

Review

Succession planning in higher education: A systematic literature review (2012–2022)

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Abstract: This research investigates the dynamic landscape of succession planning (SP) strategies in higher education, with a focus on synthesizing existing literature to guide improvements in presidential succession practices. The intense global competition in higher education has led to imbalances in the quantity and composition of potential successors, hindering institutions' rapid advancement and affecting their competitiveness on the global stage. The study addresses critical challenges such as attracting, retaining, and nurturing successors in key positions beyond material incentives. Employing a literature analysis methodology, the research comprehensively examines the existing body of literature related to succession planning, offering recommendations to promote stability in leadership, foster continuous talent development, and mitigate talent crises. The study evaluates the current state of succession planning in higher education, identifying issues and their root causes. It provides a summary and analysis of ongoing research efforts related to successor quality, team formation, and cultivation models. Despite advancements through national talent cultivation policies, persistent challenges like talent scarcity, the absence of gender-inclusive succession plans, a lack of originality, and inconsistent staff flow hinder progress. The research attributes these challenges to traditional personnel systems and university administrators. Proactive measures are proposed, including creating awareness of succession planning, advocating for personnel mechanism reform, establishing a comprehensive training system, and developing a scientifically-grounded succession plan. Though the study aims to contribute to leadership development and address pressing issues faced by higher education institutions, with only a limited number utilizing mixed techniques, it restricted the comprehensive inclusion of social context knowledge and evidence regarding the motivations, beliefs, and experiences of individuals in this investigation.

Keywords: succession planning; higher education; leadership development; talent cultivation; competitiveness

1. Introduction

The potential crisis of changing leadership and loss of institutional understanding that will diminish institutional effectiveness in higher education succession planning is not seen as a short-term problem (Eddy & Garza Mitchell, 2017). Therefore, formalized succession planning that addresses leadership shortages and organizational sustainability and provides a strategy for identifying long-term sustainability is imminent. In their review, Fusarelli et al. (2018) revealed how forward-thinking superintendents could collaborate with colleges and other institutions to address the leadership issues they face by developing long-term, strategic plans for leadership development that foster capacity for leadership and may result in notable improvements in student outcomes. Research suggests that succession planning

provides value in advancing higher education institutions' reassessment of recruitment and retention practices for future leaders (Ghazali et al., 2023). They recommended that higher education institutions need to document support to address leadership succession, promote quality improvement, and address cultural high-performance issues.

Several succession planning (SP) studies to assess the lack of SP at higher education institutions have been completed (Upadhyaya & Lele, 2022). Formal SP has been found in previous studies to suffer from lack of communication, lack of knowledge, gender inequality, lack of leadership, low priority, and lack of talent as barriers to establishing a formal succession plan (Bano et al., 2022). However, the lack of knowledge will have a higher impact on SP education as opposed to philosophy and strategy (Abd Rahman Ahmad et al., 2020). Aggressive SP will impact institutional success and growth, and research has shown that some academic institutions have developed succession plans that sweep away the loss of organizational knowledge caused by changes in expertise and leadership (Chapman, 2017). The American Association of Community Colleges (2021) sees the need to prepare preemptive actions to reduce leadership losses in higher education. Leaders of organizations may influence both parties through mechanisms of role creation and knowledge transfer through modeling, role creation, reflexive activities, processes, and insights (Areed et al., 2021). These activities are all part of the SP process to effectively identify the internal candidates who possess leadership competencies and provide opportunities for ongoing knowledge acquisition, sharing, and transfer.

Internal candidates must be chosen and trained as part of the SP process. The argument put up by proponents of choosing external candidates for succession is that leadership is a transferable skill and that competent internal candidates do not need to undergo leadership training (Farah et al., 2020). For academic internal leadership promotion, it may be based on an identified faculty member's identification through the development of his or her teaching abilities rather than one's leadership and management abilities. A faculty member selected for completion from administrative leadership using this lack of assurance would not be an effective leader (Griffith, 2012).

