

**IN SEARCH OF SUCCESSION PLANNING IN  
SCHOOL ORGANIZATIONS:  
A COMPARATIVE CASE STUDY OF  
SCHOOL LEADERSHIP IN THE  
PHILIPPINES AND INDONESIA**

**A Thesis**

**Submitted to the Master's Study Program of Faculty of Education in  
partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of**

**Master of Arts (M.A.)**



Erickson V. Samson

04212320006

FACULTY OF EDUCATION  
UNIVERSITAS ISLAM INTERNASIONAL INDONESIA  
DEPOK  
2025

**IN SEARCH OF SUCCESSION PLANNING IN  
SCHOOL ORGANIZATIONS:  
A COMPARATIVE CASE STUDY OF  
SCHOOL LEADERSHIP IN THE  
PHILIPPINES AND INDONESIA**

**A Thesis**

**Submitted to the Master's Study Program of Faculty of Education in  
partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of**

**Master of Arts (M.A.)**



Erickson V. Samson

04212320006

FACULTY OF EDUCATION  
UNIVERSITAS ISLAM INTERNASIONAL INDONESIA  
DEPOK  
2025

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT .....	x
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	xi
LIST OF TABLES .....	xiv
LIST OF FIGURES .....	xv
APPENDICES.....	xvi
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS .....	xvii
DEFINITION OF TERMS.....	xviii

### CHAPTER I

#### INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study .....	1
1.1.1 Contexts of the Study.....	3
1.1.1.1 Philippines.....	3
1.1.1.2 Indonesia .....	7
1.1.2 Lack of Succession Planning: An Unobserved Phenomenon? .....	10
1.1.3 Principal Leadership as an Integral Part of School Operations .....	11
1.2 Statement of the Problem .....	12
1.3 Research Objectives and Research Questions .....	12
1.4 Significance of the Study.....	13

### CHAPTER II

#### THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

2.1 Review of Related Literature.....	14
2.1.1 A Brief History of Leadership Succession Planning.....	14
2.1.2 Succession Planning Defined .....	15
2.1.3 Leadership, Management and Administration of Succession Planning .....	17
2.1.4 Succession Planning in the Catholic Church.....	18
2.1.5 Succession Planning in the Nursing Field.....	20
2.1.6 Succession Planning in the Business Sector.....	21
2.1.7 Succession Planning in the Public Sector .....	23
2.1.8 Succession Planning in the Field of Education.....	25
2.1.9 Potential to Novice: Prepared to be Inducted as School Leaders or Not? .....	29
2.1.10 School-Based Leadership Succession Planning: Urgency and Novelty.....	32
2.2 Theoretical Framework .....	33
2.2.1 Chavez's Succession Planning Framework.....	34
2.2.2 Arrieta et al.'s Succession Planning Model for Academic Heads.....	37
2.2.3 Parfitt's Succession Planning Framework for School Leaders.....	39
2.3 Conceptual Framework of Succession Planning.....	41

### CHAPTER III

#### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Qualitative Approach.....	44
3.2 Comparative Research.....	45
3.3 Case Study Design .....	46
3.4 Comparative Case Study .....	46
3.5 Research Paradigm.....	47
3.6 Research Setting.....	48
3.6.1 Demographic Profile of a Private School in the Philippines.....	49
3.6.2 Demographic Profile of a Private School in Indonesia.....	50
3.7 Data Collection Techniques .....	51
3.7.1 Research Subjects and Instrument .....	51

3.7.2	Semi-structured Interviews .....	51
3.7.2.1	Face-to-Face Interview.....	52
3.7.2.2	Online Interview.....	52
3.7.3	Document Analysis.....	53
3.8	Qualitative Data Analysis and Techniques .....	53
3.8.1	Verbatim Transcription.....	54
3.8.2	Six Phases of Thematic Analysis by Braun and Clarke (2021).....	54
3.8.3	Inductive, Descriptive and Thematic Coding .....	56
3.9	Trustworthiness.....	57
3.10	Ethical Issues .....	58
3.11	Time and Place of Study.....	59
3.12	Researcher’s Positionality .....	59

## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1	Results.....	60
4.1.1	Profile of the Filipino Principals.....	60
4.1.2	Qualitative Themes in the Philippines .....	61
4.1.2.1	Succession Planning as Sustainable and Proactive Strategy for Leadership.....	61
4.1.2.2	Leadership Transitions and Organizational Preparedness.....	62
4.1.2.3	Grooming and Mentoring Future Leaders.....	63
4.1.2.4	Characteristics and Criteria for Succession .....	63
4.1.2.5	Preference for Internal Candidates and Cultural Continuity .....	64
4.1.2.6	Professional Development and Support as Retention Strategies .....	65
4.1.2.7	Informal and Formal Approaches to Succession .....	66
4.1.2.8	Challenges and Risks in Succession Planning.....	66
4.1.2.9	Triangulation of Results .....	67
4.1.3	Profile of the Indonesian Principals.....	68
4.1.4	Qualitative Themes in Indonesia .....	68
4.1.4.1	Succession Planning as an Intentional Process.....	69
4.1.4.2	Vice Principals as a Leadership Pipeline.....	70
4.1.4.3	Internal or External Candidates?.....	70
4.1.4.4	Mentorship and Informal Leadership Preparation .....	71
4.1.4.5	Practical Experience Over Formal Leadership Training .....	72
4.1.4.6	Selection Influenced by Stakeholder Consensus and Observation .....	72
4.1.4.7	Criteria for Principalship: Performance, Consistency and Character....	73
4.1.4.8	Succession Challenges and Dilemmas .....	73
4.1.4.9	Triangulation of Results .....	74
4.2	Discussion.....	75
4.2.1	How Principals Defined Succession Planning in the Philippines and Indonesia. .....	76
4.2.2	Succession Practices: Structure and Informality .....	78
4.2.3	Identification and Preparation of Future Principals .....	79
4.2.4	Challenges and Concerns in the Succession Process .....	80
4.2.5	Strategies for Succession: Leadership Style, Internal Promotion and Retention. .....	82

CHAPTER V	
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	
5.1 Summary .....	84
5.2 Conclusion.....	85
5.3 Study Implications .....	85
5.4 Challenges Experienced .....	86
5.5 Research Limitations.....	87
5.6 Recommendations.....	87
5.7 Future Directions .....	88
REFERENCES .....	90
APPENDICES .....	105

## ABSTRACT

Erickson V. Samson  
04212320006  
erickson.samson@uiii.ac.id  
Master of Arts in Education  
Universitas Islam Internasional Indonesia

Succession planning is an overlooked aspect of educational leadership in Southeast Asia. This study explored and compared the succession planning practices of private schools in the Philippines and Indonesia, where abrupt leadership turnovers and the dire shortage of principals show a lack of structured approaches such as succession planning. Yet, aspiring principals are thrust into the roles without adequate leadership preparation or support, which leads to high leadership turnover rates and ongoing principal shortages across both countries. This study employed qualitative methods: semi-structured interviews and document analysis to triangulate the data. Disappointingly, little is known from the scant empirical literature hitherto about succession planning in education, especially in the Philippines and Indonesia. The researcher gathered the data from four school principals (two per country) and analyzed them thematically with *Quirkos* software. Findings reveal that a private school in the Philippines generally adopted proactive and structured succession planning, and it is guided by competency-based models that manifest leadership readiness, institutional alignment and talent development. Meanwhile, a private school in Indonesia showed reactive and informal approaches, often relying on seniority, individual initiative and concepts such as *kaderisasi* without formal frameworks, as this school views leadership as a matter of practice. This study, thus, inferred that a Philippine school strategically integrated succession planning into its governance, while an Indonesian school necessitated an urgent policy and institutional support. It also showed the importance of proactively embedding succession planning within educational governance that guarantees sustainability, continuity and preparedness in school leadership. This thesis contributes to the limited Southeast Asian literature on educational leadership, specifically succession planning, and propound practical implications to policymakers, school leaders and education stakeholders in under-resourced contexts.

Keywords: *Comparative Case Study, Educational Leadership, Pipeline, School Principal, Succession Planning*

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

There have been so many people who helped me throughout my journey to completing my master's degree. I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge the indispensable support, encouragement and guidance of so many fine individuals who have contributed along the way. I extend my sincere apologies in advance, as any errors or omissions are mine—any such oversights are entirely my own.

I cannot be more grateful to Universitas Islam Internasional Indonesia (UIII) for granting me a fully-funded scholarship for two academic years (2023-2024/2024-2025). The opportunity to study in this institution has been rewarding, worthy of commitment, and is deemed a privilege in my academic, personal and professional development as a teacher and a novice researcher.

Likewise, my sincere gratitude goes to Dr. Jamhari Makruf, the incumbent rector of UIII, as I was also privileged to interview him in one of my final paper requirements, in spite of busy leadership roles, who gave me an opportunity to learn more about how he will be/is expecting, approaching and practicing succession processes, formally and informally, at this young and growing university.

I owe an enormous debt of gratitude to my principal supervisor, Dr. Bambang Sumintono, an experienced, learned and erudite scholar, for his continuous guidance and mentorship since the beginning. His expertise in the field of education and research, thoughtful feedback, comments, recommendations, motivation for me to become a researcher in the near future and encouragement to my learning significantly shaped the direction and trajectory of this research and me as a novice researcher. I was truly honored and fortunate to be a graduate student to sit in his selected classes and under his supervision since the very first semester.

I would also like to extend my deepest appreciation to my second supervisor, Dr. Alpha Ammirachman, for his support, comments and recommendations to my study. His guidance and expertise in the field of education indeed helped strengthen both the academic quality and practical relevance of my thesis.

To Dr. Yohan Rubiyantoro, one of my examiners, an Education Analyst at the Ministry of Education and Culture of Indonesia, whose comments and commendations gave me eagerness and motivation to pursue my topic of interest further, up to a more advanced level, hopefully soon. I was grateful; it was then my pleasure, yet I am privileged to have a person from Indonesia's ministry who served as one of my examiners during thesis defense. To Dr. Suwarsih Madya, one of my examiners, a credentialed and experienced academic, who also served as one of my examiners, provided me with

comprehensive comments and constructive feedback that I really needed, which I deemed integral to my study to fine-tune the overall writing of my manuscript.

I am truly indebted to my external academic adviser, Dr. Christopher Parfitt, a leadership practitioner, whose scholarly expertise in leadership succession planning provided understanding, clarity and depth to my research, whom I have only known by chance by citing him in my literature review and trying to reach him out through email as he is a brilliant scholar who works hard to adopt and apply succession planning in the field education. I am beyond grateful for his time for our correspondence, advice and recommendations throughout my thesis process. He is an outstanding person who has sparked my interest in pursuing this scholarly, emerging, yet underresearched topic in the field of education.

I extend my appreciation to all research participants who are incumbent school principals of their respective schools from the Philippines and Indonesia who generously contributed their time and perspectives, despite the busy and hectic schedules due to the meetings and preparations for upcoming activities in their schools and the overall school operations since principals in Southeast Asia are leaders and managers at the same time. Their participation was essential to the completion of this study, and I owe them an enormous debt of gratitude.

I am also thankful to the many outstanding and incredible professors, lecturers and faculty members at UIII who contributed to my academic formation. Their support and instruction, nevertheless, have been invaluable and greatly contributed to my professional and academic growth. To all of the stellar and exceptional individuals in the Faculty of Education, thank you for all of the help and guidance throughout this journey.

To my friends, thank you for your encouragement, good company and support throughout this journey. Your presence helped me stay balanced, inspired and motivated. I will surely not forget our decisive yet meaningful moments that we used to eat together, go outside planned or unplanned, stand by each other through thick and thin, and share the same sentiments and struggles until we overcame them together.

I am especially grateful and also truly indebted to Mr. Magello Rainer Fenis, M.A. in Political Science—my former college instructor and an alumnus of this university—whose full support has been hugely integral in leading me to my admission to UIII. His encouragement set this journey in motion. Indeed, there would be lots of “I would have not been” moments if without his steadfast belief in my potential and his generous guidance along the way—such as I would have not been here in Indonesia, met my friends and lecturers and gotten the scholarship and everything that shaped my academic, personal and

professional formation without him. He was a bridge and instrumental in my journey to and through Indonesia. He is also an outstanding and emerging scholar whom I admire and look up to.

Last but certainly not least, I would like to thank my loved ones for their love, support, prayers and belief in me. I deemed their encouragement a constant source of strength.

To everyone who contributed to this journey, whether named or unnamed, thank you.

