



AN INVESTIGATION OF SUCCESSION PLANNING IN THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT OF GARMSAR CITY BASED ON PRINCIPALS' COMPETENCY

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to investigate the factors affecting the success of the succession planning system in the education department of the Iranian city of Garmsar. Falling under applied research, this study selected around 100 principals, teachers, office employees, etc. working at the education department as its statistical population. The sample size was 66 people who were randomly given questionnaires. A standardized questionnaire was used to collect data. To measure the questionnaire's reliability, Cronbach's alpha was used and was estimated at 0.8912. The questionnaire's data were analyzed by the SPSS 21 software. Findings showed that the executive planning model at the Garmsar Education Department followed the principals' competency model. With a significance value of less than 0.05, the variable of Competency Model components was found to significantly affect the way succession planning could be enforced at the department, suggesting a positive and direct effect.

Keywords: succession planning system, applied research principals' competency model

INTRODUCTION

Given the critical role of Education Departments in educating and raising people in society, principals could significantly contribute to this process. Since the principals' retirement age is raised and new principals are arriving at the system, the education department requires planning to develop and replace them. According to studies, the fast replacement of principals, in addition to the retirement of the current workforce, has led to a rising number of empty positions, as new domains emerge. As a consequence, the education department needs to provide more effective planning to fill in these empty positions. By the same token, competition to find talented and effective principals in the country seems to be growing in the coming years, as readiness to fill the key leadership posts at proper times will become a main challenge facing

the education department. So, it is becoming increasingly important to understand where the education department is standing and which components it needs to take into account to get to a favorable point (Hadizadeh & Sultani, 2021).

Succession planning serves as a critical instrument used by organizational leaders to help employees get ready for future changes and ensure that they develop their skills while assuming leadership roles (Barner, 2021). This kind of planning empowers organizational leaders to identify knowledge, skills, and key abilities and to prepare employees to perform future tasks (Byham, 2002). Countering current management challenges, such as providing more services for customers, increased changes, environmental concerns, data transfer and processing speeds, open markets, global businesses, regional collaboration among governments, applying modern technologies, demographic trends, changing expectations, worries over values, matching employee needs with others, working diversity, etc. require organizations to practice succession planning as a critical activity in conjunction with implementing macro-organizational strategies that aim to recruit, develop, and maintain talented employees (Helton, 2021). The most successful organizations are those that invest in their employees for a longer period of time.

By investing in time and cost to grow domestic talent, organizations will be capable of easily transitioning to the next stages after their main talents are retired or leave the organizations for any reason. Adopting a win-win succession planning strategy allows organizations to identify key professions, potential successors, and skill gaps, presenting employees with available occupational options and instruments to plan and meet job goals. As stated, adopting an integrated and inclusive approach could promise more benefits for employees, directors, and organizations as a whole. Succession planning is demonstrated to have been tied to people's occupations and is thought to increase the spirit of employees and their productivity. The organizations that support occupational development enable their employees to find new opportunities within organizations and encourage occupational mobility, prompting their employees to broaden their occupational development. Thus, succession planning is a valuable tool to support organizational strategies and acquire competitive benefits. Succession planning is widely accepted to be a key part of organizational strategy (Kim, 2021).

It is imperative for organizations to broaden talented workforce management capabilities to acquire management occupations in line with realizing organizational perspectives. Hence, the main dimensions of the meritocracy process include identifying talents and intellectual elite, potential and actual enforcement, recruiting the elite and talents in government organizations enforcing development, training and educating talents and their abilities in a modern way, outlining and motivating occupational working vision, and finally gaining major managerial and leadership posts, which could be accumulated within a concept called the Succession Planning System (Fulmer, 2019). In consideration of the critical role of education, this study investigated the system of principals' succession planning at the Education Department in the city of Garmsar.

Theoretical Foundations of the Study

Succession Planning

Many of the organizations on the brink of failure lack a certain management plan to meet their goals, negatively reacting to incidents that happen to them; however, the organizations that seek to maintain and consolidate their positions plan to identify and raise first intra-organizational and then extra-organizational management talents (Bordbar et al., 2021).

