Research Paper

Workforce Planning and Succession Strategies: A Comparative Analysis of Public and Private Sector Leadership Development in Nigeria a of study Rivers State Housing and Property Development Authority

Nwogu, Olachi Willington.

olachi.nwogu@ust.edu.ng

Department of Political Science (Public Administration) Rivers State University Nkpolu-

Orowurokwo, Port Harcourt, Rivers State P.M. B. 5080

ABSTRACT

This study examines workforce planning and succession strategies in public and private sector leadership development, focusing on the Rivers State Housing and Property Development Authority (RSHPDA). The research aims to assess the effectiveness of current workforce planning practices in RSHPDA, identify the challenges in implementing succession strategies, and recommend improvements for sustainable leadership development.The theoretical framework is grounded in Human Capital Theory, which emphasizes the importance of investing in employees' skills and abilities to enhance organizational productivity and sustainability. Applying this theory to RSHPDA and private sector counterparts reveals how investing in leadership pipelines can address challenges such as retirement and skill gaps, ensuring long-term organizational success. A qualitative methodology was employed, using comparative analysis to evaluate workforce planning and succession strategies in RSHPDA and the private sector. Data was gathered from relevant literature, reports, and organizational processes, including strategic alignment, adaptability, employee engagement, and leadership development. Thematic analysis was conducted to synthesize findings. Key findings show that RSHPDA's workforce planning is hindered by bureaucratic structures and lacks strategic alignment, unlike the private sector, which utilizes dynamic practices. Succession strategies in RSHPDA are challenged by political patronage, a lack of formal processes, and insufficient training programs. Recommendations include implementing a strategic leadership development plan, enhancing training and mentorship initiatives, and leveraging technology to improve leadership development. These strategies aim to ensure sustainable organizational continuity in RSHPDA's workforce and leadership practices, addressing both current inefficiencies and future leadership challenges.

Keywords:Workforce Planning, Succession Strategies, Leadership Development, Human Capital Theory

I.   INTRODUCTION

Workforce planning and succession strategies are critical components of organizational sustainability and effectiveness, particularly in the dynamic environments of developing countries like Nigeria. Effective leadership development ensures that organizations are prepared to meet future challenges by having the right people in place with the necessary skills and competencies (Armstrong, 2014). In Nigeria, both public and private sectors face unique challenges in leadership development due to factors such as economic fluctuations, political instability, and socio-cultural dynamics (Amah & Baridam, 2012). This study focuses on the Rivers State Housing and Property Development Authority (RSHPDA) as a case study to explore how workforce planning and succession strategies are implemented in the public sector and how they compare to practices in the private sector.

The RSHPDA plays a pivotal role in the development and management of housing and property in Rivers State, contributing significantly to the state's socio-economic growth. However, like many public organizations in Nigeria, it faces challenges related to workforce planning and leadership succession, which can impact its operational efficiency and service delivery (Okeke-Uzodike & Subban, 2015). The absence of robust succession plans can lead to leadership gaps, loss of institutional knowledge, and decreased organizational performance (Inyang & Akpama, 2019). In contrast, private sector organizations often adopt more proactive approaches to leadership development, emphasizing strategic talent management and succession planning to maintain competitive advantage (Obiekwe, 2018).

Understanding the differences in workforce planning and succession strategies between public and private sectors is crucial for informing policy and practice. This comparative analysis aims to identify best practices that can enhance leadership development in public organizations like RSHPDA. By examining the approaches used in the private sector, the study seeks to provide insights into how public organizations can improve their succession planning processes to ensure leadership continuity and organizational effectiveness (Garavan, Carbery, & Rock, 2012). Furthermore, this study is significant because it addresses the gap in literature regarding leadership development practices in Nigerian public organizations, particularly at the state level. Most existing research focuses on federal institutions or private enterprises, leaving a dearth of information on state-level public organizations (Okechukwu & Onyene, 2017). By focusing on RSHPDA, the study contributes to a more nuanced understanding of the challenges and opportunities in workforce planning and succession management within the Nigerian public sector.

II. STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Workforce planning and succession strategies are crucial for ensuring organizational continuity and effective leadership, yet public sector institutions in Nigeria, such as the Rivers State Housing and Property Development Authority (RSHPDA), often struggle with inadequate succession planning. This can result in leadership gaps, loss of institutional knowledge, and reduced operational efficiency, which in turn affects the organization's ability to deliver essential services. While private sector organizations tend to adopt more strategic and proactive approaches to leadership development, public sector institutions like RSHPDA lag behind due to factors such as bureaucratic constraints, lack of resources, and inconsistent policy implementation. The absence of effective workforce planning and succession strategies hinders the development of future leaders and compromises the long-term sustainability of public organizations. This study seeks to address this problem by comparing leadership development strategies in the public and private sectors and offering recommendations for improving succession planning in RSHPDA.

III. AIM AND OBJECTIVES

To examine workforce planning and succession strategies in public and private sector leadership development with a focus on the Rivers State Housing and Property Development Authority (RSHPDA).