## LIST OF TABLES

<b>Table 4.1</b>	Profile of the Filipino Principals	60
<b>Table 4.2</b>	Profile of the Indonesian Principals	68
<b>Table 4.3</b>	Comparison of Philippines and Indonesia for succession planning practices	75

## LIST OF FIGURES

<b>Figure 2.1</b>	Succession-Planning Framework	34
<b>Figure 2.2</b>	Succession-Planning Model for Academic Heads	38
<b>Figure 2.3</b>	Conceptual Framework of Succession Planning	43

## APPENDICES

<b>Appendix 1</b>	Research Permit Form
<b>Appendix 2</b>	Qualitative Participant Request
<b>Appendix 3</b>	Qualitative Interview Consent Form
<b>Appendix 4</b>	Basic Information Questions for Principals
<b>Appendix 5.1</b>	Interview with the Filipino Principal A (FPA)
<b>Appendix 5.2</b>	Interview with the Filipino Principal B (FPB)
<b>Appendix 5.3</b>	Interview with the Indonesian Principal A (IPA)
<b>Appendix 5.4</b>	Interview with the Indonesian Principal B (IPB)
<b>Appendix 6</b>	Semi-structured Interview Questions for Principals
<b>Appendix 7</b>	Sample of Real Interview Script with a School Principal
<b>Appendix 8.1</b>	Cover of the Succession Plan of a Philippine Private School
<b>Appendix 8.2</b>	Introduction Part of the Succession Plan including its Definition and Description, and One of its Phases
<b>Appendix 8.3</b>	One of the Templates of the Succession Plan (Template No. 4) Named High Potential Employee Identification
<b>Appendix 9</b>	A Real Sample of Quirks Canvas Coding for Filipino Principal A

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CEO	: <i>Chief Executive Officer</i>
CGP	: <i>Calon Guru Penggerak (Teacher as an Agent of Change)</i>
DepEd	: <i>Department of Education (Philippines)</i>
DEI	: <i>Diversity, Equity and Inclusion</i>
EDCOM 2	: <i>Second Congressional Commission on Education (Philippines)</i>
ESOP	: <i>Employee Stock Ownership Plan</i>
FPA	: <i>Filipino Principal A</i>
FPB	: <i>Filipino Principal B</i>
HRD	: <i>Human Resource Development</i>
IPA	: <i>Principal A</i>
IPB	: <i>Indonesian Principal B</i>
JHS	: <i>Junior High School</i>
KPI	: <i>Key Performance Indicator</i>
LP2KS	: <i>Lembaga Pengembangan dan Pemberdayaan Kepala Sekolah</i>
NEAP	: <i>National Educators Academy of the Philippines</i>
NKP	: <i>Nursery, Kindergarten and Preparatory</i>
NQESH	: <i>National Qualifying Examination for School Heads</i>
NUKS	: <i>Nomor Unik Kepala Sekolah</i>
OIC	: <i>Officer-in-Charge</i>
PIC	: <i>Person-in-Charge</i>
PD	: <i>Professional Development</i>
PPSSH	: <i>Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads</i>
RPMS	: <i>Results-Based Performance Management System</i>
SHS	: <i>Senior High School</i>
SMA	: <i>Sekolah Menengah Atas</i>
SMP	: <i>Sekolah Menengah Pertama</i>
TIC	: <i>Teacher-in-Charge</i>
VP	: <i>Vice Principal</i>

NOTE: Some non-English words are Indonesian terms.

## DEFINITION OF TERMS

Below are the key terminologies used extensively in this thesis.

<i>Calon Guru Penggerak:</i>	A certification and leadership development program in Indonesia designed to prepare teachers for school leadership roles.
<i>Career Pathway:</i>	A progression plan for educators to move from teaching roles into school leadership.
<i>Comparative Case Study:</i>	A qualitative research approach that systematically examines and contrasts two or more cases to identify similarities, differences, and contextual factors that shape the phenomena under investigation.
<i>Distributed Leadership:</i>	A model where leadership responsibilities are shared among various members of the school organization to enhance collaboration and build capacity.
<i>Grooming:</i>	An intentional preparation of potential school leaders through mentoring, training, and delegated leadership tasks.
<i>Instructional Leadership:</i>	A principal's role focused on fostering teaching and learning, overseeing curriculum implementation and ensuring instructional quality as part of effective school operations.
<i>Instructional Supervision:</i>	A principal's role guide, assess and improve the instructional practices of teachers to improve student learning outcomes.
<i>Leadership Continuity:</i>	It is the uninterrupted function and direction of school leadership during leadership transitions.
<i>Leadership Identification:</i>	The process of recognizing individuals with leadership potential based on performance, attitude, or alignment with institutional goals.
<i>Leadership Pipeline:</i>	It is a structured progression of individuals being prepared for the leadership roles through the process of mentoring, coaching and professional development.

<i>Leadership Turnover:</i>	It refers to the rate or process by which individuals in leadership positions leave their roles—whether through resignation, retirement, promotion, or dismissal—and are replaced by new leaders.
<i>Leadership Readiness:</i>	Preparedness of individuals to assume leadership roles.
<i>Leadership Sustainability:</i>	The long-term viability of leadership structures, practices and capacity in schools.
<i>Leadership Transition:</i>	The process through which school leadership changes from one individual to another.
<i>Mentorship:</i>	A developmental relationship wherein experienced leaders provide guidance, support and feedback to potential successors.
<i>Officer-in-Charge:</i>	A temporary leadership designation given to a teacher or school leader, such as a vice principal or department head, when the principal is unavailable.
<i>Organizational Culture:</i>	The shared values, beliefs, norms and practices within a school.
<i>Phenomenon:</i>	An observable event or fact that is studied to understand its causes, effects, or underlying principles.
<i>Principal Shortage:</i>	A phenomenon characterized by the lack of qualified individuals to fill school leadership positions.
<i>Private Schools:</i>	Educational institutions that operate independently of government funding and regulations.
<i>Professional Development:</i>	Training programs and learning activities aimed at improving educators' leadership, management and instructional competencies.
<i>Public Schools:</i>	State-run educational institutions subject to government policies.
<i>School Governance:</i>	The policies, leadership structures and decision-making mechanisms that guide the management of school organizations.
<i>Succession Evasion:</i>	A concept in organizational behavior describing the avoidance or obstruction of succession planning through behaviors such as talent suppression or belief in positional permanence.

*Succession Planning:*

A strategic and managerial process that involves identifying, developing and retaining potential leaders.

*Talent Management:*

An organized process of identifying, mentoring and coaching high-potential individuals within the organization.

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Study

Ask any person to define what succession planning is in their school contexts, and the answers will be different. Thus, this term may evoke varying responses from different people as its execution may also vary (Parfitt, 2017a, 2022). Some of whom may not be aware of what succession planning really is until its concept is introduced clearly, as this concept is defined differently in each field and/or sector. If truth to be told, these persons will not be able to define succession planning succinctly. Succession planning poses inherent challenges that no institution can fully avoid, regardless of its size, structure and purpose. Schools, in particular, can face significant disruption due to sudden changes in leadership and organizational structure (Beycioglu & Kondakci, 2021). In an interview, a principal stated, “succession planning, it means my plan to be successful, right?” while trying to think deeply and in hesitation to answer it. Unfortunately, this school principal is not alone. Interestingly, another principal also said, “succession planning is a plan that the school can use or refer to whenever leaders resign,” to which an awareness of succession planning is seen, yet the definition is not succinctly stated. Differences in defining this concept vary as in their contexts as they handle succession processes uniquely. Observably, one is reactive and the other is proactive.

School principals are believed to have a crucial role in driving school improvement and achieving positive results for students (Cieminski, 2018). However, it is unavoidable that a principal or a leader may resign due to aging, burnout, retirement, passing, poor leadership and management in the school and finding another opportunity for which an organization is unprepared for these circumstances (Boris-Schacter & Langer, 2006; Brock, 2000; Dake, 2021; Kelly, 2023; Pladdys, 2024; Tauro, 2021; Wilson, 2022). Effective succession planning helps organizations prepare for losing key individuals from critical positions (Atwood, 2020; Gabriel et al., 2020; Rothwell et al., 2015). The problems that led to a succession plan are a reflection and vulnerability of organizations and institutions’ structure and system, as schools alone cannot afford to wait until a leader leaves for whatever the reasons are (Ritchie, 2020).

A blog post says, “When making a succession plan for your organization, keep in mind that your role will someday require backfilling. Maybe you’ll decide to take advantage of a new opportunity, or you’ll put in your time and retire from the workforce. So, it’s important to ask yourself, which employee could step into your shoes one day? And what can you do, starting now, to help that person prepare for the transition?” This post was

shared by Half (2024), as he recommended that organizations must address leadership continuity by creating succession plans, which supports their mission to support organizations in workforce management, talent development and readiness for leadership changes or transitions.

Succession planning minimizes the disruption during transitions and strengthens long-term operational stability to reflect on their expertise in staffing (Hosseini et al., 2018). Some may ask the following questions: “Is there a need for succession planning?” and “Is succession planning effective?” Through the years, succession planning has not been given much attention in education because school leaders only look for replacements, whoever is available to fill the vacant positions, usually without any strategic succession plan through grooming practices (Bush, 2011; Fusarelli et al., 2018; Peters-Hawkins et al., 2018; Ritchie, 2020) such as appointing different sub-unit leaders as Teacher-in-Charge (TIC) or Officer-in-Charge (OIC) principal because the principals believe that they usually are the ones mostly involved in the leadership and administrative roles, to be followed by individualized talk to each candidate privately, evaluation and deliberation of the candidates at the end as there may be a limited delegation for grooming and developing the capacity. Yet, the education sector is slow in adopting models and practices that have long been employed in other sectors.

Researchers agreed that there is a need for organizational sustainability in school leadership and management (Susilo & Winarto, 2023). Leadership succession planning must be created beforehand to guarantee organizational success and sustainability. This succession plan aims to account for the vision of an organizational culture. Neefe (2009) contended that succession planning has been utilized in the business sector for several decades. Yet, in the field of education, it is still nonexistent (Parfitt, 2017a). Inadequate planning has frequently yielded unfavorable outcomes for schools (Fullan, 2005). Hence, the researcher, in this sense, argues that the education sector should recognize succession planning as part of the organizational process, and succession planning models are recommended to be adopted to ensure that schools are proactive and prepared for unexpected leadership turnovers and to address the principal shortage.

For the readers to easily understand this thesis, the researcher intended to metaphorize succession planning as tantamount to wooing someone or can be understood as a form of courtship. It is a gradual and relational process marked by mutual understanding or recognition, trust-building and long-term commitment. The reader may ask: why is succession planning metaphorized to courtship? The courtship, as everyone may know, begins with the so-called identification of potential by getting to know each

other, which is akin to an initial attraction. School leaders are the ones who observe the promising individuals and notice their leadership qualities are matched and aligned with the school's vision and mission, and values. This reflects the early or usual stages of courtship, where compatibility is observed first, then tested and assessed until initial interest is sparked. The relationship then deepens through mentoring and capacity-building opportunities, which are parallel to the dating process, where sharing lived experiences establishes mutual understanding and trust, even when candidates are outsiders, as in talent-scouting efforts, this process still applies, since schools may proactively identify and attract external individuals whose values and competencies align with the institution, gradually nurturing their integration much like one would in a deliberate and intentional courtship.

### **1.1.1 Contexts of the Study**

#### **1.1.1.1 Philippines**

In recent years, a report by the Philippine Daily Inquirer pointed out one critical issue in the Philippine education system: more than half of public schools currently lack qualified principals, with many schools led by head teachers, teachers-in-charge, or officers-in-charge instead (De Villa, 2024, EDCOM 2, 2024). The Second Congressional Commission on Education, known in the Philippines as EDCOM 2, reported on November 08, 2024, that more than 24,000 of the country's more than 45,000 public schools lack qualified school heads. In 2017, the passing rate of the Principals' Test was significantly low, with Region IV-A in Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal and Quezon (CALABARZON) achieving only an 11.49% passing rate, and Region VIII (Eastern Visayas) had the highest at 15.91%. This situation arises due to the low passing rates in the required exams for school heads and an outdated hiring policy by the Department of Education (DepEd) since at least 2017. This leadership gap shows the dire need for urgent reforms in succession planning since strong leadership is essential to improving school performance and realizing better student outcomes. While the DepEd (2011) has already acknowledged this issue as a phenomenon, policy such as DepEd Order No. 97, s. 2011, which outlines the qualifications and responsibilities for school heads, is a step toward standardizing leadership quality, but it falls short of solving the deeper systemic problems, which are the outdated policies to which schools operate, and the guidelines on staffing established in 1997 that do not reflect the current educational needs. Another problem is the inconsistent allocation of school heads, and its inconsistency is widespread in the assignment of school leaders. For instance, 12,057 schools have incorrect school head assignments, with many elementary schools not adhering to DepEd policies. Also, the data gaps show that 193 schools lack recorded data

on school heads, which poses significant obstacles in ensuring that there is proper leadership allocation (Reyes, 2025).