Another barrier to internal SP identified in academia is the inference that internal candidate commitments cannot always be retained. Whether higher education chooses internal or external successors is also controversial (Hillman & Baydoun, 2019). Few institutions of higher education prepare formal succession plans. The lack of effective SP at higher education institutions may limit organizational knowledge transfer as well as contemporaneous predictions of leadership shortages in terms of organizational effectiveness.

Research gap

Despite such realistic projections, gender parity in leadership and management positions remains a worldwide dilemma. There hasn't been a turning moment for diversity and inclusion in leadership, workplaces, and decision-making authority. For institutions, having unequal access to power has proven difficult (Gillard & Okonjo-Iweala, 2021). Professionals who want to hold leadership roles nevertheless face

several obstacles, notwithstanding the modest rate of progress. In business and industry, the leadership crisis has been a major topic of concern, and there hasn't been much effective planning to address the issue. These difficulties range from researching prospects, the dominant role of domesticity, and the absence of workplace policies to gender stereotypes and unsupportive laws (Keohane, 2020).

The United Nations established 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for the period 2016–2030, with a focus on providing “women with equal access to education, health care, decent work, and representation in political and economic decision-making processes.” According to projections based on current trends, it will take 107 countries 99.5 years to close the average gender gap in the world, which is still 31.4% (World Economic Forum, 2020). The few studies that have looked into the problem of leadership crises in higher education hardly ever make connections between them and SP and gender inequities. For institutions, it might be difficult to fill open leadership posts due to the high turnover rates in academics (Ebberts et al., 2010).

Because most organizations are unable to create SP strategies or offer sufficient training for future employees who can take over leadership positions, the academic literature refers to this issue as a “leadership crisis” (Luzebetak, 2010). Traditional leadership theory continues to ignore and undervalue the feminist literature on the subject of leadership (Welde et al., 2019). The lack of qualified individuals in senior management positions makes it challenging for institutions to run their operations. Most institutions are unable to transmit the same work style model to new executives because of the mission and vision established by older senior leaders.

Some institutions frequently create new important positions, like heads of academic, administrative, student affairs, and information officers, to establish succession plans. These positions may be linked to senior management positions like associate directors, vice presidents, and executive directors to ensure efficient operations. It has not been thoroughly investigated in a variety of circumstances to what extent these new key positions offer chances to ensure gender equity in leadership positions.

There hasn't been any empirical research done on or description of the change and transformation agenda from the perspective of achieving gender parity in leadership roles. The scant study justifies more investigation in the context of institutional SP programs and mixed-gender participation in leadership roles. The concept of SP in higher education is still new, and academic research has scarcely touched on it (Alghofaily, 2019). Contrast this with SP in businesses and corporations, which have formal systems for evaluating and regulating plans along with research-based initiatives, strategic designs, and processes. Several recently developed study areas support succession planning, including higher education evaluation, employee performance reviews, and leadership development (Davies & Davies, 2010).

2. Research questions

A synthesis of the research that supports the understanding of the role of SP in higher education was used to review the literature on SP. It is found that in the international competitive dynamics of higher education, succession to higher

education institutions presents imbalances in the number and structure of dimensions that constrain the rapid development of higher education and affect the competitiveness of universities in the global education market. How to attract, retain, and cultivate university successors, especially those in key positions, and how to develop the potential of successors to the maximum through a series of other means in addition to material incentives to strengthen the construction of innovative teams and promote the development of disciplines have become important issues facing higher education.

With the implementation of the talent training policy, the training of university leaders has achieved obvious results, but some problems still exist, such as the low number of high-level talents, the lack of female succession planning, the lack of originality, and unreasonable staff mobility, which restrict the development of higher education. Current work is hardly addressing the scarcity of female SP in academia, especially in the unique context of describing organizational, cultural, and individual nuances that heterogeneously overwhelm performance. Based on these research gaps, the following questions are posed:

- What is the current status of SP in higher education?
- What are the challenges of introducing SP into higher education?
- What are the problems and causes of SP in higher education?
- What are the gender differences in the implementation of SP?

