

THE ROLE OF ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE DURING THE
IMPLEMENTATION OF INTERNAL SUCCESSION PLANNING WITHIN
MALAYSIAN RESEARCH UNIVERSITIES

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A project report submitted in partial
fulfillment of the requirement for the award of the
Doctor of Philosophy in Technology Management

Faculty of Technology Management and Business
Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia

January 2021

I hereby declare that the work in this thesis is my own except for quotations
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DEDICATION

To Nishat girls wing (NGW) jamait Luari sharif, from where I got the inspiration and motivation to persue further studies and build my career. I extremely owe it a debt of gratitude for all the achievements I made.

To my brave mother and great father whose prayers and love never left me while I was working on this task away from home.

To my role model Ahsan gul dahri who had faith in me despite all the shortcomings

To my amazing brother Deen Muhammad who has been grooming me since childhood. Because of his support, I was able to finish the educational voyage.

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ABSTRACT

Succession planning is not new to academia and many institutions have supported these programs for years. Few, however, have adopted formal succession planning strategies that are both strategic and deliberate and encompass the full spectrum of succession planning activities. However, less is understood about the role of culture on succession planning within public universities in Malaysia. Nevertheless; there is an absence of a comprehensive conceptual model of the culture-succession relationship in the literature that includes the impact of moderators such as national culture. A mixed mode design was adopted by the study where qualitative data was first collected, analyzed and then used to develop a survey instrument for the quantitative phase of the study. The study surveyed 375 academic staff of the five research universities in Malaysia, and the results were analyzed using the IBM SPSS for Windows and PLS-SEM. A structural model was built to identify the relationship between the organisational culture and succession planning and the moderating effect of the national culture in public research universities. The study's findings showed that succession planning is still new to public universities in Malaysia and training and development are still unstructured. Although there was a positive and significant relationship between organisational culture and succession planning, whereas, findings suggested national culture showed a moderating effect on the relationship of organisational culture and succession planning. The model can help to analyze organisational culture in order to change the Malaysian public universities' strategy to implement succession planning.

ABSTRAK

Pelan penggantian bukanlah suatu perkara baharu dalam dunia akademik dan terdapat banyak institusi pendidikan yang telah melaksanakan program ini. Namun begitu, hanya segelintir institusi pendidikan yang telah mengadaptasi pelan penggantian secara formal yang merangkumi kesemua strategi dalam berkenaan. Malah, kesan budaya terhadap pelan penggantian di Institusi Pengajian Tinggi (IPT) di Malaysia juga masih kurang difahami. Di samping itu, terdapat kelompangan di dalam kajian model konseptual hubungan antara budaya dan pelan penggantian yang meliputi kesan moderator seperti budaya kebangsaan. Kaedah campuran telah diadaptasi dalam kajian ini di mana data kualitatif telah dikumpulkan terlebih dahulu, dianalisis dan digunakan untuk membangunkan item dalam borang soal selidik bagi fasa kuantitatif kajian ini. Seramai 375 staf akademik daripada lima universiti penyelidikan awam di Malaysia telah terlibat dalam kajian ini dan dapatan telah dianalisis menggunakan IBM SPSS untuk Windows dan PLS-SEM. Struktur model telah dibangunkan untuk mengenal pasti hubungan di antara budaya organisasi dan pelan penggantian dan kesan moderator budaya kebangsaan di kalangan staf akademik di lima universiti penyelidikan awam. Hasil kajian mendapati bahawa pelaksanaan pelan penggantian masih di peringkat awal dan tidak berstruktur. Selain itu, hasil kajian juga menunjukkan bahawa budaya boleh menjadi faktor kejayaan atau faktor penghalang terhadap kejayaan pelan penggantian dan ia bergantung kepada nilai budaya tersebut dan menyokong satu daripada dua hipotesis yang dicadangkan. Walaupun terdapat hubungan yang positif dan signifikan di antara budaya organisasi dan pelan penggantian, dapatan menyatakan bahawa budaya kebangsaan menunjukkan kesan moderator terhadap hubungan di antara budaya organisasi dan pelan penggantian. Model ini dapat membantu menganalisis budaya kebangsaan bagi mengubah strategi pelaksanaan pelan penggantian di institusi pengajian tinggi awam. Di samping itu, boleh dikatakan bahawa kajian ini mengenal pasti budaya kebangsaan dan hubungannya terhadap pelan penggantian secara langsung.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<i>OCAI</i>	Organisational culture assessment instrument
<i>HEIs</i>	Higher education institutions
<i>OC</i>	Organisational culture
<i>SP</i>	Succession planning
<i>NC</i>	National culture
<i>CVF</i>	Competing values framework
<i>VC</i>	Vice chancellor
<i>DVC</i>	Deputy vice chancellor
<i>ECC</i>	Educational competencies consortium
<i>AKEPT</i>	Akademi Kepimpinan Pendidikan Tinggi
<i>HR</i>	Human resource
<i>HOD</i>	Head of department
<i>KPI</i>	Key performance indicator
<i>PSD</i>	Public service division
<i>PLS-SEM</i>	Partial least square-Structural equation modeling
<i>EFA</i>	Exploratory factor analysis
<i>PD</i>	Power distance
<i>COL</i>	Collectivism
<i>LTO</i>	Long-term orientation
<i>UA</i>	Uncertainty avoidance
<i>MAS</i>	Masculinity
<i>MQF</i>	Malaysian Qualifications Framework
<i>BSRI</i>	Sex-Role Inventory
<i>WVS</i>	World Values Survey
<i>PCA</i>	Principal component analysis
<i>PAF</i>	Principal axis factoring
<i>ML</i>	Maximum likelihood

<i>GE</i>	General Electric
<i>NGO</i>	Nonprofit organisation
<i>CEO</i>	Chief executive officer



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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Succession planning issues are being addressed worldwide in higher education. It is a process through which an organisation assures leadership for the future through a talent pipeline with capabilities of sustaining an institution's long term goals (Klein & Salk, 2013). This is because the success of an organisation depends on its leadership. Therefore, the implementation of a proper succession process is a distinguishing factor between an effective organisation and an ineffective organisation (Ahmad, Mohamed, & Manaf, 2017).