The researcher has intended to get the data from the latest report of the EDCOM 2 on January 20, 2025 that public schools lack principals on the grounds these are an urgent need; why the researcher collected the data from the private schools believing that private schools, though some of them may or may not have the formalized and structured succession planning, these private schools have the ideal practices of adopting a succession plan, preparing principals by providing a professional development and programs about leadership, assigning them to become an OIC principal though temporarily whenever they are away such as official business outside schools, training the potential leaders or teachers and other programs and aspects that prepare them to become a leader anytime (EDCOM 2, 2025).

Becoming a principal in the Philippines is one of the desired positions of teachers. Some of them might not know what becoming a principal is really like; their expectations might leave them unprepared if they do not acknowledge the role of being a principal. However, for others, a teacher being promoted to become a principal is just a leadership position with additional duties and responsibilities with incrementally little remuneration. The road to being a school principal in the Philippines is well-charted but has many challenges. The aspiring principals must pass the National Qualifying Examination for School Heads (NQESH) since 2011, a test designed to gauge school heads' leadership and management skills. Before NQESH, the Philippines had National Qualifying Examinations for Principals. The low passing rates of the said examination continue to worsen the shortage of qualified leaders, with only about 45% of public schools having principals who have passed the NQESH. Such candidates are expected to undergo preliminary training courses to acquire competencies in leading a school. The funding and duration of these training programs depend based on the position of the organizing body. For principal positions, 40 hours of relevant training is required to be undertaken to become a Principal I until the advancement to higher principal ranks up to Principal IV while the head teacher positions require 24 hours of relevant training, which applies to the rank of Head Teacher I up to IV. Funding sources are from the DepEd itself in its HRD (Human Resource Development) fund. In August 2021, DepEd issued guidelines to support the continuous professional development of public-school teachers and leaders, which details the allocation and utilization of HRD fund. Also, collaborations with educational institutions that provide training programs. For instance, Ateneo de Manila University (ADMU) has been involved in delivering training curricula for public school principals. Also, private

sector partnerships contribute to the professional development of school leaders. The Security Bank Foundation, Inc. (SBFI), for example, has initiated mentoring programs for school principals that focus on instructional leadership, contextual problem-solving and stakeholder engagement (Security Bank, n.d.). However, these training programs face various challenges related to access and equity, especially in hard-to-reach and poor districts with a scarcity of professional development opportunities for teachers. Yet, the public school system still does not have formalized or structured succession planning as part of its policy structure.

In the private school sector in the Philippines, school-based succession planning practices often differ from those in public schools. A common practice in private schools, especially in the absence of a designated successor, is the appointment of an OIC to take on the role of the principal temporarily. This usually happens when the principal is on official business duties outside the school for one or more days. In a school in the Philippines, this individual is usually a vice principal, department head and a subject unit head, they are considered capable of managing school operations in the interim. This can also be deemed a process of eyeing and grooming the potential ones because an incumbent principal trusts his or her colleagues who hold positions under him/her. This includes mentorship and immersion into the central role of a principal. The appointment of an OIC allows continuing leadership functions without interrupting the school's day-to-day activities.

In many private schools, succession planning is not as formalized as in the public sector, where clear guidelines and systems, such as the National Qualifying Examination for School Heads (NQESH), are in place. It is important to note why educational sector does not have a formalized or structured succession plan. The lack of a formalized or structured succession plan in educational institutions can be attributed to the critical and multifaceted responsibilities of the sector, in which education plays a very critical role in shaping a society that requires institutions to juggle numerous activities, such as curriculum development, student achievement monitoring, teacher training and administrative management. Some pressing priorities have, as a consequence, outstripped the need for long-term strategic planning, including leadership succession. Succession planning has been reckoned as reactive rather than proactive, leaving gaps in leadership continuity and effectiveness. Instead, those private institutions may rely on internal leadership structures and personal relationships to determine who should step into leadership roles when vacancies arise. Often, decisions are made based on the seniority, experience, or perceived leadership abilities of potential candidates. There is, however, little preparation or training

for these individuals, which could impact leadership quality in the long term. The good thing is that these OICs already know and are familiar with the system of the school, and they may be prepared throughout the time.

For example, when an OIC is appointed without a structured plan, there may be a lack of consistency in leadership practices, which could negatively impact school culture and performance. Studies have shown that well-structured succession planning leads to more effective transitions and long-term school improvement (Fusarelli et al., 2018). Private schools should adopt a more formalized approach to leadership succession, as this managerial process is practiced in other sectors to ensure that OIC appointments are part of a broader strategy for developing future leaders and addressing the leadership pipeline gap.

These challenges remind the education sector of the need for a more structured and accessible approach to succession planning in the Philippines for both public and private sectors. Many leadership transitions in schools within the Philippines are reactive rather than proactive, unfortunately leading to instability and lost opportunities for long-term school improvement (Fusarelli et al., 2018). The lack of a well-defined and systematic approach to succession planning can even worsen the leadership problem, as leadership transitions often happen in response to crises rather than through a thoughtful and strategic process. Succession planning, in nature, is not only a contingency plan but a continuous process throughout the term of an incumbent leader. Thus, it must not be reactive but, rather, a proactive action.

Having an offer to be a principal in the Philippines is attractive, enticing, exciting and rewarding. There comes a power and authority vested in this leader. However, despite the benefits and prestige that come with it, teachers usually are not interested in and even attracted to this crucial position due to the duties and responsibilities that they may shoulder when they assume the position. The demanding responsibility and accountability vested in the principal require lots of effort because this position is crucial, and what they have on their plates are the responsibilities such as overall school operations, including leadership, management, administration, student achievement, teacher and leadership development and other aspects that make a principal an integral part of the school community.

The road to becoming a principal in the Philippines is undeniably critical, considering the shortage of qualified school heads in public schools today. Recent reports showed that over half of the country's public schools do not have designated principals, adding to the burden of teachers in charge who must attend to both instructional and administrative tasks (De Villa, 2024). This shortage only means streamlining the

qualification and training processes to fill leadership gaps and ensure effective school management.

For public schools, prospective principals must meet specific qualifications, including at least five years of teaching experience in managerial responsibilities, such as Head Teacher, Master Teacher, or Teacher-in-Charge, according to Department of Education. They also need “Very Satisfactory” ratings in the Results-Based Performance Management System (RPMS) for two consecutive periods. Passing the National Qualifying Examination for School Heads (NQESH) is a mandatory step, as this exam evaluates leadership competencies per the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads (PPSSH). Successful candidates undergo training under the National Educators Academy of the Philippines (NEAP) to prepare for the demands of school administration and how long the training should be done then depends on the position they are vying for. The range of number of hours of training is from 24 hours to 56 hours of relevant training from Head Teacher I to Principal IV.

Private schools, meanwhile, face similar leadership challenges, although the requirements for principals may vary. Most private schools adopt DepEd standards but have often focused on competencies related to their operational contexts, such as managing quality and financial viability. For instance, it can be observed that private school leadership often requires a mix of pedagogical, business and strategic planning skills. These dual demands mean that professional development programs for private school leaders are specialized. This challenge of the dual sector, as seen, requires comprehensive policy reforms and targeted training programs that address leadership shortages in public schools while catering to the demands of private institutions.

#### **1.1.1.2 Indonesia**

Succession planning in schools is also underresearched in Indonesia, and the country shares a similar phenomenon with the Philippines. The researcher tried to put the keywords such as “Educational Leadership,” “Indonesia,” “Philippines,” “Schools,” and “Succession Planning” in general for both countries by consulting the academic and scientific research databases: ERIC, Google Scholar, JSTOR, Publish or Perish and Scopus. In Indonesia, the appointment of school principals in state schools is regulated by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology under specific policies such as *Permendikbud No. 6 of 2018*, in time being due to the drastic change of policy by a new minister, which outlines the requirements for school leadership (Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Republik Indonesia, 2018). Aspiring principals must possess a bachelor’s degree, at least five years of teaching experience and pass a series of competency assessments, including

leadership training organized by the government. While this policy aims to ensure qualified candidates, challenges are seen during the implementation, especially in rural areas where the pool of eligible candidates may be limited (Rahman et al., 2020).

Islamic boarding schools, locally known as *pesantren*, have their unique process. Succeeding a leader in *pesantren* is often familial, meaning it is rooted in traditions where the *kyai* (religious leader) passes the role to a family member. For example, a *pesantren* leader transfers leadership to his son to maintain the institution's religious values, continuity and foundational Islamic principles and spiritual heritage. The question here is: who succeeds if a *kyai* does not have a son, but only a daughter, or does not have both? In terms of having only the daughter of a *pesantren* leader or the so-called *nyai*, their cultural practice vis-à-vis succession of the *kyai* designates her husband as the successor. If there are no children to inherit such a role, the leadership responsibility may fall to a close member of the extended family as a last resort. This reliance on informal processes while preserving cultural and religious values can even hamper institutional growth and innovation (Aedi, 2024). However, it should be noted that top leaders in Islamic boarding schools, especially *kyai*, are expected to uphold their strong religious convictions, cultural identity and legacy. A good example is that a *kyai* cannot pass on leadership to a non-Muslim, as doing so would result and conflict with the institution's established values, norms and traditions. This may present challenges for succession in Islamic boarding institutions that this is a typical system of Indonesian private religious schools.

Prior to the *Guru Penggerak* program, meanwhile, Sumintono et al. (2015) investigated Indonesian public secondary school principals' preparation and development, which is highly bureaucratic even Indonesian education system is decentralized. They revealed that political patronage generally dominates merit in appointments despite the introduction of mandatory training in 2009. The heavy political influence here refers to the system of appointing school principals based on political connections, favoritism or loyalty, rather than merit, competence or formal training, and it is the result of decentralization of education, which creates bureaucratic obstacles and narrows principals' autonomy. Training such as *Lembaga Pengembangan dan Pemberdayaan Kepala Sekolah* (LP2KS) hones managerial and leadership competencies. However, many principals view deputy roles as their most formative experience. Legally, the Ministry of Education's Regulation Number 6/2009 dictates formal training on the LP2KS Agency for School Principal Empowerment and Development through the Standards of Principals outlined by Decree 13/2007. Upon completion, prospective principals undergo a 300-hour program on managerial skills, curriculum development and a three-month apprenticeship, obtaining a unique principal

registration number, NUKS or *Nomor Unik Kepala Sekolah*. Challenges seen here are inadequate resources and increased accountability, which need systemic reforms to empower school leaders since most appointments are based on patronage rather than training or competence.

Indonesia faces a critical shortage of school principals, particularly in Depok, West Java, where 24 elementary schools are currently without definitive leadership (Raharjo, 2023a). The shortage has persisted since late 2022 due to retirements and the lack of certified candidates under the new requirements of the Ministry of Education and Culture Regulation No. 40 of 2021. Consequently, some principals have been assigned to lead multiple schools simultaneously, which reduces administrative efficiency and affects school programs (Raharjo, 2023b). The local education office plans to address the issue by appointing graduates of the Teacher as an Agent of Change or *Calon Guru Penggerak* (CGP) program, but implementation has been slow.

In Jember, East Java, there is a critical shortage of school principals and supervisors, impacting educational quality. The Education office reports that the region has fewer than 50 supervisors to oversee about 3,000 educational units, far below the ideal ratio. This overburdened supervisory system has compromised effective implementation of curriculum and teacher guidance. It is estimated that retiring principals further drain the supply, with 53 principals retiring in the first nine months of 2024 alone. Government regulations requiring principals to have certification from the *Guru Penggerak* program stand as barriers to filling these positions. The East Java Education Office prioritizes the *Teacher Activator* program for educators who can be leaders. This initiative is expected to increase the number of qualified leaders to fill vacant principal and supervisor roles to a more effective educational transformation (Dinas Pendidikan Kabupaten Jember, 2024).

According to the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology or locally known as *Kemendikbudristek*'s website, the Leadership and School Management Training to Achieve Quality Schools or *Pelatihan Kepemimpinan dan Manajemen Sekolah untuk Mewujudkan Sekolah Berkualitas* was facilitated and conducted from November 1 to December 13, 2024. This is a program that is aimed at preparing school principals to identify their roles as leaders and managers of educational units, understand the characteristics of quality schools, develop comprehensive school plans, including learning strategies, professional development, policies and budgeting, and to address the challenges and propose solutions for implementing school programs and conduct monitoring, evaluation and reflection on school program implementation. The benefits are to hone the

leadership quality in learning and managerial competencies among school principals to support their duties and accelerate the transformation of educational units.