Objectives

1. To assess the effectiveness of current workforce planning practices in the RSHPDA compared to the private sector.

2. To identify the challenges faced by RSHPDA in implementing successful succession strategies.

3. To recommend improvements in leadership development practices for sustainable organizational continuity in RSHPDA.

IV. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. How effective are the current workforce planning practices in the Rivers State Housing and Property Development Authority (RSHPDA) compared to the private sector?

2. What challenges does the RSHPDA face in implementing successful succession strategies?

3. What improvements can be recommended for leadership development practices to ensure sustainable organizational continuity in the RSHPDA?

*Corresponding Author: Nwogu, Olachi Willington.

V. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Human Capital Theory

The Human Capital Theory, initially developed by economists like Gary Becker (1964), serves as the foundation for understanding the role of workforce planning and succession strategies in leadership development. This theory posits that individuals' skills, knowledge, and abilities are crucial forms of capital that enhance organizational productivity and sustainability. In the context of the Rivers State Housing and Property Development Authority (RSHPDA), the application of Human Capital Theory emphasizes the need for continuous investment in employee training, leadership development, and career progression.

Leadership development and succession planning, particularly in public organizations, are critical for maintaining continuity and ensuring that the organization can respond effectively to future challenges. By investing in the growth of its workforce, the RSHPDA can enhance its operational efficiency and maintain institutional knowledge over time. In contrast, private organizations tend to prioritize merit-based hiring and leadership grooming, which further strengthens organizational performance.

This theory highlights the value of strategically developing internal leadership pipelines to address challenges related to retirement, attrition, and skills gaps. Applying Human Capital Theory to the RSHPDA and its private sector counterparts enables an understanding of how investing in leadership development can enhance both organizational resilience and long-term success.

VI. EMPIRCAL REVIEW

Okon (2018) conducted a study exploring the challenges of leadership development and succession planning in Nigeria's public and private sectors. The aim of the study was to identify the barriers to leadership development and provide solutions for overcoming them. The research examined questions such as the main challenges to leadership development and how these challenges differed between the public and private sectors. The Leadership Competency Model, which focuses on the skills and competencies required for effective leadership, served as the theoretical framework for the study. Okon identified a gap in comparative research on the barriers to leadership development between public and private sectors, especially at a strategic level. Using a qualitative method, the study employed in-depth interviews with 40 respondents from senior management and human resources. Okon found that political interference, lack of resources, and inadequate leadership training were prevalent in the public sector, while the private sector struggled with talent retention and adapting to technological changes. The study concluded that both sectors need tailored strategies, with a stronger emphasis on long-term planning and policies in the public sector. Recommendations included creating more structured leadership training programs and emphasizing merit-based promotions. The research contributed to the literature by providing comparative insights into leadership development across sectors, filling a gap in understanding sector-specific challenges.

Musa (2020) investigated workforce planning and leadership continuity in Nigerian public sector organizations, with an emphasis on how effective workforce planning strategies impact leadership continuity. The Human Capital Theory, which underscores the significance of investing in employees' skills and knowledge for organizational success, was used as the theoretical framework. The study recognized a research gap in connecting workforce planning with leadership continuity, especially in public organizations in Nigeria. Musa employed a mixed-methods approach, surveying senior staff and conducting case studies of public organizations in Rivers State. The findings revealed that workforce planning was acknowledged as important, but the absence of strategic alignment hindered leadership continuity, often due to short-term political appointments. The study concluded that integrating workforce planning with leadership development could stabilize public sector organizations. Recommendations included reducing political interference in leadership roles and implementing long-term leadership succession plans. Musa's work filled a gap by empirically examining the relationship between workforce planning and leadership continuity in the Nigerian public sector.

Nnadi (2021) conducted research on leadership succession and development in the Nigerian banking sector. The study aimed to assess the significance of succession planning and leadership development in the sector, with a focus on how banks manage leadership transitions. The Succession Planning Theory was used as the framework,

emphasizing the importance of preparing employees for leadership roles through development programs. Nnadi identified a gap in leadership succession practices within the Nigerian financial sector, where leadership continuity is critical for financial performance. The methodology involved surveying 120 senior managers across Nigerian banks, using descriptive and inferential statistics. The research found that banks with structured leadership development programs had smoother transitions and higher organizational stability. Nnadi concluded that succession planning and leadership development were vital for the sustainability of Nigerian banks and recommended further investment in leadership programs. The study contributed to the literature by addressing the gap in succession planning and leadership development in Nigeria's banking industry.

Yusuf (2019) examined succession planning and leadership development in Nigeria's oil and gas sector, focusing on how succession planning practices impact leadership continuity. The Talent Management Theory, which emphasizes attracting, developing, and retaining leadership talent, served as the theoretical framework. Yusuf identified a gap in the empirical study of succession planning within critical industries, such as oil and gas. A case study methodology was used, focusing on five major oil and gas companies. Interviews and document analysis revealed that while succession planning practices existed, they were often informal, resulting in leadership gaps during transitions. Yusuf concluded that more formalized succession planning is essential for ensuring leadership continuity in the oil and gas sector. The study contributed to the understanding of succession planning in Nigeria's vital industries, filling a gap in the literature related to leadership development in the oil and gas sector.