3. Methods

3.1. Search

In this paper, the author used Scopus, Web of Science, Google Scholar, and other foreign language literature search engines to search for SP in education, SP + higher education, and principal SP as the title of the search. A total of 18 core documents were screened in January 2023. Apart from the online literature, monographs are the least, which indicates a lack of systematicity in SP research. In addition, the keywords of SP research papers in descending order of occurrence are succession planning, succession principal, and SP in higher education. Currently, there are still relatively few core researchers on this topic, and there is a lack of sustained and in-depth attention to the issue of SP in higher education.

In the search provision step, a search string is used to access the chosen database and gather a variety of pertinent literature pieces. The number of papers that are accessible will be determined by running the search phrase against the chosen database, with the results appearing in **Figure 1**. The researcher's search criteria and intended outcomes will, however, affect the total number of publications considered in the study. The size and nature of the database utilized to hunt up relevant publications might also have an impact on the sample size of the analysis. To fine-tune the search terms to replicate the intended study objectives, a pilot literature search should be conducted before the actual systematic review search. A pilot search should be conducted before selecting the actual search engine to properly define the search keywords. For instance, during our pilot search, the results from the author's three database choices were adequate to infer the existence of a large number of pertinent

articles. The longer time frame, the use of larger search terms, and the fact that the outcomes from each database were independent all contributed to these. Only publications released between 2012 and 2022 were included in the article search.

Databases	Searching Stream and terms	No of articles	Date of acquisition
Scopus	Main searching terms-using doc title, abstract, and keywords (succession planning), (Principal Succession) Secondary searching terms: (SP and challenges), (Succession Planning and high education)	55	05/01/2023
Web of Science	Main searching terms-using doc title, (succession planning), Secondary searching terms: (high education)	98	05/01/2023
Google Scholar	Main searching terms-using doc title, (Succession Planning + higher education)	7	05/01/2023

Figure 1. Literature screening table.

3.2. Appraisal

The evaluation stage is where the chosen articles are compared to the goals of the review work. Study selection entails sifting through the chosen literature to find pertinent articles for the review. It involves two simple steps: (1) quality evaluation and (2) inclusion criteria-based study selection.

Study selection utilizing inclusion criteria: Papers that match the inclusion criteria are chosen for additional study and content analysis utilizing inclusion and exclusion criteria. The majority of the publications were excluded, including gray literature, extended abstracts, presentations, keynote speeches, review articles, and works written in languages other than English.

Figure 1 shows the beginning step of the selection process and the selection of pertinent literature, with 160 records discovered (7 from Google Scholar, which uses advanced search techniques), 98 from Web of Science, and 55 from Scopus. **Figure 2** shows how the number of works decreased to 70 after the exclusion of grey literature, longer abstracts, keynote addresses, non-English articles, publications that are difficult to get, and book chapters. After reading the abstract and topic, duplicate papers and publications on on-the-job training that lacked fresh information were manually eliminated. Finally, 18 publications continued to meet every inclusion requirement for the SLR work (**Figure 2**).