Succession planning management is a measured and organized effort practiced by an organization to ensure the continuity of leadership under critical circumstances, retain and raise intellectual and practical capital to help encourage people. Organized succession planning is presented when an organization offers specific procedures to identify, raise, and retain

committed people in the long run (Rothwell, 2020). In simpler terms, succession planning management ensures that the organization will have the right employees to fill the positions that suit them at the right time (Mandi, 2020). Succession planning can be understood as an attempt to provide a plan for a proportionate number of managers and employees with key abilities, allowing them to serve as good successors when other members of the organization retire, die, fall ill, and get a promotion, or even when new positions arise in the future organizational planning (Rothwell, 2020). The Hagberg Advisory Group defines succession planning to be “a dynamic and continuous process that identifies, determines, and develops leadership and managerial needs for future organizational strategic tasks”.

Succession planning is the process in which the need for intellectual talent and leadership is presented over time through the organization and it enables people to assume future working responsibilities required by the organization. One key goal of succession planning is to match current talents with required talents in the future, ultimately helping the organization to deal with operational and strategic challenges by providing good people at the right time and place to perform their activities more effectively.

Previous organizations used to apply succession planning only for specific occupations; however, as time passed, pioneering organizations sought to adopt a more wide-ranging concept under the heading of succession planning management. Succession planning management actually involves fast environmental transformation while forming and updating a repertoire of talents dynamically and continuously instead of presenting a simple succession program (Mader, 2021). Succession planning is also defined as the organization's conscious and systematic measures to ensure the continuity of employees' empowerment and abilities in key posts and encourage individual development. Succession planning can thus be categorized into three process management, successor election, and successor development subjects (Nasehi-Far et al., 2022).

Competency Approach and Talent Identification Process

Adopting a competency approach in human resource management is one of the best and most suitable approaches to meet the goal of succession planning. Competency models essentially serve to integrate various human resource measures. This indicates that any of subsystems of human resource management can be designed based on competency. Competency basically represents the central core of all human resource activities within an organization. This competency helps produce a paradigm in the Human Resource Management literature and is known as Competency-based Human Resource Management (Fazlabadi et al., 2022).

The fast adoption of the competency-based approach and its incorporation into employment development programs are the benefits offered by this approach. Today, the significance and role of managers as the main designers, leaders, and directors of organizations are widely known, and it is critical to employ effective appointment, recruitment, retaining, and development systems. As the key individuals dealing with various intra- and extra-organizational subjects, managers contribute significantly to the success and even failure of organizations. Since management is highly important in each organization and helps realize organizational missions and goals, it is thus important to focus on appointing competent managers as one of the main forms of meritocracy systems (Gholamzadeh et al., 2022).

Competency involves various terms as capability, empowerment, ability, qualification, and skills. Competency is defined as a combination of personal skills and characteristics as well as conduct directly associated with the effective performance of a specific job (Dargahi et al., 2022). The type and level of competency are widely applied in planning human resources. Competencies of knowledge and skills can be observed and fall under the level category. Competencies of self-concept, features, and motives are more profound and underlie character (Gholamzadeh et al., 2022).

To meet its superiority, the organization requires central competencies. Central competencies result from organizational capabilities. Organizational capabilities are created by organizational resources. The process of creating organizational capabilities is a learning process that leads the organization toward a competitive advantage through continuous organizational experiences. Central competencies include capabilities that are valuable, rare, non-substitutable, and inimitable (Afzalabadi et al., 2022).