The shortage is indeed seen as a phenomenon in the province of West Java, with hundreds of principal vacancies for high and vocational schools. A report from an Indonesian media outlet mentioned that it resulted in major administrative problems within the province. The situation shows that there is an urgency of developing more streamlined policies to recruit and prepare candidates, most especially in under-resourced areas where the impact of shortage is indeed a phenomenon.

In a broader context, *Klik Pendidikan* reported that the Ministry of Education and Culture is pushing for stronger integration of driving teachers into principal roles. They are close to providing a national policy to improve the quality of leadership and learning outcomes. Transition, though, is very slow because several potential applicants are still undergoing certification procedures. The ministry requires a long-term strategy to enhance the quality of school leadership, even though short-term solutions are also quite necessary in meeting the acute shortage of principals today.

In Depok, efforts are underway to fill vacant principal positions in elementary schools by the start of the next academic year. According to *Republika*, Depok's education office was relying on CGP-certified teachers to fill the posts, and 51 such certified candidates were available to meet the needs. This move is expected to eliminate the problems of dual leadership assignments and enhance administrative efficiency in the schools concerned.

### **1.1.2 Lack of Succession Planning: An Unobserved Phenomenon?**

What these two countries exemplify signifies a phenomenon in both countries. Succession planning is a proactive strategy that allows an organization to control unexpected challenges by preparing a plan at the beginning instead of responding to them after the problems happen or exist (Harrison et al., 2006; Karam & Ghoul, 2010; Phillips, 2020). School leaders must then engage in mentoring programs, encourage leadership training, nominate multiple candidates and establish clear criteria for leadership roles (Gul et al., 2019; Hayes & Burkett, 2021). A succession plan is an ongoing process; it must be included in one's educational organization's structure and processes as a strategy (Barton, 2019; Fusarelli et al., 2018; Peters-Hawkins et al., 2018). In the beginning, a school leader should consider who can succeed them in case things have changed during their incumbency. Public and private schools could create more sustainable and effective leadership structures, allowing smoother transitions and continued success (Gawlik, 2015). Meanwhile, the government can recommend having some improvements on the leadership

pipelines by integrating long-term talent development strategies into the existing frameworks of school organizations (Johnson & Douglas, 1990). Studies agreed that structured approaches should be adopted to leadership transitions to minimize disruptions (Cocklin & Wilkinson, 2011; Marques-Quinteiro et al., 2022; Salvato & Corbetta, 2013).

### **1.1.3 Principal Leadership as an Integral Part of School Operations**

Principal leadership is undoubtedly important. Without the principals, school operations cannot run smoothly (Jazzar, 2004). Principals, also considered as instructional leaders, are themselves the leaders of the whole school operations and management (Blank, 1987; Donmoyer & Wagstaff, 1990). Recent studies agreed that effective principal leadership positively impacts teacher and student satisfaction and retention. It can improve school attendance and disciplinary behaviors (Gooden et al., 2023). Research over the past decades proved that principals have a crucial role and an enormous impact on the school's life. An effective principal creates an environment where everyone is heard and appreciated (Quaglia, 2016). They are the ones who oversee the school operations and management and spearhead the change efforts at the school level (Shaked & Schechter, 2017; Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2004). In other words, principals are also teachers who were just promoted to a higher position because they can lead. These teachers are already familiar with the school system, which has prepared them to be potential principals, and able to create followers among colleagues they lead. These principals are made and nurtured, not born, which makes them the product of their interactions within the school community.

Normally, principals welcome the students to the school every morning to start their day. Their leadership contributes a lot to a productive school climate as they engage with everyone who belongs to the school community (Gentilucci & Muto, 2007; Gülşen & Gülenay, 2014; Sebastian & Allensworth, 2012). The question is: what can a school organization do if a principal resigns, retires, dies, or finds another opportunity? Who, then, assumes the position? Some schools either recruit an internal candidate, hire an external candidate, or appoint somebody from the school as an OIC and other practices to fill the crucial position. It is evident in the studies that the schools do not have structured succession plans that can prepare them for unexpected organizational changes, which leaves them unprepared for sudden changes.

Meanwhile, there is a consensus that school principals are integral to the effective functioning of a school system, knowing that their pivotal role in driving educational improvement and supporting a positive school culture (Leithwood et al., 2008, 2020). These scholars synthesized the summary of literature cited over 10 years written by authors National College for School Leadership in England about their so-called “strong claims”

about successful school leadership, in which they believed that school leadership, deemed as a determinant, correlates and influences the student success, ranked second to classroom teaching in its impact on learning outcomes. Leadership, as stated, achieves this influence indirectly by shaping school conditions as it supports teacher effectiveness and collaborative practices. Over the past decade, the research about this has significantly expanded, which resulted in robust evidence for leadership practices such as distributed and transformational leadership, which prioritize collaboration and contextual adoption (Harris & Spillane, 2013; Leithwood & Sun, 2012).

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

In spite of overlapping themes of succession planning in the existing literature, it is not succinctly defined, nor is there clear evidence of a clear definition. Studies about succession planning in the field of education are scant, and literature was mostly studied from the perspective of qualitative (Abdullah et al., 2009; Ahmad et al., 2020a, 2020b; Arrieta & Ancho, 2020; Barker, 1997; Canavan, 2001; Cruickshank, 2018; Keller, 2018; Parfitt, 2017a, 2017b, 2022; Sabina & Colwell, 2018; Schwartz, 2024; Shakeri & Nasri, 2021). While compellingly, other studies germane to succession planning in education corroborated and were able to address the particular aspects or supports such as coaching, mentoring and professional development (Barker, 1997; Boyle et al., 2016; Cruickshank, 2018; Daresh, 2004; Shakeri & Nasri, 2021; Sullivan & Pena, 2019; Van Nieuwerburgh et al., 2020).

Research methods such as quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods have been employed in the slender studies of succession. However, among the studies delved into, the researcher was not able to locate any comparative studies conducted related to succession planning from across contexts of countries such as Philippines and Indonesia, and scant literature of succession planning was located in these two countries, and in the context of Southeast Asia as a whole, and it has become evident in these countries the phenomenon of school leadership. On that account, a comparative study vis-à-vis succession planning to understand how each succession practice, formally and informally, works in these two countries would provide significant insights and perspectives, and to know how they manage leadership transitions proactively and reactively.

## **1.3 Research Objectives and Research Questions**

The researcher intended to understand the processes private school leaders use in the Philippines and Indonesia to identify and prepare future leaders and how these schools retain their key leaders. The study explored the challenges and opportunities experienced by private school leaders in the Philippines and Indonesia in preparing, developing, and/or

retaining leadership successors. Also, the researcher studied the strategies employed by private schools in the Philippines and Indonesia to implement effective succession planning. The researcher investigated how private school leaders address leadership continuity and sustainability within their institutions. Therefore, the researcher intends to answer the following research questions:

1. How do private school principals define succession planning in their schools?
2. What are the current practices of private schools in the Philippines and Indonesia in the preparation, selection, appointment, and/or retention of school principals?
3. How do private schools in the Philippines and Indonesia identify and prepare potential candidates for future principalship roles or retain the existing ones within their institutions, and what should be the criteria in the selection, appointment, and/or retention?
4. Were there issues and concerns faced in the preparation, selection, appointment, and/or retention of school principals?
5. What strategies do private schools in the Philippines and Indonesia employ to ensure effective succession planning, and are leadership styles determinant to the succession planning processes?

#### **1.4 Significance of the Study**

This research tries to add to the existing literature of leadership succession planning in Southeast Asia and, more particularly, in developing countries such as the Philippines and Indonesia. Focusing on the practices schools employ in the management of succession, this study gives the perspectives through the lived experiences of the principals on how schools identify and develop future leaders. The findings from this study are expected to contribute to the existing literature on how leadership succession processes are practiced to guarantee stability and successful transitions in school operations. This thesis is anticipated to present actionable recommendations for school leaders, administrators, policymakers and educational organizations.

The insights provided here are useful in improving or adopting the prevailing practices in leadership succession so that schools are not found wanting when there is a transition of leadership. The findings from this study shall be of use, and contributing as integral, actionable inputs to develop policies and leadership development programs that specifically aim at enhancing leadership continuity in schools. Practically, in the broader educational policy. Such programs are especially important in schools in under-resourced or developing countries in Southeast Asia, where effective succession planning is still underdeveloped but crucial for the long-term stability and success of schools.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS**

This chapter reviews the international literature on succession planning across sectors up until the field of education and the urgency and novelty of this thesis. From the brief history of succession planning, which encompasses different sectors, to look at the urgency and novelty of succession planning in education, the researcher explores the reasons for leadership succession planning and its consequential and long-term impacts on educational institutions and/or schools as an organization. This includes the empirical experiences of organizations across the sectors. As well, this chapter addresses why succession planning is important. The studies reviewed here have become the rationale why this study is being undertaken, and establish the justification and solid grounds why it is a must.

This chapter likewise intends to address managerial issues in organizations, especially in the education sector, where leadership turnovers and shortages are rampant and a phenomenon, which succession planning has become an overlooked aspect in educational leadership. Yet, Boris-Schacter and Langer (2006) raised a critical concern in their book that questions the underlying reasons behind the persistent shortage of school leaders. They stressed that while there is much attention had been given to the existence of the shortage itself, very few scholars or policymakers were actually asking the fundamental question: why is this happening? Or why is this matter a phenomenon? Their work sought not only to see the lack of inquiry into the root causes of the issue but also to explore practical and systemic solutions to address it, and also the need why we should question the reasons why this unobserved phenomenon exists.

#### **2.1 Review of Related Literature**

##### **2.1.1 A Brief History of Leadership Succession Planning**

It is important to understand how succession planning started historically, and how it was practiced subconsciously. Succession planning has evolved with its modern form beginning to gain prominence in the mid-20th century (Kesner & Sebor, 1994). This began prominently in the corporate and business world as a reactive process of leadership replacement (Lacey, 2003). The concept of preparing for leadership transitions can be traced back to earlier times when monarchies and dynastic families would groom heirs to assume leadership roles (Forsting, 2018; Lucas, 2012; Quataert, 2005). However, formal succession planning within businesses took shape during the 20th century. In a dictatorial power, this concept is settled by power coups by means of murdering or overthrowing an oppressive regime through a revolutionary tactic. In a democratic government, the voters

decide succession through the election, which prepares them when the current leader's term is about to end or they can no longer serve constitutionally (Reeves, 2010).

In the early 1900s, succession planning was primarily informal, mainly seen in family-owned businesses or large corporations, where leadership was often passed down through family ties or senior management without structured planning (LeCounte, 2022; Nazer & Llorca-Jaña, 2022). By the 1930s and 1940s, as organizations grew in size and complexity, business sector began recognizing the importance of a more structured approach to leadership transitions, with big companies such as General Electric (GE) starting to recognize and formalize succession planning (Ge & Campopiano, 2022). In the 1950s, management development had gained traction, and organizations began focusing on internal talent cultivation for leadership roles since internal talent themselves were the ones who already knew the system of their organization. During Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Jack Welch's leadership, GE pioneered and initiated leadership development programs and formalized succession planning for key positions to ensure organizational continuity (Berke, 2005). By the 1970s and 1980s, succession planning was increasingly recognized as an integral part of ensuring business continuity, with many companies integrating it into their long-term strategic planning process. By the 21st century, succession planning has become an essential and integral part of organizational strategy. It is thus important to maintain that there is stability and continuity through the process of identification and development of internal talent are present and effective (Conger & Fulmer, 2003).

### **2.1.2 Succession Planning Defined**

Succession planning is a managerial, strategic process or a proactive approach to identify and develop prospective leaders within an organization towards the continuity and sustainability of the management and operations (Bakare, 2021; Mwansa & Serumaga-Zake, 2023; Parfitt, 2022; Schweitzer & Graebe, 2024). This purposely identifies, develops and mentors the potential leaders to fulfill the critical leadership positions in an organization for an effective transition. Some organizational sectors also apply strategies to sustain or retain leadership roles, maintain organizational performances and prepare for unanticipated challenges (Marrelli, 2022; Parfitt, 2017a, 2017b, 2022; Schweitzer & Graebe, 2024).