Meanwhile, in Malaysia, the development of future leaders has been highlighted as a career path for academics under the Malaysian Education Plan 2015-2025. It is considered as a strategy to develop academic leadership skills in the country. Malaysia's ambition to become a highly developed country, and in particular, as the centre for international education hub, has led to the growing interest of research into leadership roles within Malaysian institutions of higher education (MHE). Unlike before, today's universities are expected to produce highly skilled graduates and high-quality work to meet the demands of the 'knowledge economy,' created by recent and rapid technological advances. With the rise in student enrollment, branding, internalization, higher tuition fees, limited research support, the creation of university leadership has been under intense scrutiny (Al Issa, 2019). Moreover, any changes in the institutions while disregarding the organisational culture would not be effective (Shabankareh, Madani, & Shiralizadeh, 2015). An understanding of the cultural

context within which a succession planning system operates may serve to enhance the implementation (Salajegheh *et al.*, 2014).

This research, therefore, identifies the current practices of succession planning in the Malaysian public universities. It explores the role of organisational culture in the implementation of succession planning in Malaysian public universities. It also intends to determine the critical success factors of succession planning in the Malaysian public universities. It investigates the moderating role of national culture in the relationship between organisational culture and succession planning. This study used the competing values framework (CVF) (Cameron Kim & Quinn Robert, 1999) and Hofstede's national culture dimensions (Hofstede, 2011) for the framework of the study. The purpose of the CVF is to aggregate culture into vast categories based on general characteristics rather than to define an institution's uniqueness. The CVF also emphasizes the importance of the balance of culture types. The CVF is an effective tool for describing and measuring the culture of higher education institutions and is appropriate to any unit of analysis. This model has been used in higher education institutions studies and is suitable for the context of higher education (Cameron & Quinn, 2011). More specifically, this framework helps to define which dominant culture is present in higher education institutions, the dominant values expressed by culture, and how higher education institutions achieve their goals or objectives (Cameron *et al.*, 2014).

1.2 Background of the study

Development in the higher education sector of Malaysia is also due to the exertions of the Malaysian government to extend the education industry internationally. The Education Strategic Plan and the National Higher Education Action Plan 2007-2020 is slated for all HEIs to accomplish actions that enhance the quality and reputation of the university. The Malaysian Ninth Plan (2006-2010) for example, delivered a series of methods to improve the quality of education, primarily through a wider coverage and application of information, communication and technology (ICT), an outline of a quality assurance system, and upgrading of infrastructure amenities (The Economic Planning Unit, 2006). These insights are consistent with the "1 Malaysia" education key plan of the scheme that concentrates on the growth and exploitation of knowledge

in line with the vision of the MOE that is “to establish Malaysia as a centre of excellence for higher education” (MOHE, 2011). This study is carried out to tackle a common principle among human resource professionals which argues that “great vision without great people is irrelevant”, and this situation may also occur among public universities’ administrators.

During the 1960s and 1970s, the government’s funding supported the public universities in Malaysia. The government of Malaysia through the ministry of education initiated all academic activities from the building of facilities to administrative power of the institutions (Bajunid *et al.*, 2017). At that time, the responsibility of the university’s leaders was to administrate the development policies on Malaysian universities. The policies developed were to focus on the development and evaluation of curriculum, teaching and learning in the classroom, management planning staff, students and parents (Inayatullah & Milojevic, 2016). The leader’s core responsibilities were only managing budget, adding the required skills in their public relations and looking for cooperation grants and donations. However, the current challenge of public research universities in Malaysia is to produce better performance. The challenge is not only to increase the number of graduates but also to increase the quality of graduates.

The required competencies for academic leadership in the last fifty years are very different from those of present academic leaders (Kamil, Hashim, & Hamid, 2016). In order to develop the necessary skills of the employee, Omar and Hassan (2015) suggested that competencies needed by vice-chancellors are as comprehensive as those that prepare them for C-suite. Furthermore, the authors defined the phase of changing leadership through succession planning. Although there are still unclear trajectories on the right element, process and assessment as most of the studies focused on corporations and western countries.

Malaysian public universities are facing enormous challenges regarding the succession process due to so many reasons. One of the reasons is the future leadership crisis that is usually stated in the literature on succession (Omar & Hassan, 2015; Sirat, Ahmad, & Azman, 2012). Most of the authors raise the issue of the shortages of succession planning strategies in public universities (Harris & Mncube, 2019; Nakutis, 2016; Richards, 2016; Seniwoliba, 2015). Moreover, Ishak and Kamil (2016) stressed that higher education systems lacked in systematic approach towards hiring, grooming, and retaining potential leaders. Meanwhile, public universities are not considering the

development of mid-level leaders (such as department heads) adequately; even the demographic situation is alarming (Ishak & Kamil, 2016). In fact, Nakutis (2016) posit that academic departments spend little time in selecting their leaders and even less time in preparing them for the duties they will assume. In fact, a number of studies have recommended that to cope with the looming leadership crisis, universities must adequately prepare their own future leaders (Bisbee & Miller, 2006; Calareso, 2013; Oppong, Oduro-Asabere, & Owusu, 2016).

Kamil *et al.* (2016) provide evidence that academic leaders in Public universities usually go into their positions lacking leadership preparation or previous executive experience, without a well-built idea of their role and deprived of credit apart from academic performance. The shortage of qualified leadership necessitates Public universities to select a qualified candidate. This critical leadership crisis requires a systematic procedure of recruitment by the administrator of Public universities (Ishak & Kamil, 2016; Omar & Hassan, 2015; Shamsuddin *et al.*, 2012; Sirat *et al.*, 2012). The emphasis should be on internal grooming and selection of leaders because internal selection tends to produce successful leadership (Ahmad *et al.*, 2017).

Business organizations practice succession planning on regular basis; however, educational organisations put less attention (Richards, 2009). As far as the Malaysian public universities are concerned, Ishak and Kamil (2016) argued that Public universities are not giving priority to develop their future leaders through succession planning as they are slow to adopt learning and talent management strategies. Abdullah *et al.* (2009) compared the values of higher education institutions and business corporations. The authors asserted that higher education institutions have several values that show the potential of such Public universities to implement succession planning. Richards (2009) found in his study that there are underlying assumptions in higher education that it cannot be run like a business organisation which is also a challenge in the implementation of succession planning. The fundamental problem is that institutions perceive succession planning as a huge task and could not get started (Adewale, Abolaji, & Kolade, 2011). Therefore, the failure of succession planning is the inability of an institution to implement a formal succession plan (Kumar & Kota, 2017).