Adeyemi (2022) explored leadership succession and talent retention in Nigerian multinational corporations. The aim was to evaluate the effectiveness of succession planning practices and their relationship with talent retention in ensuring leadership continuity. Organizational Learning Theory, which highlights how organizations develop and retain leadership knowledge, was the theoretical framework. The study identified a gap in research focusing on the link between talent retention and leadership succession in Nigerian multinationals. Adeyemi used a mixed-methods approach, with surveys distributed to 200 employees in five multinational corporations. The findings indicated that talent retention strategies, such as mentorship programs and competitive compensation, had a positive impact on leadership succession. The study concluded that talent retention is crucial for leadership continuity in multinational corporations and recommended stronger retention programs. Adeyemi's research filled a gap in understanding the role of talent retention in leadership succession within multinational organizations in Nigeria.

Johnson (2017) conducted a study on the role of leadership development in ensuring workforce planning in Nigerian manufacturing companies. The research aimed to explore the effectiveness of workforce planning strategies and their link to leadership succession. Using the Resource-Based View Theory, Johnson argued that organizations need to view leadership as a critical resource for sustainability. The study highlighted the lack of research connecting workforce planning with leadership succession in the manufacturing industry. Johnson utilized quantitative surveys distributed among senior HR executives in five major manufacturing companies, analyzing the data using regression analysis. The study found that companies with clear leadership development programs experienced fewer disruptions during leadership transitions. Johnson concluded that manufacturing companies need to strengthen leadership development to ensure smooth succession. The study contributed to the literature by addressing the connection between workforce planning and leadership development in the manufacturing sector.

Ibrahim (2019) focused on leadership succession challenges in the Nigerian public service. The study aimed to assess how leadership succession is managed in public organizations and to identify the key challenges. The study used the Institutional Theory as a framework, which posits that organizational structures and processes are shaped by external forces, including political and cultural factors. Ibrahim found a gap in research that connects political interference with leadership succession issues in public organizations. The study used a qualitative approach, conducting interviews with public officials in Rivers State. Findings revealed that leadership succession in the public service is often hindered by political appointments and a lack of meritocracy. The study

concluded that reducing political interference is crucial for ensuring effective leadership succession in the public service. Ibrahim's work filled a gap in understanding the political challenges affecting leadership succession in Nigeria's public sector.

Adamu (2020) investigated workforce planning in relation to leadership development in Nigerian telecom companies. The study aimed to evaluate the role of workforce planning in preparing future leaders in the telecom industry. Adamu used the Human Resource Development Theory, which emphasizes the need for continuous training and development to build leadership capacity. The research gap identified was the lack of empirical studies linking workforce planning with leadership development in Nigeria's telecom sector. The study employed a mixed-methods approach, using surveys and interviews with HR managers in telecom companies. The findings showed that telecom companies with strategic workforce planning practices had better leadership development outcomes. The study concluded that investing in workforce planning is essential for leadership continuity in the telecom industry. Adamu's research contributed to the literature by highlighting the importance of aligning workforce planning with leadership development in technology-driven sectors.

Olawale (2021) explored the impact of leadership succession planning on the performance of Nigerian educational institutions. The study aimed to investigate how succession planning practices influence leadership transitions and organizational performance. Olawale used the Contingency Theory, which argues that organizational success depends on adapting leadership strategies to specific situations. The study identified a gap in the literature regarding succession planning in educational institutions, particularly in Nigeria. Olawale conducted a case study of five tertiary institutions, using surveys and interviews to collect data. The findings showed that institutions with robust succession planning practices experienced smoother leadership transitions and better performance outcomes. The study concluded that succession planning is critical for sustaining the performance of educational institutions. Olawale's work filled a gap by providing empirical evidence of the link between succession planning and performance in Nigeria's educational sector.

Bello (2019) examined leadership development and succession planning in Nigeria's healthcare sector. The study aimed to assess the strategies used for developing future healthcare leaders and ensuring leadership continuity. Bello used the Leadership Pipeline Model, which focuses on preparing leaders at different organizational levels. The study highlighted a gap in research on succession planning in the healthcare sector, especially in relation to leadership development. Bello employed a qualitative approach, using interviews with healthcare professionals and administrators in hospitals across Nigeria. The findings revealed that leadership development in the healthcare sector is often fragmented, with little attention given to succession planning. The study concluded that healthcare organizations need to develop more structured leadership pipelines to ensure continuity. Bello's research contributed to the understanding of leadership development in the healthcare sector, filling a gap in the literature on leadership succession in Nigerian hospitals.

Gaps in Literature

The current study on "Workforce Planning and Succession Strategies: A Comparative Analysis of Public and Private Sector Leadership Development in Nigeria," focusing on the Rivers State Housing and Property Development Authority, addresses several significant research gaps identified in the existing literature.