This means that succession planning is not all about filling the vacant or critical positions; it is a help and preparation to secure an organization's future by preparing its prospective leaders who can sustain its vision, adapt to the challenges and kindle growth. Other sectors and organizations such as nursing, business and public sectors have structured succession plans that adopt the same managerial process. Succession planning in these

sectors has shown the importance of preparing future leaders to ensure continuity and stability. For instance, in the nursing field, hospitals prioritize succession planning for roles such as nurse managers and chief nursing officers to address workforce turnover while maintaining high standards of patient care (Gramerci, 2024). Similarly, in the corporate sector, companies such as IBM implement structured leadership pipelines to groom successors for some critical roles to ensure seamless transitions and sustain the strategic direction (IBM, 2023). Besides, compared to the military, civil bureaucracy and industries, education system is notably slower in adopting structured succession practices, leaving them unprepared and reactive to leadership turnovers. Interestingly, it has been gaining attention from some researchers, which shows the emergence of discussion about succession planning. Some proposed a succession planning model for academic heads (Arrieta et al., 2022). These fields demonstrate the urgency of proactive leadership development to uphold operational excellence.

Leadership transitions are important for the stability and success of organizations, most especially in schools. Effective succession planning builds a strong leadership bench to navigate the challenges and ensure organizational stability. At the same time, most leaders believe that succession planning is a priority. However, few think they can manage it effectively (Deloitte Insights, 2018). Succession planning is deemed a growing demand and involves the identification, recruitment, retention, development, coaching and mentoring of leaders. Analysis of data also has an important role in identifying areas for improvement, developing interventions and evaluating the program's effectiveness in educational administration (Yudianto et al., 2023). Recruitment efforts should target diverse and multiple candidates and collaborate with local high schools to identify and develop future leaders (Bureau of Justice Assistance and Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, 2023). Developing employees with potential for higher-level positions and ensuring leadership transitions are the important components of succession planning (Suresh, 2023). Collaborating with organizational leadership and determining the future needs of a school organization are the proactive steps in developing an effective succession plan. Meaning, in order to guarantee a leadership transition, new superintendents in K-12 should focus on areas such as teacher recruitment and retention (Mascall & Leithwood, 2010). Local governments can successfully manage the retirement wave in public finance and ensure a smooth knowledge and skills transition (Burdick, 2024). Good leadership development practices involve valuing individuals for their strengths and skills to create a positive work environment and promote retention (United States Fire Administration, n.d.).

One may ask where succession planning is concerned. Is it leadership, management, or administration? Literature stated that succession planning is a managerial process related to management, identifying and preparing future leaders to assume key roles that safeguard the organization's sustainability but there is still an ongoing discussion on whether succession is primarily a function of leadership, management, or administration. While interconnected, each concept has distinct roles and implications in the context of succession planning.

### **2.1.3 Leadership, Management and Administration of Succession Planning**

Leadership, abstractly and fundamentally, is about vision, influence and inspiring others to achieve collective goals (Zafar et al., 2018). Leaders believe that succession planning focuses on identifying and nurturing individuals who can lead the organization into the future. They are expected to create a culture that supports talent development, innovation and adoptability (Northouse, 2022). Hence, leaders have different leadership styles when approaching succession planning (Poulin et al., 2007). Succession planning is a strategic and managerial leadership function (Phillips, 2020). Leaders should view the long-term vision to ascertain that successors possess the organization's core values. Gentry et al. (2014) believed that effective leadership development within succession planning hinges on the ability of current leaders to mentor and coach potential successors to prepare them for unexpected challenges.

Management is concrete, and it is principally and mostly concerned with the operations and maintenance. This commonly has the involvement of planning, organizing and coordinating the resources to achieve specific goals efficiently, which should all be conforming to the organization's core values (Kazmi & Naarananoja, 2014). Management has a significant role in operationalizing the strategies. Managers, in general, are the ones who focus on the systems and processes to oversee a smooth transition of roles. Rothwell (2015) asserted that management-driven succession planning is about creating structured frameworks, such as competency models and career development pathways, to prepare individuals for leadership roles systematically. If leadership stresses the vision, management, however, implements it. Managers are then responsible for the identification of talent gaps, implementation of training programs and monitoring progress. This practical orientation sees that succession planning moves beyond theoretical strategies to actionable outcomes (Phillips, 2020). For instance, competency frameworks and key performance indicators are tools usually employed by managers to evaluate readiness for leadership transitions.

Meanwhile, administration deals with an organization's procedural and regulatory aspects; it is a concept and a so-called universal application (Sharma, 1966). The administration is the one who checks compliance with policies and legal requirements while maintaining organizational stability during leadership transitions (Kaslow & Soehner, 1980). Administrative tasks include the formalization of succession policies, documenting processes and aligning succession plans with organizational governance structures (Mintzberg, 1993). Succession planning should meticulously execute organizational policies to avoid organizational changes (Hosseini et al., 2018; Karam & Ghoul, 2010). For instance, public institutions mostly rely on administrative processes to ensure transparency and fairness in succession practices. This dimension of succession planning shows that organizational continuity ideally is not disrupted by legal or procedural shortcomings (Hallinger, 2018).

#### **2.1.4 Succession Planning in the Catholic Church**

The Catholic Church's process for selecting a new pope has evolved significantly since the early centuries of Christianity. Before, bishops of Rome were selected by local clergy and laity, often through acclamation or influence of Roman officials. According to the Encyclopaedia Britannica (2025), early papal successions were inconsistent and at times resulted in contested elections and antipopes. The pivotal reform came in 1059 with Pope Nicholas II's decree, which limited secular influence and established that cardinal bishops would elect the pope, with later approval from the clergy and laity. The conclave system was formalized by Pope Gregory X in 1274 through the apostolic constitution *Ubi periculum*, introducing the practice of sequestering cardinals until a decision was made (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2025).

Over time, further refinements were made. The Third Lateran Council in 1179 confirmed that all cardinals should vote, and that a two-thirds majority was necessary to elect a pope, who should be a male and a devoted Catholic. These provisions were reiterated by Pope Gregory XV in 1621 through the constitution *Aeterni Patris Filius*, which introduced secret ballots (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2025). This historical progression shows the Church's movement toward greater structure and standardization in papal succession.

The theological basis for papal succession is based on the belief that Jesus Christ appointed Peter as the head of the Church, a role that has been passed down through successive bishops of Rome. The Catechism of the Catholic Church stated that the pope is the successor of Peter and holds primacy over the universal Church (Vaticana, 1994). This succession is not simply administrative but, instead, theological, to ensure that there is

continuity in faith and communion. According to the book titled “*Lumen Gentium: Dogmatic Constitution on the Church*,” it was then stated that the pope serves as the “perpetual and visible source and foundation of unity” for the bishops and the entire faithful.

The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (1998) reinforced this theological foundation. They explained that the primacy of the pope is a divine institution rooted in Christ’s commission to Peter. Thus, papal succession is understood as both a historical and spiritual continuity essential for the unity and governance of the Church.

Current canonical and procedural frameworks for papal elections are based primarily on *Universi Dominici Gregis*, promulgated by Pope John Paul II in 1996. It stipulates that a conclave must begin 15 to 20 days after the papal see becomes vacant. Voting is limited to cardinals under the age of 80, and a two-thirds majority is required to elect a new pope (John Paul II, 1996). Pope Benedict XVI later reaffirmed this in *Normas Nonnullas* in 2013, ensuring that the two-thirds rule applies consistently.

The conclave takes place in the Sistine Chapel, with cardinal electors residing in the Domus Sanctae Marthae during the election. Each voting round involves written ballots, and secrecy is strictly maintained. The famous smoke signals, white for a successful election and black for an inconclusive vote, announce the outcome to the world (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2025).

Unlike corporate entities, the Catholic Church does not practice succession planning in the conventional sense. The pope cannot appoint a successor; instead, he indirectly influences future elections by selecting cardinals who vote in the next conclave. Canon 332 of the Code of Canon Law (1983) allows for a pope to resign, provided that the resignation is made freely and properly manifested.

This provision became particularly relevant with Pope Benedict XVI’s resignation in 2013, the first in nearly 600 years, which showed that there is a need for clearer protocols. Pope Francis even recognized the value of Benedict’s precedent and indicated that future papal retirements should be governed by more explicit norms (Associated Press, 2022). Cardinal George Pell also argued that there should be development of formal protocols for papal resignations to avoid ambiguity (Associated Press, 2022). Despite these, the Church maintains that the election of a pope is ultimately guided by the Holy Spirit. Thus, while informal legacy planning through the appointment of like-minded cardinals is common, no formal succession plan exists, but the succession planning process is deemed secretive, whereas the conclave cannot communicate outside during the process of selecting a new pope. As McMahon (2013) of the Council on Foreign Relations noted, the resignation of

Benedict, and recently the passing of Pope Francis in April 2025 (Vatican News, 2025), then marked a turning point in how the Church handles leadership transitions, which has been witnessed by the world personally and remotely. It consequently prompted renewed discussions about modernizing papal succession practices.

### **2.1.5 Succession Planning in the Nursing Field**

The existing literature has recognized that succession planning in nursing is a critical aspect of organizational management, and this has been explored in various studies. The said field experiences a shortage of nurses worldwide as its current leaders are on the brink of retirement. One must note that nursing leadership is a determinant of the healthcare system's success and patient outcomes. A study by Phillips (2020), in which he conducted a concept analysis on succession planning, found that the consequences of succession planning are retention, recruitment, leadership competencies, decreased role transition stress and work environment. The patterns that emerged are similar to the characteristics of succession planning: organizational support and culture, attitude, commitment and resources. Meaning, the results of the concept implied that the consequences of succession planning are beneficial in the nursing field as it is deemed a proactive strategy, which involves the purposeful identification, evaluation and development of academic nursing leaders. The intention is to prepare them for future leadership roles towards growth and development (Phillips, 2020). Likewise, Beasley and Ard (2021) concluded in their research that the consequences of succession planning are the reduction of turnover rate, improvement of preparation and the prolongation of the pool of potential nurse administrators.

Current researchers have attempted to link succession planning to nurses' performance. Atalla et al.'s (2024) study showed that career development contributes to succession planning in the nursing field by enhancing performance management and providing clear career advancement opportunities for nurses. The findings revealed a moderate opinion on succession planning among nurses, with some expressing a positive view of performance management. In contrast, others indicated a positive perspective on career advancement, showing a significant relationship between performance management and succession planning, career growth and succession planning and career development partially mediates the connection between these factors. Atalla et al. (2024) summed that a well-executed succession plan, which is integrated with career development, can help healthcare organizations prepare for future leadership gaps and improve overall performance.

It is imperative to acknowledge the shortage of leadership positions in the nursing field as it dramatically affects an organization's performance. Research by Nowak and Scanlan (2021) believed that the development of nursing leaders can address and solve the ongoing shortage of leadership in the nursing profession, which is exacerbated by retirements and a lack of preparedness among emerging leaders. As distinct from succession planning, talent management stresses the attraction, development and retention of nurse leaders by identifying emerging talent and building their leadership competence. This can give clarity and structure to stabilize nursing leadership and enhance healthcare systems' capacity to meet leadership challenges effectively.

There is, however, an emerging concept in nursing management. This is the so-called "succession evasion." The concept was coined by Salehi et al. (2024), stating that these organizational behaviors inhibit leadership development, such as fear of succession planning, talent suppression, belief in positional permanence and obstructing others' growth. Nonetheless, their study urged to address these behaviors to promote effective succession planning and ensure the preparation of competent nurse leaders. It is thereby noted that succession evasion is the antithesis of succession planning. Organizations can focus on supportive, positive leadership cultures and rectifying behaviors that impede nursing management's progress.

Ashghali-Farahani et al. (2024) asserted the urgent need for systematic succession planning in nursing that focuses on purposive identification and the development of managerial talents to ensure effective leadership transitions. Their findings showed emerging themes such as barriers and facilitators to succession planning, organizational dynamics and the consequences of neglecting this process. These themes showed the importance of contextualized approaches and policy development to cultivate a pool of qualified nursing leaders to assure organizational stability and address future managerial challenges, which, in turn, supports the broader literature that stresses the role of proactive succession planning to further sustainable leadership in healthcare sector.

#### **2.1.6 Succession Planning in the Business Sector**

Succession planning has been employed and even evident in the business sector for several decades, with structured practices gaining significant attention since the 1980s. Over the past 10-15 years, the focus has expanded to long-term preparation for leadership transitions to address organizational sustainability and leadership gaps. Modern frameworks show the importance of aligning leadership development with strategic goals and ensuring readiness for anticipated and sudden transitions. According to some HR experts, the process typically requires preparation rather than pre-sections for 12-36 months

to implement effectively, depending on the organization's size and complexity (Deloitte Insights, 2018; Investopedia, 2025; Stanton Chase, 2023).