The future of Public universities depends on the capability of the current leaders to ensure adequate leadership continuity through constant identification and building of talent from within the institution. The need for public universities to seek

and acquire high-quality leaders cannot be overemphasized (Gilbert, 2017). Moreover, the future sustainability and viability of any organisation will depend on how it implements effective succession planning (Cavanaugh, 2017). It is necessary that Public universities maintain a consistent standard parallel to the requirement of the Malaysian Qualifications Framework (MQF) (Lee, Sirat, & Wan, 2017). Since there is a scarcity of research that focuses on this topic in higher education, this study explores the role of organisational culture in the implementation of succession planning in Malaysian public universities.

1.3 Problem Statement

Succession and leadership issues encountered by Public universities throughout the world are similar (Shamsuddin *et al.*, 2012). Research on this subject in Malaysian institutions is scarce as most are conducted in the USA and Europe (Adewale, Abolaji, & Kolade, 2011; Nakutis, 2016; Rudhumbu & Maphosa, 2015). Sirat *et al.* (2012) argued that Malaysia appears to lack internationally renowned people to lead its public universities to great heights. the main reason for the malaise that underlies the Malaysian university leadership crisis is that there is no adequate system in place to select the most competent, qualified, authoritative and esteemed scholars to lead the public universities in Malaysia. Further authors also added that the existing requirements on the appointment of a Vice-Chancellor in the Universities and University Colleges Act 1971 are outdated and not consistent with the aspiration to view universities as separate, trustworthy and autonomous entities. The selection of university leaders by an extremely competitive and systematic process is contrary to international best practices (Sirat *et al.*, 2012). Moreover, Omar and Hassan (2015) indicated that leadership role is comprehensive; there are limited number of leaders from some regions (including Malaysia). Just at a time when leadership value is greater than ever, in many parts of the world, we have a huge gap in leadership capability and leadership pipeline strategies. A microcosm of this trend is the Malaysian higher education system (Omar & Hassan, 2015).

The Ministry of Education in Malaysia is involved in developing a Strategic Framework for Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for academic staff through its agencies including the Higher Education Leadership Academy (AKEPT)

and in consultation with public and private HLIs, including succession planning and academic leadership development courses (Bano, 2017). Further she stated that the selection method to identify the leadership talent pool candidates is to keep track record of the applicant for leadership style, credibility, technical skills and experience. Applicants for top management (university Vice Chancellor, Deputy Vice Chancellor) must undergo five professional development programs and applicants for middle management roles (Head of Departments, Deans) must undergo seven professional development programs coordinated by AKEPT for academic staff (Bano, 2017; Omar & Hassan, 2015).

However, the literature on Malaysian public universities indicates that there is a lack of a systematic approach to identify leadership potentials and develop future leaders through succession planning (Bano, 2017; Ishak & Kamil, 2016; Kamil *et al.*, 2016; Omar & Hassan, 2015; Richards, 2016; Sharma & Sengupta, 2018). The required skills set for academic leaders in the past fifty years is very different from what obtains with the current academic leaders (Kamil *et al.*, 2016). Public universities are on a steep learning curve. Faculty and administrators are finding it hard to adapt. It will take a while to change mindsets and behaviors; many understand the need to be more efficient and innovative in generating revenue but balk at the thought of actual implementation. Indeed, they may not have the fundamental entrepreneurial competencies to do so (Abdullah, 2017). Faculties and departments are risk-averse, preferring to maintain current initiatives rather than to discover new ways of doing things. Particularly, changes are required in regulatory frameworks, which do not reflect the autonomy status granted (Sheriff & Abdullah, 2017). In order to generate greater income, universities must operate more like business entities. Further, Bano (2017) sums it up best when she encouraged leaders of community colleges to engage in succession planning. She stated that without such planning, the effectiveness of institutions would be at stake as the quality of their educational programs will be jeopardized and their integrity may be compromised.

Development of an education organisation, as a planned process, is equal to evolution in organisational culture, and any changes in the organisation while disregarding the organisational culture would not be effective (Shabankareh *et al.*, 2015). An understanding of the cultural context within which a succession planning system operates may serve to enhance the implementation, utilization, and change of succession planning systems in public universities (Nakutis, 2016; Richards, 2016;

Salajegheh *et al.*, 2014; Sharma & Sengupta, 2018). Meanwhile, Mehrabani and Mohamad (2011) argued that organisations need to study organisational culture in order to look at how succession planning is currently being practised. Organisational culture influences the implementation of succession planning, which is a critical requirement of organisational survival (Muthengi, 2018; Shabankareh *et al.*, 2015). Organisational culture as a contextual factor in succession planning has not been rigorously researched (Richards, 2016b; Salajegheh *et al.*, 2014; Shabankareh *et al.*, 2015). It is, however, an important area for study and theory generation (Fancher, 2009; Richards, 2009). An understanding of the cultural context within which a succession planning system operates may serve to enhance the implementation, utilization, and change of succession planning systems in public universities (Cavanaugh, 2017; Gilbert, 2017; Ishak & Kamil, 2016; Kamil *et al.*, 2016; Oppong *et al.*, 2016).

Although there are numerous studies on organisational culture and succession planning, majority of them employ qualitative approach and only interested in examining the influence of culture (Fancher, 2009; Jina, 2014; Richards, 2009; Richards, 2016; Tan, 2009; Ye, 2013) with little or no attempt on relationship between culture-succession. Based on this shortcoming, therefore, the purpose of this exploratory sequential study is first to explore the succession planning practices in Public universities in Malaysia and then to examine the relationship of the organisational culture to the succession planning.

1.4 Research Questions

1. How do Malaysian public universities practice succession planning?
2. What are the critical success factors for succession planning in Malaysian public universities?
3. What is the role of organisational culture in the implementation of succession planning in Malaysian public universities?
4. Does national culture moderate the relationship between organisational culture and succession planning in Malaysian public universities?