First, while previous studies have examined various sectors such as healthcare, banking, education, and telecommunications, there is a noticeable lack of empirical research specifically investigating workforce planning and succession strategies within public sector organizations in Nigeria, particularly in the context of housing and property development. This sector plays a crucial role in urban development and social welfare, yet it remains underexplored in leadership studies.

Second, prior studies have predominantly focused on the barriers to leadership development and the importance of talent retention but have often neglected the comparative analysis between public and private sector practices. By contrasting the approaches taken by the Rivers State Housing and Property Development Authority with

those in private sector organizations, this research aims to fill the void in understanding how different sectors can inform one another's leadership development strategies.

Additionally, many existing studies emphasize the challenges faced in leadership succession due to political interference, inadequate training, and lack of structured development programs. However, there is a gap in understanding how specific workforce planning initiatives can be effectively integrated into leadership development frameworks to enhance succession planning outcomes. This study will provide insights into best practices for leadership continuity, tailored specifically for the unique challenges of the housing and property sector in Rivers State. Lastly, the study will contribute to the theoretical discourse by applying relevant frameworks that have not been extensively tested in the context of public housing organizations, thereby enriching the academic literature on leadership development and succession strategies in Nigeria. By addressing these gaps, the current research aims to offer practical recommendations for improving leadership practices in the public sector, contributing to better governance and organizational effectiveness.

VII. **METHODOLOGY**

The study employed a qualitative methodology, using comparative analysis to evaluate workforce planning and succession strategies in RSHPDA. Data was collected from relevant literature and reports on public sector workforce management, with an emphasis on identifying challenges and best practices. The research involved examining organizational processes, such as strategic alignment, adaptability, employee engagement, and leadership development, across both public and private sectors. Findings were synthesized through thematic analysis, highlighting areas of inefficiency and potential improvements in RSHPDA's workforce and leadership practices.

VIII. **DATA PRESENTATIONS**

Answer to research question 1: How effective are the current workforce planning practices in the Rivers State Housing and Property Development Authority (RSHPDA) compared to the private sector?

The effectiveness of current workforce planning practices in the Rivers State Housing and Property Development Authority (RSHPDA) compared to the private sector can be evaluated through various dimensions, including strategic alignment, adaptability, employee engagement, and outcomes in both sectors. Workforce planning is a critical organizational process that ensures an organization has the right number of people with the right skills in the right places at the right times (Cascio & Boudreau, 2016). In the public sector, particularly within organizations like the RSHPDA, workforce planning is often influenced by bureaucratic structures and political considerations, which can hinder its effectiveness compared to the more dynamic approaches typically found in the private sector.

To assess the effectiveness of workforce planning at RSHPDA, it is essential to first examine the strategic alignment of its workforce planning practices with organizational goals. According to Becker and Huselid (2006), effective workforce planning should be closely linked to an organization's strategic objectives to ensure that human resources support overall business goals. In contrast, many public organizations, including RSHPDA, may struggle with aligning their workforce strategies due to rigid policies and a lack of flexibility in responding to changing external conditions (Akanbi & Ojo, 2018). For instance, bureaucratic processes may slow down recruitment and staff development initiatives, making it challenging for RSHPDA to quickly respond to the evolving demands of the housing and property development sector.

In terms of adaptability, private sector organizations typically exhibit greater agility in their workforce planning practices. A study by McKinsey & Company (2020) found that private companies often utilize data analytics to forecast workforce needs and identify skill gaps, enabling them to adjust their strategies in real-time. Conversely, RSHPDA's workforce planning may rely more on traditional methods, such as manual assessments and historical data, which may not be as responsive to rapid changes in the housing market (Ogunyomi, 2018). This lack of adaptability can result in skill mismatches and underutilization of human resources, ultimately affecting organizational performance.

Employee engagement is another critical factor influencing the effectiveness of workforce planning. Research indicates that organizations with high levels of employee engagement tend to have better performance outcomes and lower turnover rates (Saks, 2019). In the private sector, companies often implement proactive engagement strategies, such as regular feedback mechanisms and opportunities for professional development. In contrast, RSHPDA may face challenges in fostering engagement due to limited resources and the inherent rigidity of public sector employment structures (Ikegbunam & Igbokwe, 2020). As a result, employees may feel less motivated and engaged, negatively impacting their productivity and the overall effectiveness of workforce planning efforts. The outcomes of workforce planning practices can be measured through various performance indicators, such as employee turnover rates, recruitment success, and overall organizational effectiveness. In the private sector, successful workforce planning typically leads to lower turnover rates and a more skilled workforce, which can enhance organizational performance (Boxall & Purcell, 2016). For example, firms that prioritize strategic workforce planning often report improved employee retention and job satisfaction (Lepak & Gowan, 2016). In contrast, RSHPDA may experience higher turnover rates, which can disrupt continuity and affect service delivery in housing and property development initiatives (Olaoye, 2021). The lack of a robust workforce planning framework may contribute to these challenges, highlighting the need for improvements in this area.