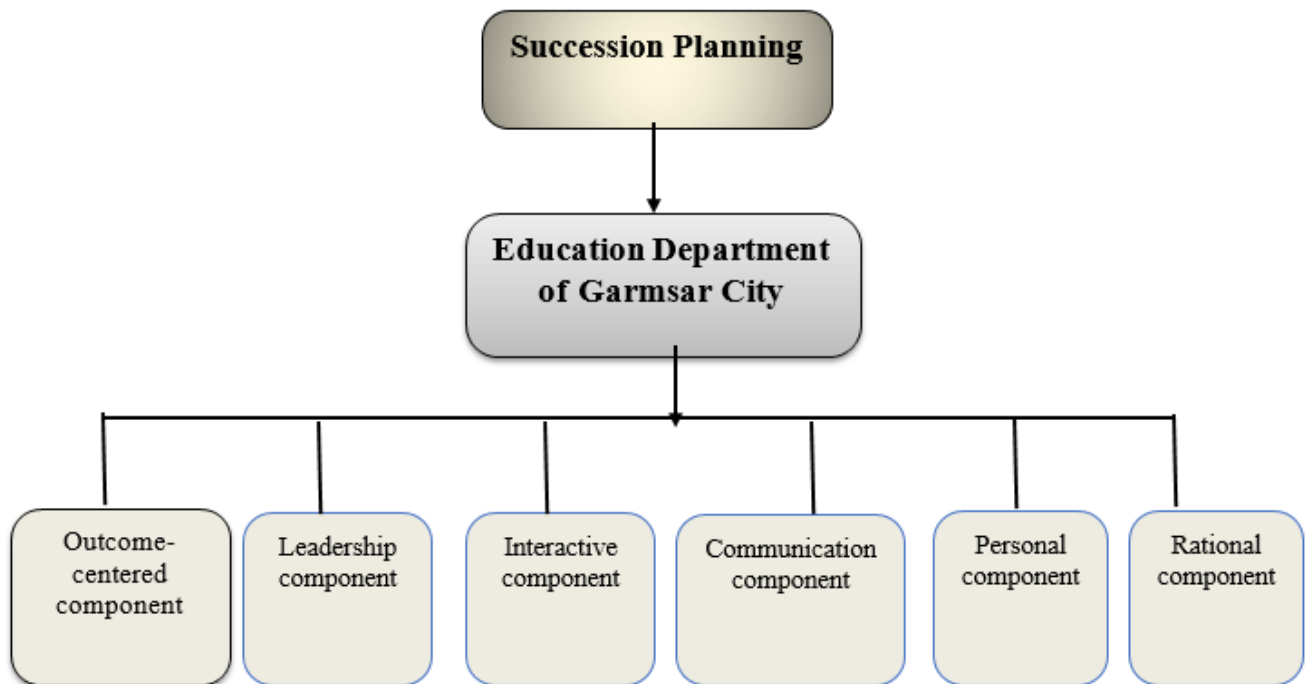


Fig. 1: Conceptual model

Research Methodology

This study was applied in terms of nature and goal and fell under descriptive-correlational research in terms of data collection while being a field (survey) form in terms of administration. The city of Garmsar's Education Department management comprised the statistical population. The sampling procedure was two stages; in the first stage, employees of the management division (around 100 people) were selected, and in the second stage, the total number of employees was obtained. The Morgan Table was used for the sample size which amounted to 66 people. The questionnaires were randomly distributed to them.

To measure the content validity of the questionnaire, the measuring tool was provided to professors and experts in human resource management to be reviewed. The review of the tool could help measure the internal consistency of the items. At last, the questionnaires were distributed to the intended sample size. The face validity of the questionnaire was measured by controlling the items when completed by the respondents. To measure the questionnaire's reliability, Cronbach's alpha was used and was estimated at 0.8912. The questionnaire's data were analyzed by the SPSS 21 software.

Findings

Findings showed that 5 (7.6%) of the respondents were women, as 61 people (92.4%) were men. The relative majority of the respondents (46 people), i.e., 69.7% of the respondents, were in the 35-year-old and higher age group. Eight people (21.1%) were 26 to 30 years old. The relative majority of the respondents (41 people), i.e., 62.1%, had a working record of higher than 15 years, eight people (12.1%) had a working record of up to 5 years, and 16.7% held 11-

15 years of working records. Forty people of the respondents (60.6%) held B.As., while 26 people (39.4%) held B.A. and higher.

Table 1: Describing components of succession planning

	No.	Min.	Max.	Mean	SD	Variance
Variable of succession planning	66	1.81	4.07	2.8	0.7	0.5
Variable of rationality	66	1.64	5	2.97	1.03	1.07
Variable of personality characteristics	66	1.75	5	3.3	0.81	0.67
Variable of communications	66	1.8	5	3.74	0.92	0.86
Variable of interaction	66	1.83	5	3.5	0.87	0.76
Variable of leadership	66	1	5	3.06	1.16	1.36
Variable of outcome centeredness	66	1.75	4.88	3.19	0.98	0.97

Table 1 shows that the variable of succession planning held the lowest and highest values of 1.81 and 4.07, respectively, mean of 2.8, standard deviation of 0.7, and variance of 0.5; the variable of rationality held the lowest and highest values of 1.64 and 5, respectively, mean of 2.97, standard deviation of 1.03, and variance of 1.07; the variable of personality characteristics held the lowest and highest values of 1.75 and 5, respectively, mean of 3.3, standard deviation of 0.81, and variance of 0.67; the variable of communication held the lowest and highest values of 1.08 and 5, respectively, mean of 3.74, standard deviation of 0.92, and variance of 0.86; the variable of interaction held the lowest and highest values of 1.83 and 5, respectively, mean of 3.5, standard deviation of 0.87, and variance of 0.76; the variable of leadership held the lowest and highest values of 1 and 5, respectively, mean of 3.06, standard deviation of 1.16, and variance of 1.36; the variable of outcome centeredness held the lowest and highest values of 1.75 and 4.88, respectively, mean of 3.19, standard deviation of 0.98, and variance of 0.97.