1.5 Research Objectives

This study embarks on the following objectives:

1. To identify the practices of succession planning in Malaysian public universities.
2. To examine the critical success factors for succession planning in Malaysian public universities.
3. To explore the role of organisational culture in the implementation of succession planning in Malaysian public universities.
4. To investigate the moderating effect of national culture in the relationship between succession planning and organisational culture in Malaysian public universities.

1.6 Significance of the study

The importance of this study lies in the fact that it will promote more understanding regarding the nature of the relationship between organisational culture and succession planning by investigating the impact of moderators on this relationship in public universities in Malaysia. The sub-sections of this section further explain the significance of the study in terms of the theoretical, methodological and practical significance

1.6.1 Theoretical

This research used the competing values framework (CVF) to measure the organisational culture in Malaysia's public universities. It is an empirically-based framework that has been shown to have both face and empirical validity and helps to combine many of the dimensions proposed by different authors. It also acts as a guide and indicator of cultural change, employee engagement and the advancement of leadership skills. While planning a change program, it is important for leaders to consider what attitudes and beliefs they are trying to change in order to obtain the

behavioral outcomes they are looking for. For such a change referring to the CVF may help leaders understand the cultural changes that may be required.

Also based on the existing literature, the impact of national culture on the relationship between organisational culture and succession planning is always taken for granted. This study intends to explore the national culture dimensions and their impact on the relationship between organisational culture dimensions (clan, adhocracy, hierarchy, and market culture) and succession planning. In order to do that, this study proposed to take national culture dimensions as moderators of the culture-succession relationship. National culture, generally speaking, has a big impact on organisational culture and organisational culture has a major impact on the implementation of succession planning.

In other words, it can be said that the significance of this study is based on establishing the relationship between organisational culture and succession planning, bearing in mind the role that the national culture of Malaysia plays.

1.6.2 Methodological

The methodological significance of this study is based on enriching the use of mixed methods research methodology in studying the relationship between organisational culture and succession planning in Malaysian public universities (Creswell & Clark, 2007; Tashakkori, Teddlie, & Teddlie, 1998). Results from previous studies have shown that a combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches is useful to address succession planning issues (Mateso, 2010; Richards, 2016; Shabankareh *et al.*, 2015). In addition, this study contributes to the development of a questionnaire to determine the role of organisational culture in implementing succession planning in public universities of Malaysia. The data were collected using a questionnaire and interviews to identify research-related information.

1.6.3 Practical

An understanding of the associations between national culture, organisational culture, and succession planning would help public universities in Malaysia to be more successful in the implementation of succession planning. Also, an understanding of

these features and their relationships would enable them to gain a competitive advantage. Moreover, it would be beneficial for management to be capable of distinguishing and aligning their organisational culture in order to execute succession planning for future leadership growth as well as the effect of national culture on this relationship.

1.7 Scope of study

The main objective of the study is to explore the role of organisational culture in the implementation of succession planning. A mixed methods study has been conducted to explore the practices and critical success factors of succession planning in Malaysian research universities. Moreover, the study aimed to investigate the moderating effect of national culture on the relationship between organisational culture and succession planning. In total, five research universities were selected for this investigation. These research universities are expected to explore their intellectual capacity and become models of Malaysian universities in conducting research activities aimed at knowledge advancement. Apart from this, research universities are entrusted with generating their own income and establishing holding companies responsible for conducting business ventures through the commercialization of their research products. As research is one of the major criteria for university ranking, Malaysia led 8th place in publishing research documents in Scopus from 1996-2018. This thus calls for a visionary leadership that can be developed through succession planning.

On the basis of the research questions formulated, this study employed a sequential exploratory mixed methods design. Data were collected in two phases. In the first phase, interviews have been conducted from Registrars at five research universities. A survey questionnaire was developed from qualitative phase of the study that lead to quantitative phase. In the second phase, an online survey was conducted through questionnaire. The questionnaires were distributed among academic staff in public research universities (UTM, UM, UPM, UKM, and USM) in Malaysia. After data collection, the hypothesis formulated were tested by using structural equation modelling (SEM).

1.8 Operational definitions

This section describes the operational definitions of all variables that have been used in the study. All the definitions below have been adopted from literature.

Succession planning

A deliberate and systematic effort by an organisation to ensure leadership continuity in key positions, retain and develop intellectual and knowledge capital for the future, and encourage individual advancement. (Rothwell, 2010).

Organisational culture

Cameron and Quinn (2005) defined organisational culture as the values which are considered self-evident, underlying assumptions, expectations, collective memories and definitions which are already present within the organisation.

Clan culture

Clan embodies the culture, which is similar to a family-type organisation, has less focus on structure and control and has a greater concern for flexibility (Cameron & Quinn, 2005).

Hierarchy culture

The hierarchy culture is defined as a highly formalised, structured working environment. Procedures determine what the people do (Quinn & Rohrbaugh, 1983).

Market culture

Compete (Market) culture describes organisations which are externally oriented with more focus on structure and control and less concern for flexibility and risk (Cameron *et al.*, 2014).

Adhocracy culture

Create (or adhocracy) represents a culture where organisations are externally oriented and have less focus on structure and control but a greater concern for flexibility and acceptance of risk (Cameron & Quinn, 2005).

National culture

Hofstede (1980) defines national culture as “the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one human group from another”.

1.9 Outline of the thesis

The outline of the thesis is shown in Figure 2.1:



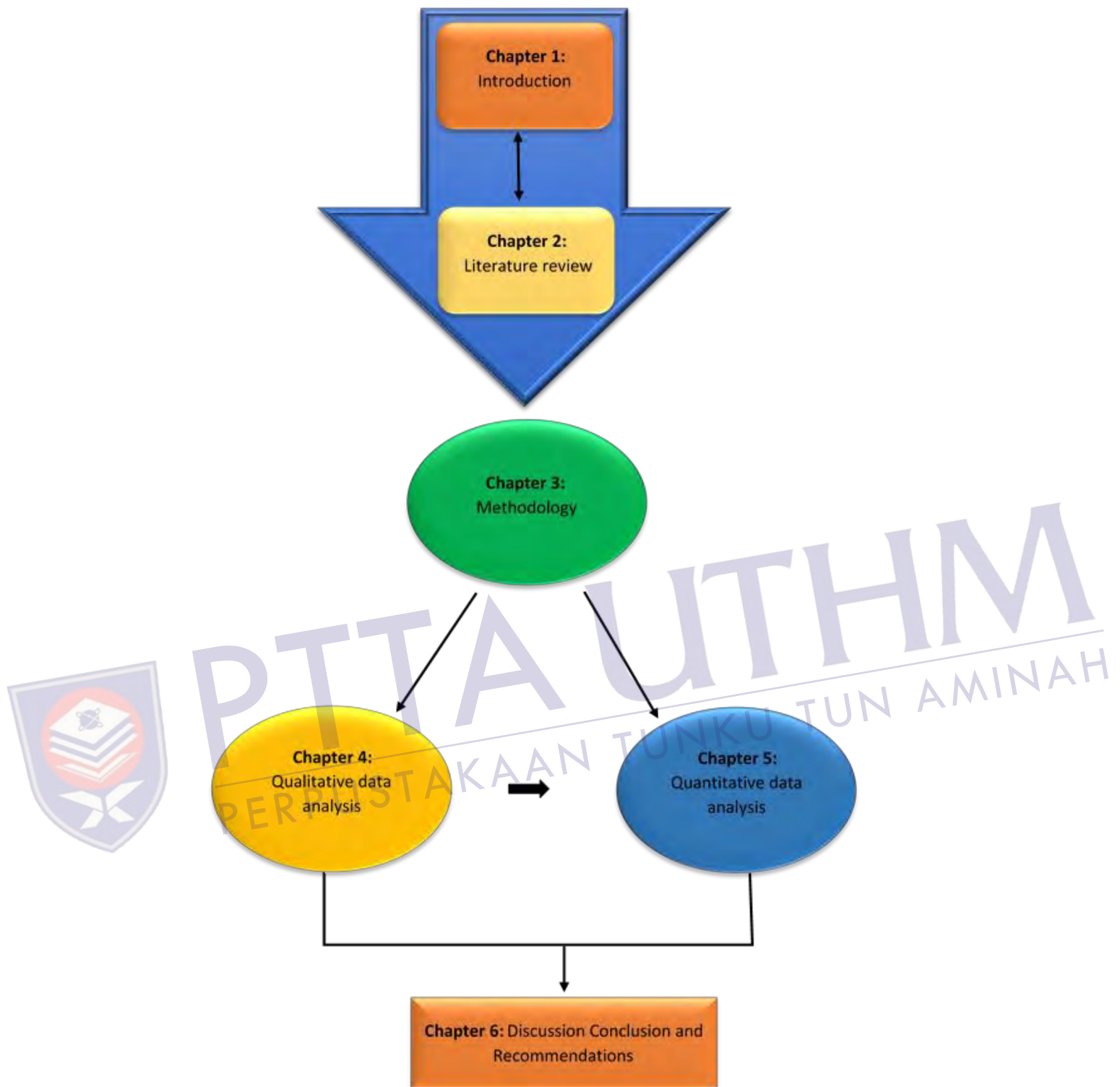


Figure 1.1: Thesis outline

1.9.1 Chapter 1-Introduction

This chapter contains the introduction of the research with background highlighting the issues related to the implementation of succession planning in public research universities. It also presents the significance and scope of the research.

1.9.2 Chapter 2-Literature review

This chapter presents the review of previous literature related to practices of succession planning within the corporate and higher education sector, organisational culture and related theories, and national culture and succession planning practices in other countries too.

1.9.3 Chapter 3-Methodology

This chapter describes the process and research designs in conducting the research. It also describes the procedure of data collection and strategies of data analysis.

1.9.4 Chapter 4-Qualitative data analysis

This chapter presents the findings from the individual interviews. Content analysis was used for the analysis of interview transcripts.

1.9.5 Chapter 5-Quantitative data analysis

This chapter presents the results of the questionnaire. Data were analysed using PLS-SEM to answer the research questions.

1.9.6 Chapter 6-Discussion conclusion and recommendations

This chapter presents a summary of the findings. It also contains the conclusion and recommendations that were reached from the results.

1.10 Summary

This chapter presented the study by giving a summary of the background section's central theme of the research, outlining the research problem formulating research questions, the research objective, and the specific research objectives. The chapter also outlined the scope, significance of the research, research organisation, and research plan or process. The discussion will be highlighted in the next chapter on Malaysia's organisational culture, national culture, succession planning, and institutional settings.



PTTA UTHM
PERPUSTAKAAN TUNKU TUN AMINAH

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter describes literature related to the theories, succession planning, and succession planning in Malaysian Public universities, organizational culture, and the national culture of Malaysia. The literature review process is an integral part of research planning. It provides a foundation for research and triggers creative thinking. The literature review process also assists in identifying appropriate research methods and techniques and helps in formulating a discussion about the implications of the research. Therefore, a review of related literature will be needed in this study to examine the related theoretical foundations.

2.2 Succession Planning

The concept of succession planning has gained significance over the last few decades because research has proved that it is helpful for organisations to manage the leadership continuity and develop the human capital (Atwood, 2020; Atwood, 2007). In the modern world, succession planning emphasizes more the development of leadership skills because the knowledge, skills, and capabilities of the leaders are keys to the success of an organisation (Omar & Hassan, 2015). Therefore, it requires organisations to understand the necessity and importance of the development of leadership skills.

In early stages, the concept of succession planning ensures organisational growth and sustainability. A compatible vision is a prerequisite for successful succession planning (Klein & Salk, 2013). According to Atwood (2020), succession planning involves an elaborate, integrated, and systematic approach for identifying and developing high potentials or talent pools intended for enabling the organisations to have a list of adequately prepared candidates to fill key positions of the top two or three management levels whenever vacancies occur. Similarly, (Rothwell, 2010, p. 18), defined succession planning as: ‘...deliberate and systematic effort by an organisation to ensure leadership continuity in key positions, retain and develop intellectual and knowledge capital for the future, and encourage individual advancement’.