Furthermore, the comparison between RSHPDA and the private sector reveals significant differences in how workforce planning practices are implemented and their effectiveness. While private organizations often leverage advanced technologies and innovative approaches to attract and retain talent, RSHPDA may rely on traditional methods that do not sufficiently address the complexities of the modern workforce (Nwankwo & Nwokedi, 2019). For example, private firms are increasingly adopting flexible work arrangements and talent management systems to enhance their workforce planning processes, which can lead to improved employee satisfaction and productivity (Kaufman, 2019). In contrast, RSHPDA's rigid policies may hinder its ability to adapt to such changes, resulting in missed opportunities for enhancing workforce effectiveness. In summary, the effectiveness of current workforce planning practices in the Rivers State Housing and Property Development Authority, compared to the private sector, is influenced by factors such as strategic alignment, adaptability, employee engagement, and overall outcomes. While RSHPDA faces challenges related to bureaucratic structures and limited resources, private sector organizations tend to exhibit greater agility and responsiveness in their workforce planning efforts. To enhance its effectiveness, RSHPDA must adopt more flexible and data-driven approaches to workforce planning, ultimately leading to improved organizational performance in housing and property development initiatives.

Answer to research question 2: What challenges does the RSHPDA face in implementing successful succession strategies?

The Rivers State Housing and Property Development Authority (RSHPDA) encounters several challenges in implementing successful succession strategies, which are essential for maintaining leadership continuity and organizational stability. Understanding these challenges requires an examination of the unique context of public sector organizations in Nigeria, the specific operational dynamics within RSHPDA, and the broader socio-economic environment in which it operates. One of the primary challenges RSHPDA faces in implementing succession strategies is the lack of a formalized succession planning process. According to Gilley, Gilley, and McMillan (2009), effective succession planning involves systematically identifying and developing internal personnel to fill key positions. However, many public sector organizations in Nigeria, including RSHPDA, often lack structured processes for identifying potential leaders and providing them with the necessary training and development opportunities. This absence of a formal process can lead to a talent pipeline gap, whereby suitable candidates for leadership roles are not adequately prepared to take on new responsibilities when opportunities arise (Akanbi & Ojo, 2018). Without a clear succession strategy, the organization risks leadership voids that can disrupt operations and impede the achievement of organizational goals.

Another significant challenge is the influence of political patronage in public sector appointments, which can undermine merit-based succession planning. In Nigeria, public sector organizations often grapple with the political nature of appointments, where positions may be filled based on political affiliations rather than merit (Nwankwo & Nwokedi, 2019). This practice not only affects the quality of leadership within RSHPDA but also discourages potential leaders from pursuing development opportunities, as they may perceive that their advancement is contingent upon political connections rather than their skills or contributions. Consequently, the organization's ability to cultivate a competent leadership cadre is hampered, leading to inefficiencies and a lack of accountability in managing housing and property development initiatives.

Moreover, RSHPDA faces challenges related to inadequate training and development programs, which are crucial for preparing employees for leadership roles. Succession planning is not merely about identifying successors but also involves providing them with the necessary skills and experiences to succeed (McCauley & Hezlett, 2002). However, public sector organizations in Nigeria often experience budget constraints and resource limitations that hinder the implementation of comprehensive training programs. As a result, employees may not receive the developmental support needed to transition into leadership roles effectively. This gap in training can lead to poorly prepared leaders who may struggle to address the complexities of housing and property development in Rivers State (Olaoye, 2021). Resistance to change is another barrier to effective succession strategies within RSHPDA. Organizational culture plays a crucial role in shaping how change is perceived and accepted. In public organizations, where bureaucratic processes are often entrenched, employees may be resistant to new approaches to succession planning (Akanbi & Ojo, 2018). This resistance can stem from a lack of understanding of the benefits of succession planning, fears of job insecurity among current leaders, or skepticism about the ability of emerging leaders to succeed. Overcoming this resistance requires a cultural shift that emphasizes the importance of leadership development and continuity for the organization's long-term success.

Furthermore, demographic changes within the workforce can pose challenges for RSHPDA's succession strategies. As the workforce ages and experienced leaders retire, the organization must contend with the loss of institutional knowledge and expertise. According to KPMG (2020), many public sector organizations in Nigeria are grappling with the implications of an aging workforce, which necessitates effective succession planning to retain critical knowledge and ensure a smooth transition of leadership. Failure to address these demographic shifts can result in a leadership crisis, with less experienced personnel stepping into key roles without adequate preparation or support. The legal and regulatory framework governing public sector organizations in Nigeria can also impact RSHPDA's ability to implement effective succession strategies. Compliance with various laws and regulations can limit the flexibility of succession planning initiatives. For instance, stringent rules around recruitment, promotions, and appointments may restrict the organization's ability to swiftly promote qualified internal candidates. This bureaucratic rigidity can lead to missed opportunities for timely leadership transitions, ultimately affecting organizational performance (Akanbi & Ojo, 2018).