According to Vincent (2017), 90% of the business community is family-owned in the United States, 62% of which are employed in the private sector. Most of these businesses prefer to pass and continue their businesses to their children and immediate family members. However, 70-80% fail to do so for the second generation and only 12% make it to the third generation. The reason is simple: lack of viable succession plan. The business owners may not know when they will pass away, retire, become incapacitated, bored, tired and experience a breakdown. Vincent (2017) argued that this plan is intended to transfer knowledge and technology. Without a strategic plan, this may result in the family selling their business or liquidating it for the value of its assets. He proposed a succession plan: (a) develop a team of advisors; (b) identify the qualities a successor must possess; (c) identify the successor; (d) train the successor; and (e) plan for legal and tax issues. A business owner must have a succession plan prior to starting their business because they may not know when a successor will assume the position. Unpredictability is important, and they must note that preparation is the key to a seamless transition, which is a succession plan. It is not easy because a succession plan takes a long time as the steps are requisite to each other.

Similarly, from the research of Vincent (2017), similar questions were posed by Schaeffer and Akhavan (2016) in the context of franchisees. They said that a succession plan may not even be a part of a franchise owner's plan. Themes are seen in the nuts and bolts of succession planning, which should be tailored and a process: (a) ownership and management; (b) advisory team; (c) conflict between passive and active owners; (d) senior generation versus junior generation control; (e) no one qualified to succeed; (f) employee succession; and (g) life insurance as succession planning tool. This shows that the involvement of the assurance of leadership preparedness by evaluating the skills of successors, engaging the external advisors for technical expertise and maintaining transparency can mitigate the disputes between active and passive owners. Tools such as Employee Stock Ownership Plan (ESOP) and life insurance are important to preserve control, minimize tax burdens, facilitate transitions and assure business continuity even in the absence of qualified family successors or senior leaders' readiness to relinquish control.

The study of Schepker et al. (2018) investigated how formalized succession planning processes underpinning procedural rationality enhance the quality and quantity of CEO succession candidates by systematically addressing the informational barriers of boards. Their study contended that these processes enhance the quality of decisions by lessening

the risks of adverse selection and ensuring a thorough assessment of multiple candidates. Results indicated that the formalized processes positively affect significant outcomes: determining more than one successor candidate as they cannot fixate on a candidate and improving the chances of selecting internal successors since they are the ones who already know the system of an organization. Hence, they have already been immersed, reducing the time to appoint a permanent CEO. Succession planning is not a short process, but it is divided into parts as it is deemed a process to recruit potential employees. Moreover, the processes even promote external help to ensure impartial appraisals of internal and external candidates. However, influential CEOs disrupt such processes, mainly by restricting the use of external advisors, though their influence does not make a difference in other succession variables. The findings pointed out that structured succession planning warrants better leadership transition, suggesting that when CEOs are hired, considering the potential successor takes place, should any unexpected circumstances happen.

Succession planning is important for leadership continuity and organizational sustainability in the business, in particular to address workforce shortages and leadership gaps. Rothwell (2015) stated that effective succession planning minimizes disruptions during transitions to support the engagement of employees and align leadership development with strategic goals. Susilo and Winarto (2023) said it supports organizational sustainability by leveraging transformational leadership and learning agility, assuring resilient and adaptive leadership pipelines. However, according to Bano et al. (2022), knowledge loss and skill gaps are some of the hidden challenges of retiring baby boomers. This means balancing the promotion of internal leaders, which expedites transitions, and hiring external candidates to bring diversity and innovation, as a company's CEO cannot fixate on a candidate. The literature about business showed the strategic importance of integrating structured development programs, transparent processes and proactive planning to sustain organizational growth and operational stability.

### **2.1.7 Succession Planning in the Public Sector**

Succession plan in the public sector is nothing new as it has been utilized for several decades, with its formalization varying across regions and administrative systems. In the United States, structured succession planning later acquired attention in the 1980s and 1990s, which was driven by the result of demographic trends such as the retirement of baby boomers and the need to maintain institutional knowledge (Mitchell, 2014). The United Kingdom and Australia then even integrated succession planning into public sector reforms during the 1990s, which saw the focus on leadership development and workforce continuity. These efforts reflect a global trend of embedding succession planning within

strategic human resource frameworks to ensure sustainability and operational efficiency (Office of Human Capital Strategy, 2022).

In Asia, countries such as Singapore and Malaysia adopted succession planning as part of broader modernization efforts, focusing on leadership pipelines to support economic growth, as it also reduces problems that are linked to transition of leadership (Chia et al., 2021; Susilo & Winarto, 2023; Wallin, 2007). Emerging economies, while slower in formal adoption, are increasingly recognizing the importance of succession planning, particularly in critical sectors such as education and healthcare. Across the public sector, their focus has come to center increasingly from ad hoc processes to evidence-based approaches, which integrate workforce analytics and competency-based models. These approaches not only address leadership transitions but also even align workforce capabilities with long-term organizational objectives. As governments face increasing complexity and changing demographics, succession planning remains an important tool for sustaining public service delivery and achieving strategic goals. According to Mitchell (2014), effective succession planning reduces the risk associated with the retirement of experienced employees, especially within the federal government, where the retirements of baby boomers threaten institutional knowledge.

The U.S. Department of Commerce (2022) has a framework for systematically identifying and preparing talent for critical roles, and they align these efforts with organizational strategies (Office of Human Capital Strategy, 2022). These findings are supported by Susilo and Winarto (2023), who thought that organizations must have formal, proactive succession planning systems in place to address leadership and competency gaps. On an industry level, the process involves the evaluation of current talent, the vision of future needs and developing leadership pipelines.

A recurring theme is the critical role of transformational leadership in successful succession planning. Susilo and Winarto (2023) identified that transformational leaders inspire and motivate teams to create a culture of resilience and agility, which is essential for the long-term sustainability of the organization. This also corroborates the findings of Mitchell's study (2014), which showed that the leadership engagement can further enhance the employee readiness for future roles. The Department of Commerce further emphasizes the need to integrate leadership development with wider human capital strategies in order to equip employees for mission-critical positions. Leadership styles that recommend innovation and mentorship are prerequisites to succession planning in the culture of an organization (Damer, 2022; Ejakpomewhe, 2017; Rothwell, 2015; Siambi, 2022).

However, there are some striking differences in the way succession planning is implemented across sectors. Susilo and Winarto (2023) indicated that most private organizations have implemented effective data-driven approaches, whereas Mitchell (2014) identified no comprehensive planning in the federal government. The federal government is highly fragmented in its approach and informal, compared to structured frameworks put in place in the private sector. These challenges pose a requirement that customized strategies should fit specific sector constraints, from bureaucratic inertia in government to rapid changes in market demands experienced by the private sector.

Existing literature expresses alignment in succession planning with more general organizational objectives. The Department of Commerce illustrated how the inclusion of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) goals in succession strategies help ensure the building of inclusive leadership pipelines, as stated by the Office of Human Capital Strategy (2022). Similarly, Susilo and Winarto (2023) supported the alignment of succession planning with other strategic priorities related to technological adoption and employee engagement. Mitchell (2014) also suggested that mentorship and professional development programs facilitate employee retention and readiness. These studies together suggested the need for holistic, adaptive succession planning approaches that best meet the challenges and goals of a given organization.

#### **2.1.8 Succession Planning in the Field of Education**

The education sector, especially school organizations, has been slow in adopting succession practices in other sectors. In the existing literature, efforts about succession planning are limited. Disappointingly, there is little research discussing succession planning in education. It is thus not given importance by educational institutions, be it private or public, resulting in a lack of retention and a shortage of principals. Standard succession practices in education are in the process of appointment and internal or external recruitment without succession planning strategies. These are considered time-consuming because they rely on mentorship, hiring qualified individuals who have undergone training, examinations, or licensures to become school leaders or principals. Reasons can also be seen that the education sector is busier than other public and private sectors, so they do not try to pursue this managerial process, but a researcher questioned and recommended that in order to ensure and secure a successor, school administrators should mentor and aggressively recruit internal teacher candidates (Barker, 1997).

Interestingly, succession planning is increasingly recognized as a strategic imperative in educational institutions, especially in the context of aging leadership, rapid organizational change and the pressing need for sustainability in leadership. Across

countries and institutional types, scholars have investigated how succession planning is understood, practiced and implemented in institutions. These studies employ various methodologies, but collectively they affirm that the absence of structured succession planning may pose a risk to institutional continuity, effectiveness and leadership development in institutions.

In Malaysia, the study conducted by Abdullah et al. (2009) showed the conceptual and operational gaps in succession planning within higher education institutions. While succession planning has long been adopted in the corporate sector, the study found that educational organizations often neglect it. Through a literature-based analytical framework, these researchers argue that the inclusion of succession planning in strategic educational agendas improves institutional credibility, talent retention and leadership stability. Its implementation remained inconsistent and it shows some revealing challenges between theory and practice.

A more applied case is presented by Ahmad et al. (2020a), who investigated the effectiveness of succession planning in a Malaysian public university using semi-structured interviews. The study was grounded in Rothwell's seven-point model, which includes identifying key positions, assessing talent and developing future leaders. Their findings showed the existence of a structured succession planning process despite the limited staff in strategic roles. These authors recommended the expansion of the framework across all institutional levels for greater impact. Complementing this, Ahmad et al. (2020a) also explored the influence of national culture on succession planning in Malaysian universities. Using Hofstede's cultural dimensions and structural equation modeling on data from five universities, they found that cultural factors, such as power distance, collectivism and uncertainty avoidance, significantly influenced how succession planning was perceived and executed.

A North American perspective from the study of Keller (2018), who investigated succession planning pilot programs across five two-year colleges in Minnesota, United States of America (USA). He found that succession planning was often hindered by a lack of strategic alignment, inconsistent frameworks and inadequate leadership development. He concluded that embedding succession planning into institutional culture and strategic planning is important for sustainability and mitigates leadership crises.

Parfitt (2017b; 2022) advanced the field by developing a succession planning framework and instrument specifically in the field of education. Drawing from business literature and validated through expert panels and pilot studies, Parfitt proposed a multi-dimensional approach involving talent identification, mentoring and leadership retention.

He stated that there is a need for targeted development rather than generic leadership training and proposed continuous evaluation mechanisms to ensure that the plan's relevance and effectiveness over time.

In Iran's education department, Shakeri and Nasri (2021) conducted a correlational study to assess the relationship between succession planning and organizational effectiveness. Their study found a strong positive correlation between succession practices (identifying talent, mentoring and training) and organizational outcomes. Their work provides and shows an empirical validation of the idea that effective succession planning can be an enhancement of institutional performance and staff motivation.

Research by Cruickshank (2018) stated the role of school leadership in influencing teaching quality and student outcomes through capacity building and succession planning. Effective leaders, he argued, prioritize the professional development of staff. They sow a collaborative culture of continual learning and intellectual growth. Transformational leadership models are stressed and built on teachers' leadership and teaching capabilities. His research recognized a need for targeted professional development and succession planning had to be implemented to prepare the staff for future leadership. Nevertheless, long-term institutional success is always undermined because there is a lack of any structured succession plan that often results in inequities and discontent among staff. He also suggested integrating professional development with organizational objectives since this can enhance teacher effectiveness and sustain improvements in student outcomes.

Meanwhile, Sabina and Colwell (2018) investigated the challenges of hiring internal and external candidates for school principal positions in Florida. Internal succession planning supports leadership continuity and cultural alignment, but it risks alienating external candidates who may bring fresh perspectives. External hires, however, often struggle with acclimation to a district's established culture, which can hamper their effectiveness. The research identifies the resentment among internal candidates when external candidates are preferred. It showed that it is important to balance internal talent development with strategic external hiring. They recommended including the creation of systems that incorporate cultural adaptability training for external hires and refining internal succession programs to address potential biases. Thus, it is to ensure an equitable and effective leadership pipeline (Sabina & Colwell, 2018).

For it to be coherent and contributory to the succession planning inputs and existing literature, one must note that mentorship is a process of preparing the potential school leaders in the pipeline (Daresh, 2004). Instances such as immersing or appointing an eyed school leader as an Officer-in-Charge are also considered mentoring. There are principals

whenever they have an official business outside schools, they commonly assign, not arbitrarily, their subordinate leaders such as subject unit head, academic coordinator, their vice principal and others who have leadership roles to be an OIC Principal of the school due to the limited delegation of power (Kurebwa et al., 2015; Mbatha et al., 2006; Weitz, 1961). Another example is when a principal expects somebody to assume a leadership role in an institution by introducing a teacher to a job role. Some principals gradually talk to these teachers and even observe them.

Furthermore, Van Nieuwerburgh et al. (2020) investigated how personalized coaching impacted the behaviors of 14 aspiring school principals, which suggested immense benefits from personal time for reflection, a safe space for personal exploration, personal leadership focus and heightened emotional resilience. This can enhance preparedness for leadership and self-awareness, which is important in addressing challenges. What this means is the incorporation of coaching into professional development frameworks where potential leaders are equipped with technical skills, emotional intelligence and strategic insight for seamless transitions. Hence, coaching is a pipeline for confident and adaptable leaders ready to assume principal roles when needed.