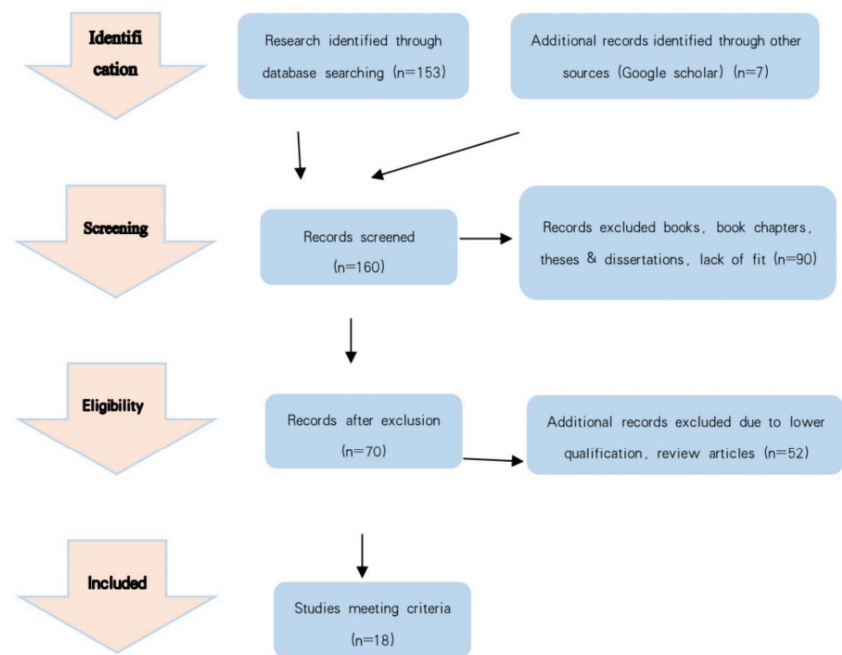


Figure 2. Data screening flow chart (Prisma).

For additional study, the complete list of relevant papers was obtained. 11.25% of the original articles in the databases made up the articles used for subsequent research. In contrast to Hoque et al. (2021) and Qi et al. (2020), which employed 0.7% and 2.8% of the original number of articles in the databases, respectively, this review effort used a larger sample size. The number of publications included in the analysis depends on the search criteria and the goals of the study. The size of the sample used for analysis depends on the quality and kinds of databases that are used to search publications (**Figure 3**). Additionally, the majority of research articles on the subjects were not open sources, which reduced the total number of published articles considered for additional evaluations.

Quality assessment:

- Each SLR was evaluated using the following criteria which are based on four quality assessment (QA) questions:
 - QA1. Are the review's inclusion and exclusion criteria described and appropriate?
 - QA2. Is the literature search likely to have covered all relevant studies on the topic?
 - QA3. Did the selected publication had blind reviewers that assess the quality/validity of the study?
 - QA4. Was the type of BL mentioned in the publication described adequately?

Figure 3. Criteria of quality assessment.

The same analytical procedures of looking for patterns in data, evaluating the synthesis's quality, and some sort of data transformation are used in all types of synthesis. combining data to respond to the review question (Thomas et al., 2012).

It was needed to sort the data into categories in order to prepare it for further analysis. **Figure 4** shows how we sorted the data into categories based on the iterative (Repetition of an action) description. data evaluation (Organization of the data into quantitative categories, descriptions, and narrative analysis).

No	Criteria	Categories considered	Justification
1	Year of publication	Between January 2012–Dec. 2022	Those studies before 2012 were discarded
2	Name of journal	-	To describe the distribution of the work
3	Study site	Name of the country	Geographic site
4. Types of data sources	-	Primary data	Data derived from sampling in the field (e.g., field data, surveys, or interviews or census data)
	-	Secondary data	Data types which were derived from other readily available information and not verified in the field (e.g., remote-sensed data, socioeconomic data, and mixed sources like databases like global statistics)
	-	Mixed data	Database (global statistics, e.g., map of carbon storage and FAO reports), bibliography, modeling, surveys, and field data.
	-	Look-up tables	Use of existing MES values from the literature
	-	Expert knowledge	Experts are invited to rank MES types based on their potential to provide specific ecosystem services to human beings
-	Method	Causal relationships	Incorporate existing knowledge to link with related ecosystem processes and the services to create a new proxy layer of the MES
-	-	Models	Employing field data of MES as response variables and proxies (e.g., biophysical data and information obtained from GIS) as explanatory variables.
-	The scale of the study site using Martínez-Harms and Balvanera [Ref]	-	-
-	Mode of assessment	-	-
-	Number of IST assessed	-	-
-	Purpose of publication	-	-
-	Difficulties mentioned	-	-

Figure 4. Synthesis criteria.

4. Analysis

Discussion and findings

Findings of the study have been reported based on the research questions

(a). Current status of SP in higher education

The results imply that there is a lack of a solid framework that institutions can employ for SP in higher education. In many areas, it is still unclear how to eliminate gender inequalities in women's roles in leadership positions. The traditional academic career path is still being followed by higher education institutions. As a result, current patterns should be modified to meet market needs.