Additionally, the lack of a clear vision and commitment from top management can hinder succession planning efforts. Leadership support is critical for the successful implementation of succession strategies. If senior leaders at RSHPDA do not prioritize succession planning or fail to communicate its importance to the rest of the organization, it may not receive the necessary attention and resources. Research by Rothwell (2010) emphasizes that leadership commitment is essential for embedding succession planning into the organizational culture, ensuring that it becomes a core function rather than an afterthought. Finally, inadequate evaluation and feedback mechanisms can impair the effectiveness of succession strategies within RSHPDA. Successful succession planning requires continuous assessment and refinement of processes to ensure they meet organizational needs (Becker & Huselid, 2006). However, many public sector organizations in Nigeria lack robust evaluation frameworks to measure the outcomes of their succession planning efforts. This lack of data-driven insights can lead to a perpetuation of ineffective practices and a failure to identify areas for improvement, ultimately undermining the organization's ability to cultivate effective leaders for the future.

In conclusion, the RSHPDA faces numerous challenges in implementing successful succession strategies, including the absence of formalized processes, political patronage, inadequate training programs, resistance to change, demographic shifts in the workforce, regulatory constraints, lack of leadership commitment, and insufficient evaluation mechanisms. Addressing these challenges requires a concerted effort from leadership to prioritize succession planning, create a supportive organizational culture, and implement comprehensive training and development initiatives. By doing so, RSHPDA can enhance its capacity to cultivate a strong leadership pipeline that will drive its mission of promoting sustainable housing and property development in Rivers State.

Answer to research question 3: What improvements can be recommended for leadership development practices to ensure sustainable organizational continuity in the RSHPDA?

Leadership development practices play a crucial role in ensuring sustainable organizational continuity in the Rivers State Housing and Property Development Authority (RSHPDA). Given the unique challenges faced by public sector organizations in Nigeria, particularly in housing and property development, it is essential to adopt a multifaceted approach to enhance these practices. This response outlines several improvements that can be recommended for leadership development in RSHPDA, focusing on strategic planning, training and development programs, mentorship initiatives, and the integration of technology. First, the RSHPDA must implement a strategic leadership development plan that aligns with its organizational goals and objectives. A strategic plan provides a roadmap for cultivating leadership talent and ensures that leadership development initiatives are coherent and focused on the organization's long-term vision. According to Rothwell (2010), effective succession planning and leadership development should be proactive and aligned with the strategic goals of the organization. By establishing clear objectives, key performance indicators (KPIs), and timelines, RSHPDA can create a structured approach to leadership development that addresses its specific needs and challenges.

Additionally, the organization should prioritize comprehensive training and development programs that equip current and potential leaders with the necessary skills and competencies to navigate the complexities of housing and property development. Training programs should encompass various areas, including project management, financial literacy, conflict resolution, and communication skills. A study by Gilley, Gilley, and McMillan (2009) highlights the importance of continuous learning and development in enhancing organizational performance and fostering a culture of innovation. By investing in a robust training curriculum, RSHPDA can enhance the leadership capabilities of its workforce, thereby improving decision-making and problem-solving processes. Mentorship initiatives are also vital for fostering leadership development within RSHPDA. Establishing a formal mentorship program can facilitate knowledge transfer between experienced leaders and emerging talent, providing guidance and support for career advancement. According to Allen et al. (2004), mentorship positively impacts leadership development by enhancing the professional growth of mentees and increasing their confidence and competencies. By pairing established leaders with junior staff, RSHPDA can cultivate a culture of learning and support, which is essential for sustainable organizational continuity.

Furthermore, RSHPDA should consider integrating technology into its leadership development practices. The adoption of digital tools and platforms can enhance the accessibility and effectiveness of training programs. Online learning modules, webinars, and virtual coaching sessions can provide flexibility for employees to engage in professional development at their own pace. A report by KPMG (2020) emphasizes the growing importance of digital transformation in the public sector, highlighting how technology can streamline processes and enhance the delivery of services. By leveraging technology, RSHPDA can reach a wider audience, increase engagement, and ensure that leadership development initiatives are adaptable to the changing needs of the workforce. Additionally, fostering a culture of feedback and continuous improvement is essential for enhancing leadership development practices in RSHPDA. Implementing regular performance evaluations and feedback mechanisms allows employees to identify their strengths and areas for growth. Research by London and Smither (1999) suggests that feedback is critical for personal and professional development, as it encourages self-awareness and motivates individuals to improve their performance. By creating an environment where feedback is valued and utilized, RSHPDA can facilitate ongoing leadership development and ensure that employees are continuously refining their skills.

Moreover, RSHPDA should actively engage in collaborative partnerships with educational institutions and professional organizations. Such partnerships can provide access to cutting-edge research, training resources, and best practices in leadership development. According to Nwankwo and Nwokedi (2019), collaboration between public sector organizations and academic institutions can enhance workforce planning practices by integrating theoretical knowledge with practical applications. By establishing alliances with universities and training organizations, RSHPDA can enrich its leadership development initiatives and stay abreast of emerging trends and practices in the field. Furthermore, the organization should prioritize diversity and inclusion in its leadership development practices. Diverse leadership teams are known to enhance creativity and innovation, leading to better decision-making and problem-solving capabilities (Herring, 2009). RSHPDA should ensure that its leadership development programs are accessible to individuals from various backgrounds and demographics, creating an inclusive environment where diverse perspectives are valued. By promoting diversity within leadership ranks, RSHPDA can leverage the strengths of its workforce and foster a more adaptable and resilient organization. Finally, the organization must establish metrics and evaluation processes to assess the effectiveness of its leadership development initiatives. Regularly evaluating the outcomes of training programs, mentorship efforts, and other leadership development activities will enable RSHPDA to identify areas for

improvement and measure progress toward its strategic goals. Research by Becker and Huselid (2006) emphasizes the importance of data-driven decision-making in human resource management, highlighting how metrics can guide organizations in refining their leadership development strategies. By utilizing performance data, RSHPDA can ensure that its leadership practices are aligned with organizational objectives and effectively contribute to sustainable continuity.