Participants developed inspirational motivation and intellectual stimulation competencies that are crucial in developing an innovative and inclusive school climate. Advanced leadership styles are important in enhancing institutional performance and equipping leaders to mentor and develop their successors. Such training creates a foundation for continuity by ensuring that future leaders are nurtured and made with the skills and mindset required to drive long-term organizational growth and adopt to evolving educational demands.

Succession planning in K–12 Catholic schools has emerged as a critical issue due to the increasing difficulty in attracting and retaining qualified school leaders (Canavan, 2001). Catholic school principals are expected to serve not only as the schools' instructional leaders but also as faith leaders, responsible for maintaining the school's religious mission and identity (Boyle et al., 2016). These tight and multiple responsibilities place unique demands on leadership preparation and transition. According to Schwartz (2024), some Catholic schools lack the formalized succession plans, which really make them vulnerable to instability when leadership transitions occur. Without the proactive strategies, schools would risk losing institutional memory and diminishing their Catholic identity during leadership challenges.

Intentional leadership development becomes a major theme in the literature. Butler et al. (2014) emphasized that Catholic schools should adopt a systems approach to

leadership formation, which includes identifying high-potential candidates early and supporting them through mentoring and targeted professional development. Distributed leadership model, where leadership responsibilities are shared and delegated among staff, has been figured out as a solution to build a leadership pipeline (Boyle et al., 2016). This approach can even encourage the aspiring leaders to grow within the system, supported by diocesan networks and professional communities. Canavan (2001) also stated the value of informal identification of successors, which he noted that current principals often tap potential leaders, especially those already embedded in the school's culture and mission.

Maintaining the Catholic identity during leadership transitions is one of the main concerns. Boyle et al. (2016) argued that secular leadership programs often neglect the religious and spiritual formation that are required for the Catholic school principals. As such, Catholic schools must ensure that their leaders are not only skilled administrators but also committed to the Church's educational mission. Schwartz (2024) supported this view, noting that succession planning must integrate opportunities for candidates to engage in faith formation, learn the charism of the school's founding community, and demonstrate a commitment to Gospel-centered leadership. Catholic School Management (2022) states that a successful succession plan must be "mission-driven," which ensures that new leaders are aligned with the spiritual and educational vision of the school.

In terms of implementation, effective succession planning involves structured and strategic processes. Catholic School Management (2022) has recommended that schools and dioceses regularly assess leadership needs, project future vacancies and maintain updated records of potential candidates and their readiness levels. Sullivan and Pena (2019) outlined a five-step process that includes identifying key leadership roles, assessing current bench strength, defining leadership competencies, developing individual growth plans and monitoring progress. Schwartz (2024) added that having emergency succession protocols and well-defined search procedures further stabilizes the leadership transition process. Schools that follow these best practices tend to experience smoother transitions, greater leader retention and stronger adherence to mission and values.

### **2.1.9 Potential to Novice: Prepared to be Inducted as School Leaders or Not?**

Leadership roles for some, reiteratively, are prestigious and rewarding because of the power, authority and benefits that come with them (Arrieta & Ancho, 2020), but it has demanding duties and responsibilities that an aspiring or novice school leader has to carefully discern and thoughtfully consider. Assume that an incumbent principal is about to leave next school year, largely due to retirement, resignation, promotion and a new opportunity. This incumbent principal sees someone as their replacement by involving them

to leadership activities and training, appointing them as an OIC principal when a principal is on an official business activity and regularly talking to them. The prompt raises a question: Is this person being involved in these activities prepared, or getting prepared? This kind of activity that a principal does to a person is something empowering and exciting, and giving a signal, and somewhat enticing, but one has to expect that what everything that a principal does has either an implicit agenda or an intention. Both can imply negative and positive, but as a school organization, one must be prepared for whatever might happen, to which for it to prove that successful succession planning is effective, it prepares a school organization for an inevitable loss of key persons in a critical position.

According to Sumintono et al. (2015), the national principal training program in Indonesia, administered by LP2KS, includes a significant “on-the-job learning” (OJL) component as part of its certification process. This OJL is an apprenticeship phase lasting three months (200 hours), during which principal candidates work in both their own school and another school in their district. Candidates are given the task of developing an action plan aimed at school improvement. This phase is considered by many participants to be the most beneficial part of the training, as it enhances their professional competence and leadership skills through practical, real-world engagement in school management. The training overall is structured to span 300 hours and culminates in the completion and presentation of a portfolio documenting their learning and initiatives during the OJL phase.

Kusumaningrum et al. (2018) presented the concept of self-reflection-based mentoring as a transformative approach to helping novice school leaders develop these competencies. From this research, Sobri et al. (2018) noted that selection and induction are often unprepared for the practical challenges new principals face. They recommend mentoring modules on visionary and strategic leadership that offer tools to navigate organizational dynamics better and align school goals. Such modules focus on introspection for personal, social and professional competencies and suggest structured mentorship as indispensable in a seamless leadership transition.

This perspective befits Lashway (2003), who pointed to mentorship as a component essential in induction programs that help alleviate stress and isolation among first-year administrators. However, he criticized some induction models for over-emphasizing technical and managerial tasks and called for a balance between practical skills and reflective learning. Although mentorship is emphasized in both studies, Sobri et al. (2018) relied more heavily on introspection, while Lashway (2003) believed that broader systemic support is important. Such differences beg the question of whether introspection alone

might suffice or if it is to be complemented with an organizationally embedded program, which better aligns leaders' values with institutional culture.

While Sobri et al. (2018) focused on developing future-ready leadership through self-reflective practices, Lashway (2003) criticized that programs do not respond to the immediate practical needs of novice administrators. Lashway (2003) noted that new principals often focus more on survival skills, including crisis management and navigating systems, than on long-term leadership development. Arrieta and Ancho (2020) also reported that the novices in the Philippines' higher education institutions usually have an extremely heavy workload and even face cultural resistance, which make the implementation of strategic changes very complicated. This revealed a tension between meeting immediate operational challenges and developing reflective, visionary leaders.

These studies all underline the challenges of novice leadership preparation but vary in focus. Sobri et al. (2018) urged a change in the direction of strategic competencies, whereas Lashway (2003) and Arrieta and Ancho (2020) stressed that there is a need of practical support for immediate needs. Arrieta and Ancho (2020) further criticized how seniority trumps competence when it comes to promotion processes, suggesting that poor preparation is compounded by other challenges facing those new to the role. These findings collectively argue for a hybrid model combining hands-on induction, reflective mentoring and strategic visioning.

Arrieta and Ancho (2020) introduced succession planning and leadership pipelines as possible solutions for the systemic problems of novice leadership. They pointed to a lack of structured mentorship and orientation programs as one of the main reasons that transition is not practical, in concurrence with Lashway's (2003) critique of the "sink-or-swim" approach in many districts. Structured mentoring could reduce the stress related to transition into leadership. However, Arrieta and Ancho (2020) believed that succession planning brings a longer-term view that seeks to make leadership sustainable by grooming leaders in advance.

On the other hand, Sobri et al. (2018) proposed that the mentoring process should focus on the personal and professional development of the individual through self-reflection, which may be considered narrower. Self-reflection engenders introspection, whereas Arrieta and Ancho (2020) and Lashway (2003) stressed that the mentorship placed within organizational systems should meet the current needs and develop relational capacity. This begets a question in the debate on whether mentorship programs should focus more on personal development and organizational integration or be a balanced combination to prepare novice leaders for these big roles. Maybe the answer is in blending all the

approaches into a cohesive strategy and aligning immediate needs to sustainable leadership development.

#### **2.1.10 School-Based Leadership Succession Planning: Urgency and Novelty**

Scant attention and importance are given to succession planning, especially in education. Other sectors have already adopted and embraced succession planning as part of institutional structure, system and governance. Unfortunately, unlike other sectors such as the military or civil bureaucracy where roles, responsibilities and transitions are systematically embedded, schools can continue functioning with minimal alignment between leadership planning and institutional goals, leading to the observed neglect of formalized succession processes, in the education system, they slowly acknowledge and recognize succession planning, and this is related to Weick (1976)'s notion of educational institutions as "loosely coupled systems." In such systems, formal policies, governance structures and school-level practices often operate independently rather than in a tightly coordinated manner. This helps explain why, despite having centralized policies or regulations, public schools in countries such as the Philippines and Indonesia still lack effective, strategic succession plans. Hence, emphasis was too little in the sense that schools believe that they can manage to facilitate succession processes within their institutions, be it public or private. Though public schools have policies and regulations that come from the central government, they still lack an effective implementation or a strategic and formalized succession plan to retain the principals in the schools, which signifies the shortage in both countries, which has become a phenomenon in the Philippines and Indonesia.

It is evident in those contexts that leadership turnover and shortages exists in both the Philippines and Indonesia, both in the public and private sectors. This signifies that neither sector has structured and formalized succession planning implemented in the schools. Whether this phenomenon is a fact or myth is solely described by the phenomenon and data provided by both countries. One must then reflect that if this is an apparent phenomenon, it is a fact that currently happens in schools. Others may say that the shortage of principals is a myth because schools are the primary reason for these phenomena. Also, the directives from the government can be because they affect and influence the school management and operations in both countries. It is implied here that the public and private sectors should be aware of these situations because these would not have been a phenomenon if proactive measures had been taken to circumvent leadership turnovers. Thus, whether it is a fact or a myth, it is paradoxical because succession planning would not have led these problems to become factual phenomena or a myth. Then, the researcher

believes that leadership turnover and principal shortage, paradoxically, are both a fact and a myth.

Existing literature on leadership succession planning in education reveals challenges and opportunities to support sustainable school leadership. Also, literature has led the researcher to see the novelty and urgency of succession planning in education. Despite the proven significance of succession planning in enhancing leadership continuity and organizational performance in other sectors (Parfitt, 2017a, 2017b, 2022; Rothwell, 2015), its adoption in education remains limited. Research by Cruickshank (2018) and Parfitt (2017) stated the importance of capacity building, professional development and structured succession plans in sustaining educational excellence. However, studies such as those by Sabina and Colwell (2018) and Sumintono et al. (2015) showed that there still happens systemic barriers, including political patronage, resource constraints and resistance to formalizing succession practices, particularly in Indonesia and the Philippines, in the education sector, be it private or public.

Emerging strategies across literature show that mentoring, coaching and transformational leadership training are important in addressing succession planning gaps (Nisar et al., 2020; Van Nieuwerburgh et al., 2020). Yet, inconsistencies in implementation and the lack of documented processes undermine their potential (Arrieta et al., 2022). The dual-sector challenges in public and private schools necessitate tailored approaches, as seen in the distinct but overlapping challenges of principalship in the Philippines and Indonesia (De Villa, 2024; Sumintono et al., 2015). These findings have implied that education needs a systemic reform, targeted professional development for school leaders and the institutionalization of succession planning to address leadership shortages to ensure the leadership continuity and sustainability as contributory to the educational quality. Despite valuable contributions, gaps persist in addressing equity in leadership transitions, integrating emotional intelligence into leadership readiness and evaluating long-term impacts of succession planning models. Future research should focus on comparative studies across sectors, culturally adaptive frameworks and scalable succession planning strategies to advance the field.

## **2.2 Theoretical Framework**

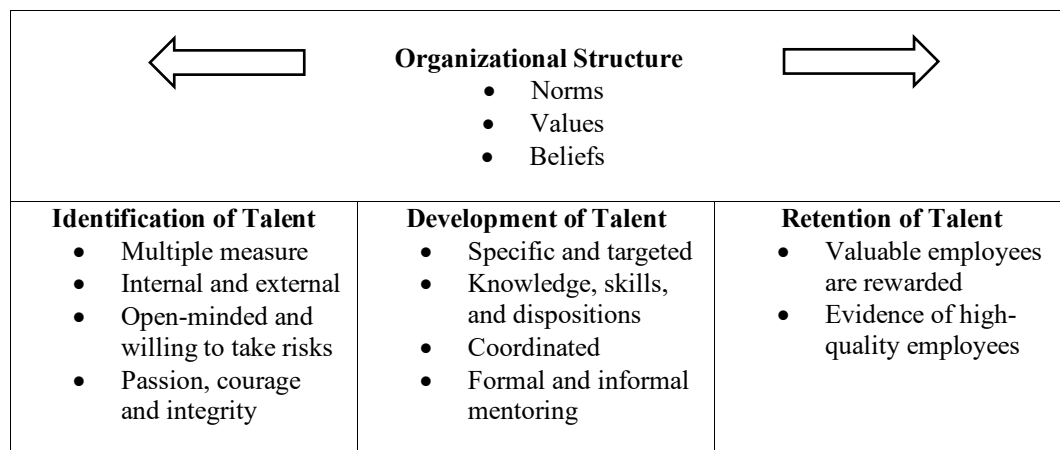
Despite succession planning strategy being understudied in education, discussions about it have emerged as a critical strategy for leadership continuity and organizational stability, particularly in educational institutions where leadership transitions directly impact institutional culture and performance. The theoretical frameworks discussed in this section provide the foundation for analyzing leadership succession planning in private schools in

the Philippines and Indonesia. Succession-Planning Framework by Chavez (2011), Succession Planning Model for Academic Heads by Arrieta et al. (2022) and Succession-Planning Framework for Educational Leaders by Parfitt (2022) framed this study and guided the researcher to explore the leadership identification, development and retention practices in select educational organizations in the Philippines and Indonesia.