There is a limited amount of research on SP practices in private institutions that describes academic SP, including definition, planning, and value proposition (Klein & Salk, 2013).

Without a succession plan in place, academic institutions would have a very difficult time attracting and keeping talent. This is a truth: higher education cannot change anytime it has to, but it must execute succession plans to build internal talent, despite the resulting absence of succession planning in higher education.

The necessity for staff career development is understood by higher education institutions, but it is unclear how to approach this problem strategically (Keller, 2018). A structured succession plan is in place in 32% of firms, according to the Society for Human Resource Management. However, improper SP implementation can result in a lack of motivation, high staff turnover, low employee morale, and decreased market competitiveness (Johnson et al., 2018). Higher education, in contrast, lacks long-term succession planning and qualified personnel to assist with designing succession plans. To be more precise, succession planning, when included in a business strategy, aids in the retention of skilled workers, adds value, better positions the organization to face future problems, boosts general employee engagement and productivity, and fosters fresh thinking and creativity. And it helps organizations grow, develop, and hold onto the people they need. SP in higher education is still essential to academic settings at this point, but the discipline needs a theoretical foundation on which to build concepts and a strong strategy for dealing with it. To cope with the fierce competition in the market, organizations are now focusing on how to attract, retain, and develop employees. To find the appropriate person for the right job at the right time and to develop high-potential talent, SP is the process of identifying and training potential successors for a specific level of management (Titzer et al., 2013). There is some foreign research on succession planning, some involving SP systems, and some guidance on the methods and steps needed to implement a succession plan and the elements that a successful succession plan should have.

The success of SP depends critically on an organization's chief executive officer or top managers (Singh et al., 2014). They should also keep in mind that succession management is a long-term process, an organizational effort that can never be replaced by any short-term commitment, and they should be patient enough not to favor those with similar educational backgrounds, early work experiences, and other experiences.

The form of SP varies greatly from company to company, depending on their strategic goals. A succession plan can be very simple, with a list of candidates and

those who have the potential to progress to higher management levels, or it can be very formalized, with a formal written document that includes succession systems for all levels of the organization. SP is a complex process that integrates a variety of factors. Implementing SP in management change suggests that the ideal succession plan should include the creation of a candidate database, a systematic approach to candidate selection, activities to develop candidate potential, and a development program. The main factors for a successful succession management plan are planning rigor and well-thought-out plans (Berns & Klarnar, 2017).

(b). Challenges of introducing SP into higher education

Academic leaders don't know about the succession plans or programs for their college or university, and they don't think their organization is ready for a leadership crisis, according to research on leadership development and succession planning. The private sector, in contrast to public higher education, has more flexibility in selecting and appointing leaders. Academic planning is an institutional value, while enterprise planning plays a dominant role in the structure (Dozier, 2013). In a higher education setting, grooming someone for a certain post is viewed as unequal and a violation of the institution's egalitarian ideals. Teachers in higher education describe the academic culture as inclusive, friendly, and open. However, professorships are frequently utilized as stepping stones to future leadership roles because leadership readiness requires various stakeholders to impose their decisions and take advantage of trust-based qualities. However, individuals who desire leadership positions claim that there are no clear paths for progression. In addition, a strong community makes the administrative process of higher education work. Research has demonstrated that these programs are frequently led by individuals rather than institutions, even though many university administrators have started to acknowledge the need to develop the next generation of leaders (Caldwell, 2007). In higher education, leadership takes both an organisational and personal form. In this context, selection committees and boards outside the department typically supervise and regulate succession decisions. The selecting committee has the full right to keep things going on the same path or alter it. To effectively lead higher education institutions in the current period and help them accomplish corporate goals, modern strategic leadership is essential. Old leadership techniques appear ineffective as a result (Kezar & Holcombe, 2017). The absence of teacher interest in volunteering for administrative posts and other similar positions is another factor contributing to the lack of SP in higher education. Additionally, there was a strong correlation between leaders' readiness and their age, years of leadership experience, and academic discipline background (Mohnot, 2019). However, studies on the effects of upcoming studies on the advancement of leadership in academic institutions. The nature and effects of leadership development programs in some innovative and emerging organizational settings need to be explored using a rigorous research methodology, especially for senior leadership styles in educational institutions (Dopsonetal, 2019). Studies carried out in Arab nations reveal that women are rising to management and leadership positions as a result of governments' announcements of plans to promote gender equality (Sidani et al., 2015). Because of this, women continue to experience sociocultural challenges in relation to their status at work in organizations (Afiouni & Karam, 2014). There aren't enough institutions of