In conclusion, the RSHPDA can enhance its leadership development practices to ensure sustainable organizational continuity by implementing a strategic development plan, prioritizing comprehensive training programs, establishing mentorship initiatives, leveraging technology, fostering a culture of feedback, engaging in collaborative partnerships, promoting diversity and inclusion, and utilizing evaluation metrics. These improvements will not only cultivate a strong leadership pipeline but also empower RSHPDA to navigate the challenges of housing and property development in Rivers State effectively. By investing in its leaders, RSHPDA can position itself for long-term success and contribute to the sustainable development of the region.

Key Findings

1. The current workforce planning practices at RSHPDA are hindered by bureaucratic structures and a lack of strategic alignment with organizational goals compared to the more dynamic practices in the private sector.
2. RSHPDA faces significant challenges in implementing succession strategies, including the absence of formal processes, political patronage affecting leadership appointments, and inadequate training programs for potential leaders.
3. To ensure sustainable organizational continuity, RSHPDA should prioritize strategic leadership development plans, enhance training and mentorship initiatives, and leverage technology to improve accessibility and effectiveness of leadership development programs.

IX. RECOMMENDATIONS

Here are three recommendations for enhancing leadership development practices in the Rivers State Housing and Property Development Authority (RSHPDA):

1. Implement a Strategic Leadership Development Plan: RSHPDA should develop and execute a strategic leadership development plan aligned with its organizational goals, incorporating clear objectives and performance indicators to create a structured approach that addresses its specific challenges and fosters long-term leadership continuity.

2. Enhance Training and Development Programs: The organization must prioritize comprehensive training initiatives that equip current and aspiring leaders with essential skills such as project management, financial literacy, and communication, ensuring they are well-prepared to navigate the complexities of housing and property development.

3. Establish Formal Mentorship Initiatives: RSHPDA should introduce a formal mentorship program to facilitate knowledge transfer between experienced leaders and emerging talent, promoting professional growth, increasing confidence, and fostering a supportive culture that underpins sustainable organizational continuity.

X. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the effectiveness of current workforce planning practices within the Rivers State Housing and Property Development Authority (RSHPDA) is significantly challenged compared to the more agile approaches found in the private sector. Factors such as strategic alignment, adaptability, employee engagement, and outcomes reveal considerable discrepancies. While RSHPDA grapples with bureaucratic constraints, limited resources, and traditional methodologies that hinder responsiveness, private sector organizations leverage data-driven strategies to foster employee engagement and maintain skilled workforces. Furthermore, RSHPDA faces substantial obstacles in implementing successful succession strategies, including the absence of formalized processes, political patronage, inadequate training, and resistance to change. Addressing these challenges is imperative for enhancing leadership continuity and organizational stability. Recommendations for improvement include establishing a strategic leadership development plan, prioritizing comprehensive training programs, fostering mentorship initiatives, integrating technology into development practices, and cultivating a culture of

feedback. By adopting these improvements, RSHPDA can better prepare its workforce for future challenges, ensuring sustainable organizational continuity in the housing and property development sector.

REFERENCES

1) Adeyemi, G. O. (2022). Leadership succession and talent retention in Nigerian multinational corporations. *Journal of Multinational Business Studies*, 19(2), 45-67.

2) Adamu, B. T. (2020). Workforce planning and leadership development in Nigerian telecom companies. *Journal of Human Resource Management Studies*, 12(3), 102-117.

3) Akanbi, M. O., & Ojo, O. (2018). The role of human resource management practices in organizational performance: Evidence from the Rivers State housing sector. *International Journal of Human Resource Studies*, 8(2), 135-150.

4) Allen, T. D., Eby, L. T., Poteet, M. L., Lentz, E., & Lima, L. (2004). Career benefits associated with mentoring for mentors: A retrospective study. *Journal of Career Development*, 30(2), 112-118. https://doi.org/10.1177/089484530403000204

5) Amah, E., & Baridam, D. (2012). Adaptability and organizational effectiveness: A study of the Nigerian banking industry. *International Journal of Business and Management Tomorrow*, 2(3), 1-9.

6) Armstrong, M. (2014). *Armstrong's handbook of human resource management practice* (13th ed.). Kogan Page Publishers.

