment in Secondary Schools in Bayelsa State

Model Summary					
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Decision
1	.796 ^a	.633	.632	7.55208	High Relationship
a. Predictors: (Constant), SuccessionPlanning					

In table 1, it was shown that the value of the Pearson Product Correlation co-efficient ($r=0.796$) and this value implied that there was a high and positive relationship between succession planning and teachers' job commitment in secondary schools in Bayelsa State. Similarly, the R^2 ($R^2=0.633$) meant that succession planning predicted 63.3% ($0.633*100$) of teachers' job commitment in secondary schools in Bayelsa State while the remaining percentage score (36.7%) was predicted by other external variables outside succession planning.

Research Question Two: What is the relationship between strategic employee planning and teachers' job commitment in secondary schools in Bayelsa State?

Table-2: Simple Regression on the Relationship between Strategic Employee Planning and Teachers' Job Commitment in Secondary Schools in Bayelsa State

Model Summary					
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Decision
1	.304 ^a	.092	.090	11.87544	Low Relationship
a. Predictors: (Constant), StrategicEmployeePlanning					

In table 2, it was revealed that the value of the Pearson Product Correlation co-efficient ($r=0.304$) and this value implied that there was a low but positive relationship between strategic employee planning and teachers' job commitment in secondary schools in Bayelsa State. Similarly, the R^2 ($R^2=0.092$) meant that strategic employee planning predicted 9.2% ($0.092*100$) of teachers' job commitment in secondary schools in Bayelsa State while the remaining percentage score (90.80%) was predicted by other external variables outside strategic employee planning.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis One: Succession planning does not significantly relate to teachers' job commitment in secondary schools in Bayelsa State.

Table-3: t-test associated with Simple Regression on the Extent Succession Planning Relates to Teachers' Job Commitment in Secondary Schools in Bayelsa State

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-.364	1.746		-.208	.835
	SuccessionPlanning	2.195	.077	.796	28.462	.000
a. Dependent Variable: TeachersJobCommitment						

Table 3 revealed that the t-value associated with the simple regression produced a value of 28.462 but the significance level (probability value was 0.000) and this value was less than the alpha value of 0.05 and based on this, the null hypothesis was rejected indicating that succession planning significantly relates to teachers' job commitment in secondary schools in Bayelsa State.

Hypothesis Two: Strategic employee planning does not significantly relate to teachers' job commitment in secondary schools in Bayelsa State.

Table-4: t-test associated with Simple Regression on the Extent Strategic Employee Planning Relates to Teachers' Job Commitment in Secondary Schools in Bayelsa State

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	26.993	3.139		8.599	.000
	StrategicEmployeePlanning	.798	.116	.304	6.906	.000

a. Dependent Variable: TeachersJobCommitment

Table 4 showed that the t-value associated with the simple regression produced a value of 6.906 but the significance level (probability value was 0.000) and this value was less than the alpha value of 0.05 and based on this, the null hypothesis was rejected indicating that strategic employee planning significantly relates to teachers' job commitment in secondary schools in Bayelsa State.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Succession Planning and Teachers' Job Commitment in Secondary Schools in Bayelsa State

It was revealed in the study that the value of the Pearson Product Correlation co-efficient ($r=0.796$) showed a high and positive relationship between succession planning and teachers' job commitment in secondary schools in Bayelsa State while the R square ($R^2=0.633$) meant that succession planning predicted 63.3% of teachers' job commitment in secondary schools in Bayelsa State. This finding was higher than the outcome of a related study conducted by Odigwe and Abraham (2018) which revealed that succession planning predicted 40% of teachers' job performance in the selected schools. The relationship between succession planning and teachers' job performance and commitment is moderately high because every teacher wants to be a part of the future of school. However, the teacher in addition to being groomed for his or her future role must also be given some level of independence in the process. Preparing teachers for future role but conditioning them on what to do and how it should be done can be counterproductive if adequate care is not taken.

The level of commitment may not be very high even if teachers are part of the succession plan of the school if they don't enjoy some level of independence. This explains why the study by El-Badawy *et al.* (2016) showed that only a moderate positive relationship of $r= 0.53$ existed between succession planning and job engagement, as well as a moderate positive relationship of $r=0.58$ between succession planning and job satisfaction. Satisfaction and commitment can only be very high if the succession plan which involves students also provides some level of autonomy on the job. If teachers are part of the succession plan but their independence cannot be guaranteed, the commitment of the teacher may continue to nosedive until they get tired of the system and decide to leave for a better work environment where their individuality is guaranteed. Teachers are always in search of schools where they can bring their ingenuity to play and any succession plan that will enhance teacher commitment in the school must take this fact into consideration.