higher learning in Saudi Arabia. Lack of information and skills prevents women in Saudi Arabia from holding leadership roles (Abalkhail, 2017).

In general, in the case of university positions, the older generation retires, and new successors are created according to seniority. Many universities do not have succession plans at all, or succession plans have only a simple prototype and lack standardized management systems and processes. The so-called succession also only stops at the handover of positions and authority. A succession management plan is a systematic project to identify, track, and cultivate high-potential talents and to identify suitable candidates for key positions at the right time. It is a long-term process covering several human resource management activities such as selection, development, cultivation, and assessment of high-potential talents.

SP is a systematic project covering specific management modules such as selection, development, cultivation, and assessment of high-potential talents, so when formulating a succession needs list according to the higher education development plan, it is necessary to first assess the successor positions. The successor of the university is not only responsible for the management of the university but also for the organization and deployment of human, financial, and material resources and the coordination of interpersonal relations for the construction of the discipline. Therefore, only through a reasonable evaluation of the position (Keerio et al., 2022).

Therefore, only a reasonable assessment of the position can determine the competent characteristics of the successor, such as political quality, professional quality, learning ability, organizational and coordination ability, communication ability, leadership ability, innovation, scientific spirit, and social activity ability. In addition, the imperfection of the system of job evaluation affects to a certain extent the assessment of the quantity and quality of successor needs, which in turn affects the development, training, and assessment of successors (Ghazali et al., 2021). With the development and implementation of a high-quality talent cultivation plan by the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Personnel, and other related departments, the competition for backbone personnel resources has been launched among universities. But compared with developing and cultivating high-potential talents, universities are more willing to introduce talents vigorously. The blind introduction of talents may lead to the situation of “attracting one but running away a bunch” and may not match well with the development of the university, resulting in the waste of high-level human resources. With the serious problem of losing core talents in universities, the lack of attention to high-potential talents not only leads to the loss of high-potential talents but also shows a fault in key positions (Weisblat, 2018).

It is a revolutionary leap in human resource management to establish a talent database when making succession plans, which requires the use of high technology for talent assessment and management, including the assessment and analysis of successor attributes, individual characteristics, the external environment, and other factors. In addition, the methods of succession competency assessment are not diverse enough, lack the support of expert teams, and are not scientific and effective (Phillips, 2019). For example, the organization’s performance appraisal system is used to determine the strengths and weaknesses of employees, or the psychological testing

method is used to assess employees' competencies, mostly requiring the Internet and computer systems.

(c). Problems and causes of SP in higher education

The main problem of the metabolism of the leadership team is to deal with the relationship between the successor and the predecessor, to complete the relay race, to grasp the principle of succession, and to complete the handover not only of positions and powers but also of experimental equipment, assistants, etc., and invisible knowledge and skills, interpersonal network, and social activity skills (Chia et al., 2021). At present, the lack of SP in some universities has led to the inability of the personnel in charge of key positions, especially the leaders, to gradually transfer the power, responsibilities, relationships, and business matters related to the positions in a planned manner. In some universities, the lack of planning for the handover between the successor and the predecessor has resulted in the inability of the successor to obtain the details of the predecessor's work, making it difficult to carry out the follow-up work, which not only affects the efficiency of work but may even lead to the waste of resources.