Apparently, several authors associate succession planning with words similar to “proactive” and “systematic”, for example, McAndrew and Chen (2018) describe succession planning as a systematic process of developing individuals to fill key organisational key roles. Although overlapping themes are distinct in the academic literature, a clear definition of succession planning is not evident. Furthermore, in-depth studies into succession planning in educational organisations are limited (Peters-Hawkins, Reed, & Kingsberry, 2018). Most quantitative methods applied showed few weaknesses such as a lack of transparency regarding the methodology applied and insufficient highlights on the skewness and normality of the data collected. Moreover, most designs employed were archival field studies and rarely applied qualitative methods to clarify gaps. Furthermore, the aspects of internal and external validity were not always adequately explained, and not all internal validity threats were controlled (Harris & Mncube, 2019).

The importance of succession planning and management has been echoed by several authors (Cavanaugh, 2017; Mateso, 2010). In 2004, Rothwell conducted a study that involved over 500 Human Resources Management (HRM) professionals of different organisations. All respondents (100%) agreed that succession planning is important to their organisations. In another study, it was found that organisations with formal succession planning were eighty percent prepared or extremely prepared to immediately fill leadership positions (Richards, 2016). Many authors affirm the worth of succession planning (Harris & Mncube, 2019; Mateso, 2010; Rothwell, 2002).

Several authors believe that succession planning is an answer to the impending leadership crisis (Hossain, 2019; Rothwell, 2010). Atwood (2020) states that “the purpose of succession-related practices is to ensure that there are ready replacements

for key positions in an organisation as the turnover doesn't affect the organisation's performance" (p. vii). However, succession planning is not only for immediate replacement of departing leaders, as it is also a very important strategy for the long-term sustainability and viability of the organisations (Pila, Schultz, & Leigh-Anne, 2016). Succession planning is also important in the retirement of senior leaders drain technical and cultural knowledge of the organisation because whenever a senior leader retires, a loss of experience, expertise, cultural insights, and organisational knowledge occur (Kamil *et al.*, 2016). Hence succession planning is the strategy that can prevent loss of the organisational knowledge and culture (Mateso, 2010; Richards, 2016).

Moreover, there exists a link between succession planning and organisational performance (Washington, 2016). In the business world, for instance, investors tend to value firms that have a known heir when a CEO leaves. Despite the difficulty of measuring the return-on-investment for a succession planning program in business, common sense indicates that the cost of the absence of a succession program might be higher than the cost of putting one in place (Rothwell, 2010). In addition to improved performance, companies with succession plans experience better leadership transition than firms that do not have any (Majda, 2016).

Another important benefit of succession planning is related to the competitiveness of organisations. As today's world is so competitive that organisations must find a means of attracting, developing, and retaining the workforce with the required abilities (Bagheri, Lope Pihie, & Krauss, 2013). Those organisations that successfully use succession planning and talent management for attracting and developing future leaders will be able to remain competitive (Titzer, Shirey, & Hauck, 2014). To attain a competitive edge in the dynamic market-driven world, organisations must adopt well-designed succession plans. This is because, the organisations can confidently face the future if they create their own talent factories (Gilding, Gregory, & Cosson, 2015). Nevertheless, it is vital to stress here that it is the formal succession planning, not the informal, that enables entities to develop and monitor the performance of the high potentials (Schepker *et al.*, 2017).

One of the main determinants for the successful implementation of succession planning programs is documentation. Keeping up with the necessary formalities, rules, and regulations of the plan consistently and rationally should be well-thought-out and a priority of the plan. Formulating and preparing a mission statement, scripting the plan's policy, clarifying its course of action, and establishing plan priorities should be

understandable by all participants. Documenting in clear systematic steps should lead and encourage participation in the plan. Documentation should be easy to understanding, as well as clarifying the participation, and involvement of all parties within the organisation. Also, clear well-established documentation of the plan will make it easier to define the roles and responsibilities, and communicate benefits behind the plan, clarify employees' expectations, as well as presents a sense of purpose, and illustrate the driving forces of the plan. Besides, documentation of the succession plan will establish the plan's goals and policies. It supports the follow-up of the plan, benchmarking of the results and outputs of the plan, and facilitates making necessary amendments down the road (Rothwell, 2011).

Additionally, succession planning is significant for several other reasons. In brief, succession planning: is the basis for the continued survival of the organisations; ensures the pipeline of the future talent and candidates for key positions of the organisations; encourages diversity and multiculturalism in workplaces; and augments career paths, staff development plans, and other human resource mobility activities (Mateso, 2010; Rothwell, 2010). Despite the importance, however, succession planning practices have not yet permeated all organisations. Studies on the prevalence of succession planning indicate estimations of forty percent to sixty-five percent of companies have adopted formal succession planning practices (Gilbert, 2017). What is not clear though is that despite its benefits, some organisations and most academic institutions have not yet paid adequate attention to succession planning strategies, even when faced with a leadership crisis (Donner *et al.*, 2017).

The sections below discuss the elements of succession planning such as criteria for selection, internal vs. external candidate, and employee development. The next section further discusses the criteria for the selection process for suitable leaders in succession planning.

2.2.1 Criteria for the selection process in succession planning

Members of the selection committee need to create a clear understanding of who would be the best serviced in a senior management role. Several critical selection criteria include the need for a chemical or personal fit between the candidate and the board, a desire to invest in university traditions and values, a mutual belief in institutional

problems, and stakeholder capacity to stay open-minded (Olatunji, Abimbola, & Samuel, 2020). A university president's diverse duties make it difficult for presidential selection boards of universities to find a candidate who can fulfill all the requirements for a particular position. Once the board determines the required management abilities and criteria, the procedural course of action may be more centered on a collegiate presidential search (Collins *et al.*, 2016).

As college presidents and scientists suggest, because of the complexity of different demands, a college president is not a glamorous position and because, as one college president said, "it's not a job — it's how you choose to live nearly every time" (Person, 2015) as a lifestyle change. Although this sort of exposure and pressure may be handled by some people, others may not. Candidates must be able to manage the job's multi-dimensional and public elements and be able to react efficiently and effectively. Leadership education continues to be a significant developmental element for higher education leaders, including the collective components of private experience, personality, and position context (Ramseur *et al.*, 2018). Individuals with experience handling complex organisations may have a benefit over others with more concentrated experience, who may have nothing but an academic experience.