The gains of engaging teachers in the succession plan of the school exceed only the enhancement of teachers' commitment on the job. In their study, Amirkhani *et al.* (2016) found out that succession planning had a positive and significant relationship on performance and commitment on three variables of earnings, organizational improvement process and the employees' growth and innovation but not on customers' satisfaction. On this note, involving teachers in the succession plan of the school is a form of indirect responsibility given to the teacher since such responsibility requires the teacher to be on top of the game of administration to surpass previous achievements as they continue to discharge their responsibilities. This is beneficial both to the teachers and the school system as a whole in different areas.

Similarly, it was revealed that succession planning significantly relates to teachers' job commitment in secondary schools in Bayelsa State. This is the same with the result of the study by Olatunji *et al.* (2017) which also indicated that succession planning significantly influenced employees' job commitment. Succession planning is therefore relevant as it helps to build the trust of the teacher in the system and also promote contribution to the development of the school which is an aspect that teachers can use to show their commitment to their job.

Strategic Employee Planning and Teachers' Job Commitment in Secondary Schools in Bayelsa State

It was revealed from the data collected and analyzed from the respondents selected for the study that the Pearson Product Correlation co-efficient ($r=0.304$) showed that there was a low but positive relationship between strategic employee planning and teachers' job commitment in secondary schools in Bayelsa State. In the same manner, the R² ($R^2=0.092$) meant that strategic employee planning predicted 9.2% of teachers' job commitment in secondary schools in Bayelsa State. This level of relationship simply gave strength to a related study conducted by Mugure (2011) which indicated that most schools do not engage in employee planning as regular as they ought to as this is done quarterly while

some schools do not even have the needed plan for employees in place. This explains why employee planning did not show the expected level of influence on teachers' job commitment in the study.

Every employee is always in search of an organization that can assist them realize their short and long term personal goals. If the organization fails to carry out this expectation, the commitment of the worker may suddenly begin to dwindle. Although a similar study by Agabi and Ogah (2010) simply showed that some of these organizations do not have the needed financial and other resources needed for the planning of employee activities, this should not however be a determinant factor as the organization as well as the employee have a lot to benefit if the organization engage in employee planning activities. It is therefore important for deliberate action to be taken to ensure that teachers are incorporated in the short and long term plan of the school. Engaging teachers in such plan gives them the impression that they are valuable to the school. Similarly, several management scientists have posited that it is only when the goals of employees are realized that the goals of the organization can be achieved. On this note, the school system and its management must continue to do all that is within their power to ensure that strategic employee planning activities are carried out in the school and on regular basis.

Planning is a continuous exercise in the school and so should strategic employee planning be regular. The planning of teachers' activities should be in tandem with the other plans of the school. Additionally, in the process of strategic employee planning, the teacher should be active and not passive. In their study, Myende and Bhengu (2015) was able to reveal that there was lack of evidence suggesting stakeholders' involvement, specifically that of Heads of Department (HoD) in strategic employee planning in the sampled schools and that the HODs were involved in some form of planning but there is no evidence suggesting their participation in substantive issues on strategic employee planning. This points to the need for all-inclusive planning both in terms of general school activities as well as the strategic planning of employee activities as this has the capability of improving on the commitment of the teachers in these schools.

Furthermore, the hypothesis of the study showed that strategic employee planning significantly relates to teachers' job commitment in secondary schools in Bayelsa State. This finding negates the outcome of the study by Opoku-Mensah (2012) which showed that most of the Information Services Department staff do not have adequate knowledge on human resource planning, and it was further revealed that these planning strategies were not well practiced by the senior officers. This means that due care and diligence must be taken in the process of strategic employee training because the significant influence it has on teachers' commitment can harm the goals and objective of the school if not adequately managed.

CONCLUSIONS

The following conclusions were made based on the findings of the study:

1. There was positive and significant relationship between the independent and dependent variables. This implied that teachers' job commitment could be established when succession planning and strategic employee planning are adequately considered in these schools.
2. Succession planning has a high positive relationship with teachers' job commitment while strategic employee planning has a low positive relationship with teachers' job commitment in secondary schools in Bayelsa State.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made in the study:

1. There would be need for functional monitoring and team work practices to be instituted in these schools to make the process of succession planning easy and achievable such that a sense of belonging could be promoted among teachers and then competent teachers would be able to take over from out-going teachers for the sustainability of educational goals and objectives in secondary schools in Bayelsa State.
2. School administrators should delegate the responsibility of strategic employee planning to the heads of departments in the school as this would make it easy for employee activities to be planned in line with the identification of teachers' competencies as well as go a great extent to promote teachers' job commitment in the school. In other words, the planning of employee activities should be made the sole responsibility of the heads of the departments where the teacher or employee operates for easy identification of teachers' strength and weakness.

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