The lag between the management concept and the talent team-building concept in universities determines the development of a talent training plan and affects the existence of a succession plan. Under the conditions of the market economy, the international competition for higher education is intensifying, and high-level talents have become the core element of the competition of universities and even the competition for national comprehensive power (Sverdlik, 2012).

In this situation, the lack of talent competition consciousness among university management will lead to drawbacks in personnel management in terms of personnel plans, work targets, and work implementation, which cannot meet the goal of high-level talent cultivation. In addition, the administrative performance concept of college leaders also tends to affect the short-term development goals of colleges and universities. SP requires a lot of human, material, and financial resources for the training of successors, and the leadership may worry about the negative impact of SP on the performance of key positions, such as the loss of other excellent personnel due to the pre-designation of successors, which affects the stability of people's hearts (Obianuju et al., 2021).

SP is a long-term process, and the selection, development, training, and evaluation of successors require significant human, material, and financial resources, which makes SP a challenge for universities that are rapidly expanding in size and underfunded. SP is a complex system project, which requires the managers of personnel departments responsible for SP to have professional backgrounds and be capable of succession planning, selection of high-potential personnel, assessment of key positions, and construction and application of competency characteristics models (Larcker & Tayan, 2016).

However, many colleges and universities still use the traditional rigid management for personnel management, and the work content of people management staff is restricted to administrative matters, such as file administration, salary, and welfare, and it remains at the simple business level: labor relations, title evaluation, and so on. Personnel work is the top priority of university management, and the ability

and quality of personnel department staff in universities will directly affect the whole university management, and their professional level also affects the scientific process of the selection of successors, the effectiveness of development and training work, and then the quality of a high-level innovative talent team.

With the deepening of higher education reform, organizations and personnel are bound to encounter many new situations and contradictions. Principals should take innovation consciousness, innovation ability, and innovation results as the basis for training, measuring, and using talents and effectively grasp the work of using, caring for, and motivating talents. Principals should establish the idea of “talents strengthening the university”, actively explore and improve the talent selection mechanism with open selection, fair competition, and the ability to go up and down, which is conducive to the talents coming out, and strive to make talents with careers, gather talents with the environment, and motivate talents with mechanisms to provide intellectual support and talent guarantee for the reform and development of the university.

SP is generated for successor replacement, which refers to a management activity to achieve the strategic goals of universities, to obtain the leaders who meet the requirements of university discipline construction goals at the right time and in the right way, and to fill the vacancies of future and present positions caused by the flow of personnel such as promotion, transfer, departure, retirement, and death so that universities can operate normally and efficiently (Guise, 2015).

SP is an important part of human resource management, which can prevent the shaking of the school caused by the absence or turnover of leaders, and at the same time, it belongs to the long-term planning of colleges and universities, which needs to be consistent with the strategic goals of colleges and universities and is, in essence, the long-term talent development strategy of colleges and universities. The replacement of a successor due to promotion, transfer, or retirement has certain planning, and the departing person has a period of leading and teaching the successor. The succession happens more calmly, but it also requires colleges and universities to usually pay attention to the training and exercise of the successor to adapt to the new work as soon as possible (Odim et al., 2017).

When colleges and universities are faced with such unexpected events, the sudden departure of leaders will cause losses such as stagnation of work, loss of core technology, interruption of projects, and instability of people. If there is no scientific succession management system for university discipline construction, the loss of high-level staff will cause an incalculable loss to university construction. Thus, establishing awareness of SP can, to a certain extent, avoid potential or real job vacancies, or even possible talent crises, faced by university discipline construction.

Educational practices, teaching and learning environments, and feminist research efforts have led to a boom in women’s studies (Lin, 2019). In terms of equal rights for women to take leadership roles in higher education, the theoretical basis has fallen short. Limitations exist for women seeking equality with men in higher education (Policastro, 2015). Women’s leadership is becoming more widely accepted on a global scale. It is frequently maintained that having more women in the workforce is crucial for both social and economic advancement (Grigoli et al., 2018). Despite making a

significant economic contribution, women still fall short of men in terms of equality (WEF, 2020).