Table 2: Regression test between the variable of competency model components and succession planning

R value	Coefficient of determination	β coefficient	Constant value	Sig. value
0.76	0.58	0.76	0.79	0.000

With the significance level being less than 0.05, the variable of competency model components was found to significantly affect succession planning at the Garmsar Education Department at 95%. The intensity of this effect amounted to 0.76. The β coefficient indicated that the effect was positively direct. On the other hand, the coefficient of determination in this hypothesis was 0.58, i.e., the independent variable could predict 58% of the dependent variable changes (Table 2).

Table 3: Regression test between the variables of competency model and succession planning

	R value	Coefficient of determination	β coefficient	Constant value	Sig. value
Variable of rational components	0.82	0.68	0.82	1.1	0.000
Variable of personal components	0.61	0.37	0.61	1.02	0.000

Variable of communication components	0.31	0.08	0.31	1.9	0.01
Variable of interactive components	0.59	0.34	0.59	11.61	0.000
Variable of leadership components	0.79	0.62	0.79	1.31	0.000

With the significance level being less than 0.05, the variable of rational components was found to significantly affect succession planning at the Garmsar Education Department at 95%. The intensity of this effect amounted to 0.82. The β coefficient indicated that the effect was positively direct. On the other hand, the coefficient of determination in this hypothesis was 0.68, i.e., the independent variable could predict 68% of the dependent variable changes.

The variable of personal components was found to significantly affect succession planning at the Garmsar Education Department at 95%. The intensity of this effect amounted to 0.61. The β coefficient indicated that the effect was positively direct. On the other hand, the coefficient of determination in this hypothesis was 0.37, i.e., the independent variable could predict 37% of the dependent variable changes.

The variable of communication components was found to significantly affect succession planning at the Garmsar Education Department at 95%. The intensity of this effect amounted to 0.31. The β coefficient indicated that the effect was positively direct. On the other hand, the coefficient of determination in this hypothesis was 0.08, i.e., the independent variable could predict 8% of the dependent variable changes.

The variable of interactive components was found to significantly affect succession planning at the Garmsar Education Department at 95%. The intensity of this effect amounted to 0.59. The β coefficient indicated that the effect was positively direct. On the other hand, the coefficient of determination in this hypothesis was 0.34, i.e., the independent variable could predict 34% of the dependent variable changes.

The variable of leadership components was found to significantly affect succession planning at the Garmsar Education Department at 95%. The intensity of this effect amounted to 0.79. The β coefficient indicated that the effect was positively direct. On the other hand, the coefficient of determination in this hypothesis was 0.62, i.e., the independent variable could predict 62% of the dependent variable changes.

CONCLUSION

The goal of this study was to examine succession planning in the Education Department of Garmsar City based on the principals' competency. Findings showed that given the significance level of less than 0.05, the variable of competency model components had a significantly positive and direct effect on succession planning at the department; the variable of rational components had a significantly positive and direct effect on succession planning at the department; the variable of personal components (i.e., adaptability, independence, truthfulness, enduring pressure, etc.), had a significantly positive and direct effect on succession planning at the department; the variable of communication components had a significantly positive and direct effect on succession planning at the department; the variable of interactive components had a significantly positive and direct effect on succession planning at the department a 95%; the variable of leadership components had a significantly positive and direct effect on

succession planning at the department, and the variable of outcome-centered components the variable of communication components had a significantly positive and direct effect on succession planning at the department. The findings of this study confirmed the results of previous research, including those by Christie (2021) who concluded that most respondents maintained that succession planning in their respective organizations should be associated with organizational perspective, goals, and strategies, and the employees' recruitment development, occupational progress, and retaining. This, they argued, indicated the enforcement of the order by the representative of the Presidential Management division over succession planning. The main limitation of the study was the data-collection tool (questionnaire); for this, future research is recommended to broaden purposeful plans to recruit skilled people for critical positions.

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