Multidimensional positions managing expertise and experience can assist university presidents to survive and succeed in their allocated responsibilities. Extensive academic and campus management abilities may be lacking for leaders with economic and budgeting experience. Those people with a comprehensive understanding of academics and research may be weak in a university's company aspect. Thus, selection boards may be lucky to discover one applicant with all the necessary characteristics (Collins *et al.*, 2016), but they must be prepared to trade requirements in order to find a particular person to meet the requirements of the next college leader. Overall, repetitive topics concentrate on the absence of present leadership research and studies on presidential selection procedures, presidential failures, and the absence of diversity (Chiocchio & Gharibpour, 2017). In order to solve the significant problems of presidential choice and achievement, a significant change is to focus on a method of grooming and education for the growth of academic faculty management from early on in the career trajectory that does not always come naturally and potentially leaving behind some prospective applicants (Sierra & Calabrese, 2019). The next section briefly discussed the choice of candidate internal vs. external in the selection process in succession planning.

2.2.2 Internal vs. external candidates

As universities become big businesses, academics question the need for presidents of universities to move through academic ranks compared to corporate internal applicants (Bornstein, 2010). Non-traditional applicants may have a company experience benefit because they understand the marketplace's operating methods, as well as the jargon of policymakers, corporate officials, and economic donors (Fain, 2008). Understanding the strengths and weaknesses that can be brought to an organisation by each candidate can possibly predict who best can function for a particular institution type. Someone with experience working with state and federal legislatures could benefit schools requiring comprehensive cooperation with political representatives. An experienced educator, however, can assist a college in experiencing issues with academic accreditation. Universities, with a general absence of inner growth for university presidents (Blumenstyk, 2005), must depend on people to pursue self-development through different roles and training possibilities, which could imply a real desire for personal progress. Background information on present university presidents (whether traditional or non-traditional candidates), tenure duration, and education / training experience could show a trend in which people presently have a potential benefit over their colleagues for future presidential university choices.

Generally, most authors believe that grooming successors internally is more beneficial for organizations than relying on externally grown successors (Harrell, 2016; Payne *et al.*, 2018; Phillips, 2020; Prathima & Sasibala, 2020; Sabina & Colwell, 2018; Schepker *et al.*, 2018; Tucker, 2020). It has been demonstrated that home-grown CEOs generate 1.9% points higher of the annual shareholder returns (Harrell, 2016). Meanwhile, sourcing from within is considered cheaper than recruiting from outside, in addition to the fact that 65% of leaders recruited externally tend to fail within the first two years of their new positions (Phillips, 2020). The external sourcing of leaders makes internal talents become stagnant, which might lead to attrition, hence watering down any effort to retain employees (Prathima & Sasibala, 2020). Although fear exists that grooming internal talents may also qualify them for external markets, the benefit of internal succession is greater than that fear, because internal succession minimizes distraction associated with leadership change, conserves institutional memory, and utilizes talents within the institution (Tucker, 2020).

However, leaders from outside are likely to lack organization-specific knowledge and might have difficulty in gaining internal support from executives (Payne *et al.*, 2018). Moreover, external successors tend to need more time for studying and understanding their new organizations and are likely to come with unwanted foreign cultures (Payne *et al.*, 2018; Schepker *et al.*, 2018). In fact, an external successor might need a period of six months to two years to learn a new organization and create a needed network (Phillips, 2020).

Meanwhile, grooming and development of selected candidate for leadership position is also a important element in succession planning. Next section focused the literature related to the development of employees in educational organisations.

2.2.3 Employee development

Employee development is a substantial element, and benefit of, succession planning within educational institutions and business organisations (Nguyen *et al.*, 2017; Rudhumbu & Maphosa, 2015; Washington, 2016). Rudhumbu and Maphosa (2015) evaluated succession planning as a component of talent management programs within private higher education institutions. Research directly correlated succession planning to talent management, and it was found that private higher education institutions are often unable to fill key positions successfully with talented replacements (Rudhumbu & Maphosa, 2015). Washington (2016) explored the positive impact of succession planning on employee development programs within higher education institutions. Institutions are able to utilize succession planning to prepare employees to serve in key positions and provide the stability needed to continue institutional operations in an effective manner (Washington, 2016).

Succession plans have the potential to inspire institutional leaders to implement employee development and mentorship programs (Fitzpatrick, 2014; Nguyen *et al.*, 2017). The programs inspired by succession plans assisted institutions in retaining a talented workforce, thus, implementing institutional programs and strategies in a quality and consistent manner (Nguyen *et al.*, 2017). Educational institutions must include professional development and transition plans as elements of succession plans if they are to be successful (Najam ul Hassan & Siddiqui, 2020). Institutions must provide opportunities for growth and learning if they are to have qualified individuals

prepared to assume key roles and responsibilities (Najam ul Hassan & Siddiqui, 2020). Mentorship and leadership development programs were identified as solutions to developing qualified successors, however, institutions must identify the positions requiring a qualified successor in order to identify potential mentees (Dachner *et al.*, 2019). Aithal (2016) reported that institutions will find it difficult to obtain excellence without establishing formal succession plans that include well designed development programs. Development programs play an important role in ensuring employees are prepared to fill positions on an interim and permanent basis (Nguyen *et al.*, 2017). As established within the literature, succession planning is an essential component of talent management and employee development programs that assist institutions in successfully fulfilling their missions and strategies.

Fulfillment of organisational and institutional missions and strategies is largely dependent upon employee capabilities and motivation (Anderson, 2015; Leuzinger, Rowe, & Brannon, 2016). Succession plans assist institutions in ensuring the right person is prepared to fill vacancies in key positions at the right time (Anderson, 2015; Leuzinger *et al.*, 2016). The fulfillment of missions and strategies can be impaired when the wrong person is placed in a key position (Anderson, 2015). Newhall (2015) suggested strategic succession planning requires organisations to consider the future potential of employees and not just high performance. The consideration of future potential assists organisations in avoiding the selection of an individual that might not perform well in the future (Leuzinger & Rowe, 2017; Newhall, 2015). In one recent doctoral study, Parfitt (2017) researched succession planning within multiple public schools within the United States. The study demonstrated it was detrimental to simply place a current employee in a vacant leadership position because they employee may not be adequately prepared to serve within the new role (Parfitt, 2017). Succession plans identify, and prepare, individuals, to move into vacant positions and serve successfully (Parfitt, 2017).