(d). Gender differences in the implementation of SP

Studies show that women are underrepresented as experts in the positioning of service delivery (Murray et al., 2019). In particular, the shift to more supportive female leadership may be associated with growing dissatisfaction with the economic environment and people's attitudes and behaviors (Jones et al., 2018). Due to employment segregation, gender discrimination, color, status, and ineptitude, women confront numerous obstacles to obtaining leadership positions (Hodges, 2017). Even though more women are entering the workforce, they are underrepresented in leadership and management roles (Alaqahtani, 2020).

5. Recommendation

There is a dearth of quantitative information and evaluations on actual SP initiatives and results. Case studies and interviews can provide insightful background. It is necessary to use these methods and tools in future investigations. In order to comprehend the obstacles and enablers that affect the creation and implementation of thorough succession plans, future studies can examine the elements impacting the successful application of succession planning in university settings. To find best practices and areas for development, a comparative study of various succession planning models used by universities can be carried out to investigate the differences in methodology, efficacy, and results of succession planning activities.

Future studies can look into and create more reliable succession planning models that are especially suited to the particular difficulties that institutions face. This could entail looking into cutting-edge methods of succession planning that go beyond the simple transfer of roles and responsibilities and take into account things like social activity skills, personal networks, and experimental equipment. The study can look at practical approaches to succession planning in higher education. The elements of organizational culture, leadership dedication, and the function of human resources in promoting orderly transitions between predecessors and successors are among the elements of succession planning that can be successfully investigated through research.

According to our analysis of the literature, few studies address female leadership in higher education, putting more of an emphasis on the difficulties that women encounter. Research gaps found in the current study can be filled by conducting additional studies in the field of gender representation in leadership posts. Research to examine in depth the particular obstacles that prevent women from achieving leadership roles and how racial, ethnic, age, and socioeconomic status connect should be conducted to gain a deeper understanding of the difficulties that various groups of women encounter. The need for SP research in higher education is for new directions, contextually relevant theory and practice engagement, and female inclusion, which are key aspects of talent development best practices to promote long-term objectives. Thus, three study fields that might support the contributions of academic scholars and doctorate students are suggested for future research initiatives. Additionally, it can aid government organizations that fund studies in higher education and involve women in

succession planning. The majority of SP research is done from a North American and European perspective. It is also advised to look into similar studies in other areas in order to comprehend the variety of phenomena.

6. Limitation

This study faced limitations stemming from insufficient available data or publications pertaining to the correlation between human resources and school performance. Additionally, the prevalence of predominantly quantitative research papers, with only a limited number utilizing mixed techniques, restricted the comprehensive inclusion of social context knowledge and evidence regarding the motivations, beliefs, and experiences of individuals in this investigation.

7. Conclusion

This study is the result of a thorough analysis of the research on higher education succession planning, or SP. It calls for a thorough investigation of the nuances of human capital management in higher education, going beyond a cursory examination. Scholarly research on SP in higher education has been notably scarce, which highlights the necessity of preliminary evaluations of staff career development plans in this setting. These evaluations are essential for understanding the present situation and creating a foundation for academic institutions' succession planning programs.

As a lengthy process, succession planning requires an awareness of how requirements for successors change as universities strategically align and fields go through developmental phases. Effective succession planning necessitates the use of a scientifically sound system of assessment indicators that includes process, reaction, and outcome indicators in order to track and modify plans in accordance with organizational requirements. A system like this should measure a candidate's leadership abilities, sense of teamwork, foresight, creativity, and flexibility in great detail.

The review also emphasizes how crucial it is to conduct more study on management techniques, assessment, and post-succession development. This also applies to the creation of dynamic, cooperative, and cohesive teams. It highlights the particular difficulties experienced by women in higher education in particular, and it suggests that an action research technique could offer fresh perspectives in this area. Thus, this study intends to support the creation of pilot interventions for succession planning by offering fresh data and suggesting directions for future investigation. The research findings could be advantageous not just for academics and higher education establishments but also for government funding agencies that support higher education research, particularly that that focuses on including women in succession planning endeavors.

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