7) Becker, B. E., & Huselid, M. A. (2006). Strategic human resources management: Where do we go from here? *Journal of Management*, 32(6), 898-925. https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206306293668

8) Becker, G. S. (1964). *Human capital: A theoretical and empirical analysis with special reference to education*. University of Chicago Press.

9) Bello, K. F. (2019). Leadership development and succession planning in Nigeria's healthcare sector. *Health Leadership Review*, 14(2), 77-95.

10) Boxall, P. F., & Purcell, J. (2016). *Strategy and human resource management*. Palgrave Macmillan.

11) Cascio, W. F., & Boudreau, J. W. (2016). The search for global competence: From international HR to talent management. *Journal of World Business*, 51(1), 94-106. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jwb.2015.08.005

12) Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (4th ed.). Sage Publications.

13) Garavan, T. N., Carbery, R., & Rock, A. (2012). Mapping talent development: Definition, scope, and architecture. *European Journal of Training and Development*, 36(1), 5-24.

14) Gilley, K. M., Gilley, J. W., & McMillan, H. S. (2009). Organizational learning, performance, and the role of human resource development. *Advances in Developing Human Resources*, 11(3), 310-332. https://doi.org/10.1177/1523422309338492

15) Herring, C. (2009). Does diversity pay? Race, gender, and the business case for diversity. *American Sociological Review*, 74(2), 208-224. https://doi.org/10.1177/000312240907400202

16) Ibrahim, L. T. (2019). Leadership succession challenges in Nigerian public service. *Public Administration Quarterly*, 20(3), 123-140.

17) Ikegbunam, I., & Igbokwe, C. (2020). Employee engagement and organizational performance in public organizations: A case study of Rivers State. *African Journal of Business Management*, 14(4), 60-72.

18) Inyang, B. J., & Akpama, U. (2019). Talent management and succession planning in the Nigerian public sector. *International Journal of Business and Management*, 14(9), 99-110.

19) Johnson, E. A. (2017). Workforce planning and leadership succession in Nigerian manufacturing companies. *International Journal of Organizational Leadership*, 9(1), 89-103.

20) Kaufman, B. E. (2019). The role of labor market institutions in employment growth: Evidence from Nigeria. *Industrial Relations Research Association*.

21) KPMG. (2020). Workforce planning in the public sector: Challenges and opportunities. Retrieved from https://home.kpmg/ng/en/home/insights/2020/10/workforce-planning-public-sector.html

22) Lepak, D. P., & Gowan, M. (2016). The impact of high-performance work systems on the relationship between employee engagement and organizational performance. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 27(6), 698-715. https://doi.org/10.1080/09585192.2015.1078880

23) London, M., & Smither, J. W. (1999). Feedback orientation, feedback, and performance. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 14(6), 501-519. https://doi.org/10.1108/02683949910294640

24) McCauley, C. D., & Hezlett, S. A. (2002). Individual development in the workplace. In S. A. Hezlett (Ed.), *The future of leadership development* (pp. 63-86).

25) McKinsey & Company. (2020). How to build a successful workforce planning process. Retrieved from https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/

26) Musa, D. T. (2020). Workforce planning and leadership continuity in Nigerian public sector organizations. *Public Sector Review*, 28(4), 65-80.

27) Nnadi, A. K. (2021). Succession planning and leadership development in the Nigerian banking sector. *African Journal of Finance and Economics*, 14(1), 34-56.

28) Nwankwo, B., & Nwokedi, C. (2019). Workforce planning practices in the Nigerian banking sector: Challenges and prospects. *Nigerian Journal of Management Sciences*, 8(1), 1-12.

29) Ogunyomi, O. (2018). Factors affecting workforce planning in the public sector: Evidence from Nigeria. *Public Personnel Management*, 47(1), 54-71. https://doi.org/10.1177/0091026017744087

30) Okechukwu, O. J., & Onyene, V. E. (2017). Leadership development in the Nigerian public sector: A case for strategic talent management. *African Journal of Business Management*, 11(15), 367-374.

31) Okeke-Uzodike, O. E., & Subban, M. (2015). Public sector recruitment policies: Efficiency, effectiveness and consequences. *Problems and Perspectives in Management*, 13(1), 183-192.

32) Okon, E. J. (2018). Leadership development and succession planning in Nigeria: Challenges and solutions. *African Journal of Leadership Studies*, 16(3), 111-126.

33) Olawale, I. R. (2021). Succession planning and performance in Nigerian educational institutions. *Journal of Educational Leadership*, 22(1), 97-114.

34) Olaoye, O. (2021). Public sector workforce planning: Challenges and solutions in Nigeria. *International Journal of Public Administration*, 44(5), 410-418. https://doi.org/10.1080/01900692.2020.1836635

35) Obiekwe, O. (2018). Employee engagement and productivity in Nigerian banking industry. *Journal of Business and Management*, 20(6), 77-85.

36) Rothwell, W. J. (2010). *Effective succession planning: Ensuring leadership continuity and building talent from within*. Amacom.

37) Yusuf, A. S. (2019). Succession planning and leadership development in Nigeria's oil and gas sector. *Energy Leadership Journal*, 5(2), 40-59.