Anderson (2015) displayed the role succession planning plays in avoiding the selection of the wrong individuals for specific key positions. The author researched succession planning within governmental law enforcement agencies and found that law enforcement agencies possessing succession plans were more likely to consistently fill their missions and objectives within their communities (Anderson, 2015). Huynh (2016) applied these principles within academic libraries. The case studies presented by Huynh (2016) presented evidence that succession planning is a



developmental process that considers current and future needs. Developing employees as a part of the succession planning process provided stability and assisted the libraries in ensuring talented employees were available to move the institutions forward (Huynh, 2016). The case studies demonstrated the right individuals serving in the right position provide a foundation to implement strategies and missions effectively and consistently (Huynh, 2016). Anderson (2015) suggested that succession planning can be beneficial even when law enforcement agencies are required to hire external candidates to fill key positions due to government requirements. This suggestion was presented by Anderson (2015) because succession planning encourages leaders to consider the future and the role of specific positions throughout the organisation. Succession planning also prepares internal candidates and ensures resources are available to provide a smooth transition for internal and external candidates (Anderson, 2015; Leuzinger & Rowe, 2017). Public higher education institutions are often faced with similar challenges associated with government hiring, yet the consideration of the future and smooth transitions can play a role in the consistent fulfillment of institutional missions and roles within their communities.

These were the element of succession planning next section discussed the role of organisations in the implementation of succession planning.

2.3 Role of the organisation in succession planning

Organisational approaches for succession planning encompassed proactive measures to attract, hire, identify, and develop candidates to become suitable leadership successors that contribute to organisational development, growth, and sustainability (Bennett, 2015). Nevertheless, in many instances, planning for succession did not embrace the succession management constructs of talent management and relational aspects (LeCounte, Prieto, & Phipps, 2017). Furthermore, some leader's succession management strategies lacked structure for forecasting leadership vacancies (Peters-Hawkins *et al.*, 2018). The degrees of succession instability linked to unstable organisational events. Researchers indicated that stability in leadership was vital because it was relational with effective, stable leadership and organisational success (Peters-Hawkins *et al.*, 2018). Developing an organisation to meet future needs,

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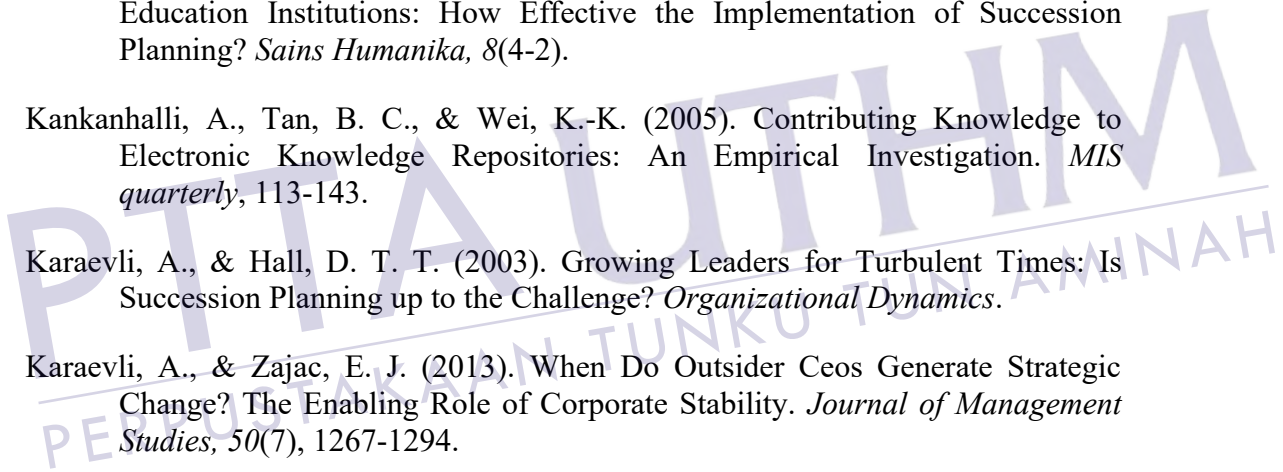
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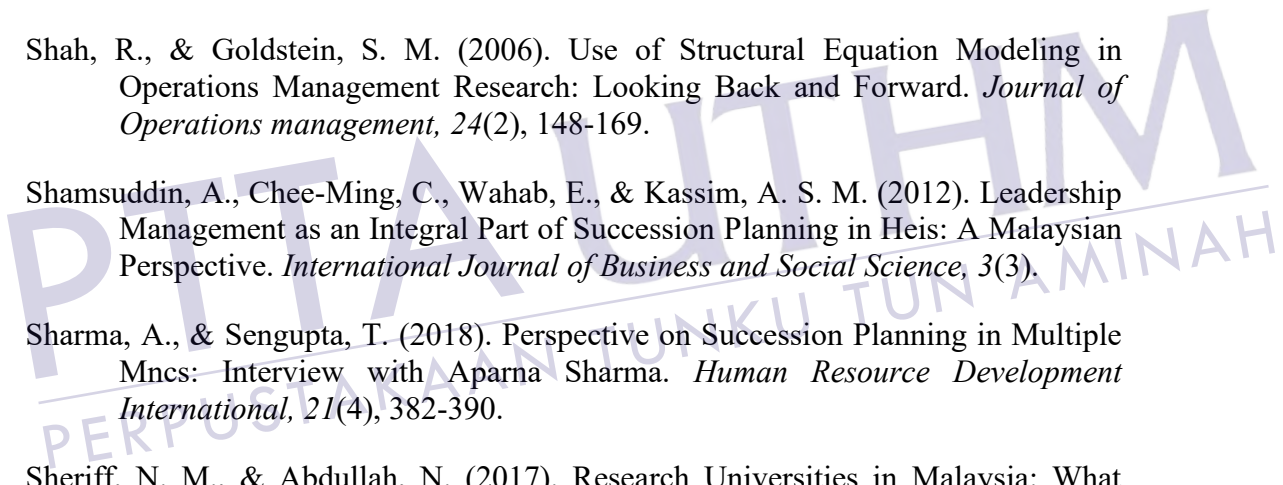
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