### 2.2.1 Chavez’s Succession Planning Framework

This framework is based on Chavez's (2011) succession planning framework, where three-point principles were mentioned, such as identification of talent that leaders are expected to be open-minded and visionary, who made bold decisions while maintaining respect due to their strong core values. Engagement and development of employees by utilizing both conventional and unconventional approaches, including opportunities both inside and outside the organization and retention of top performers in an organization because investing in the retention of established talent proved more cost-effective than recruiting high-performing individuals, assuring that there is a continuity. He identified three core dimensions critical to successful succession planning: leadership readiness, talent management and organizational culture. These dimensions are relevant in educational institutions since effective leadership is important in sustaining quality education and long-term institutional goals. Figure 2.1 below shows the Succession Planning Framework proposed by Chavez (2011).

**Figure 2.1.** Chavez’s Succession Planning Framework



The arrows above show a two-way relationship or feedback loop; organizational culture affects succession practices and succession practices in turn help shape and sustain the organization's culture. This states that successful succession planning is deeply embedded in and simultaneously shapes an organization’s identity and operations. The framework then showed that leadership readiness usually refers to the process of equipping

individuals with the necessary competencies, skills and mindset to assume crucial leadership roles (Chavez, 2011). He stated that there is a need for structured programs that assess leadership potential, address competency gaps and provide tailored training. Studies such as Davis et al. (2005) then supported this framework, which they showed evidence that leadership preparation programs are relevant for developing the readiness of potential leaders within educational institutions. Leadership academies and coaching programs have been found to increase leaders' preparedness in discussing the challenges of educational management and leadership.

Talent management implies an organized process of identification, training and retention of individuals of high potential to guarantee an adequate pipeline of leaders. Chavez (2011) emphasized that to be effective, there must be active recruitment, mentoring and coaching of prospective leaders for continuity in leadership. This component of the model has been more extensively researched in schools. For example, Brundrett and Rhodes (2010) reported that schools operating within a formal talent management system showed more excellent continuity of leadership and consistency of leadership strategy. They also emphasized embedding leadership development into the rhythm of the business as a means to grow new leaders organically within the four walls.

Organizational culture also has a very important role. A collaborative culture, with a sense of transparency and shared leadership, provides the proper context for leadership development and succession planning to be effectively practiced. According to Chavez (2011), organizations with a strong culture of support and a shared vision are more likely to sustain leadership transitions. This finding supports Leithwood et al.'s (2006) report, where positive organizational culture helped with transitions but also enhanced the effectiveness of the school leadership teams.

The model proposed by Chavez (2011) gives a broad understanding of succession planning in educational institutions. The model addresses complex problems related to leadership readiness, talent management and organizational culture in the context of preparing and retaining leaders. This study applies Chávez's (2011) framework in analyzing the lived experiences of school leaders in private schools in the Philippines and Indonesia regarding how these dimensions are implemented in practice and their impact on leadership continuity.

Parfitt (2017b) proposed a succession planning instrument arguing that the education is slow in adoption of succession planning in education compared to other fields and sectors. The survey instrument developed focuses on four components: identification of talent, targeted development and mentoring, retention of high performers and

organizational culture. The findings showed the importance of combining traditional methods, such as mentoring, with non-traditional approaches, such as community engagement. The study necessitates systematic talent identification and professional development tailored to organizational needs through aligned leadership practices (Parfitt, 2017a, 2017b, 2022).

The fundamental step in succession planning for the schools is important such as comprehensive assessment of the institutions' needs. Identification of critical leadership roles, such as principals, department heads and academic coordinators, and evaluation of potential gaps arising from retirements, promotions, or turnover. As Atalla et al. (2024) stressed that proactively addressing leadership shortages is a proactive help to ensure smooth transitions and continuous growth. Schools then must analyze employee turnover patterns to identify systemic challenges and design strategies to address them.

The criteria of the potential successors are also important in order to align the leadership transitions with the school's long-term goals and institutional core values. Rothwell (2015) identified the determination of the essential skills, competencies and experiences for leadership roles as a way to ensure smooth succession within an organization. Schools should then also integrate opportunities for professional growth and engagement, strengthening retention and showing the institutions' commitment to nurturing their talent.

Identification of future leaders requires a holistic evaluation of the current staff, including teachers, department heads and other school personnel. Performance assessments and supervisor feedback help recognize individuals with leadership potential. Beasley and Ard (2021) showed the value of early identification in building a diverse leadership pipeline. Transparent communication with potential leaders is key to aligning their career aspirations and the schools' needs to support trust and mutual commitment.

Schools are, therefore, encouraged to invest in the structured development of identified talent through tailored growth plans, mentorship, training and hands-on leadership experiences. Atalla et al. (2024) have demonstrated that linking career development to succession planning prepares individuals for future leadership and improves overall performance. This proactive approach is a commitment on the part of school institutions to staff development, improving leadership retention and loyalty. Retention strategies go a long way to ensure that the leadership pipeline does not break. Schools can even introduce recognition awards, competitive compensation and work-life balance initiatives to improve employee satisfaction and engagement. Salehi et al. (2024) recommended addressing negative workplace behaviors, such as talent suppression, to

support a positive school culture that fosters leadership development. It makes the employees feel valued as it helps to reduce turnover and retain potential leaders.

Mentorship programs are indeed needed in schools to transfer knowledge and build professional relationships between emerging leaders and experienced mentors. Van Nieuwerburgh et al. (2020) showed that coaching and mentorship are a process to hone leadership readiness and emotional resilience. Schools should provide shadowing opportunities and interim leadership roles that afford aspiring leaders practical experience and prepare them for smooth transitions.

Effective transitions require detailed planning that documents critical responsibilities, processes and strategies. Hajri (2024) showed that structured transition plans are significant in addressing leadership gaps to ensure leadership continuity of operations. Interim roles and step-by-step handovers can reduce stress in transitions as this helps successors to gain confidence and achieve success.

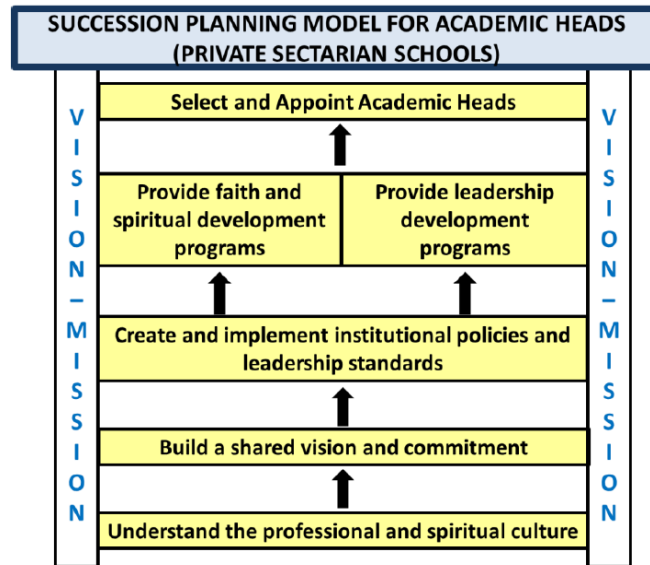
The succession planning in monitoring and adjustment has to be flexible, regularly reviewed to keep up with the needs of the school. Moreover, it was added by Schepker et al. (2018) that it also greatly assists in key decision-making processes and minimizes potential risks from leadership transition. Indicators here that may be used to review the effectiveness of the plan can include retention rates of staff and satisfaction surveys.

Communication of the plan is a quality of being proactive. Clear communication is critical to the success of the succession plan. Sharing the plan with all school stakeholders builds trust, shows transparency and even encourages accountability. One of the findings of Mitchell (2014) believed that clear communication is important to align individual goals with the organization's mission, as the benefits of the succession plan can garner support and enthusiasm across the community. It may be something uncommon to hear, but celebrating successful leadership transitions can lead to a positive school culture and boosted morale.

### **2.2.2 Arrieta et al.'s Succession Planning Model for Academic Heads**

This framework is grounded in the succession planning model for the academic heads as developed by the researchers (Arrieta et al., 2022). This addresses the critical need for leadership continuity and sustainability in educational institutions, particularly in private sectarian schools. Their model responds to the pressing challenges of unclear leadership selection policies, insufficient preparation of academic leaders, declining number of religious vocations and issues that have significant implications for school effectiveness and vision and mission alignment. Figure 2.2 shows the succession planning model for academic heads by Arrieta et al. (2022).

**Figure 2.2.** Arrieta et al.'s Succession Planning Model for Academic Heads



Succession planning, as seen in the model, is not merely about replacement of the outgoing leaders, but about the cultivation of a pipeline of well-prepared, mission-driven individuals who are ready to assume leadership roles when needed. The model is rooted in four key elements: vision-mission alignment, spirituality and culture, institutional policies and procedures, and professional growth. These elements are important in guiding the leadership succession process, which assures that appointment of academic heads is grounded in institutional values and strategic goals rather than subjective preferences or ad hoc decisions.

The model proposed by Arrieta et al. (2022) stated that structured training and development substantiates and complements leadership readiness. The absence of formal and consistent training mechanisms in some private sectarian schools led to gaps in leadership preparation, which this model has sought to address through targeted leadership programs such as mentoring, job-shadowing, coaching and supports for graduate study. These initiatives are thereby not only professional in nature, but also are anchored in the school's spiritual ethos, which reflects a dual emphasis on competence and character. In terms of quality control, the model strongly supports the clearly defined leadership standards and professional benchmarks that can enable systematic identification, preparation and evaluation of leadership candidates. This structure can nurture a culture of transparency and accountability, as it veers from the decisions predicated on administrative preferences or unclear criteria, and towards the merit-based, policy-driven appointments. Through these mechanisms, leadership transitions are both credible, consistent and congruent with institutional goals and values.

The model encourages a systematic and participatory approach to succession planning. It begins with understanding the organizational culture, followed by building a shared vision and commitment among stakeholders, which evidently strengthens organizational coherence and aligns leadership initiatives with long-term goals. The development and implementation of clear institutional policies, leadership standards and ethical guidelines are shown to assure transparency and objectivity in leadership selection. This model shows the importance of holistic leadership development. This includes personal and moral formation programs that nurture spiritual maturity and ethical leadership, particularly vital in faith-based schools. Leadership development initiatives such as mentoring, job-shadowing and formal training programs are deemed integral to equip future academic heads with the competencies required for effective school leadership.

Arrieta et al. (2022) believed that in anchoring succession planning process on the institution's vision-mission and integrating both professional and spiritual formation. Their model assures that leadership transitions do not disrupt but instead, reinforce the school's identity and purpose in accordance to its core values. It promotes a culture of proactive leadership development that empowers teachers and staff to envision themselves as future leaders. Thus, to support commitment and reduction of leadership gaps over time. Their model blends organizational development theory with contextual and faith-based considerations. It serves as a strategic tool for institutional sustainability, which enable schools to prepare leaders who are not only professionally qualified but also spiritually grounded and aligned with the mission of education through evangelization.

### **2.2.3 Parfitt's Succession Planning Framework for School Leaders**

Parfitt (2022) proposed a succession planning framework in educational leadership, as he believed that is a structured, future-oriented process of identifying, developing and retaining high-potential individuals that there is a continuous pipeline of qualified school leaders within an organization. As defined by Parfitt (2022), it is not merely a replacement strategy but a comprehensive and systematic process by which individuals are prepared to assume the leadership positions of greater authority at all levels of an organization. The theoretical framework that underpins this study is grounded in three overlapping phases: talent identification, targeted development and mentoring and retention of high-performing employees. All are embedded within the unique culture of the organization.

The first component of the framework is the identification of leadership talent, which involves recognizing individuals with the knowledge, skills and dispositions to lead in an organization. Parfitt (2022) believed in the importance of using the multiple measures and

perspectives during the identification process, such as 360-degree assessments that gather the input from supervisors, subordinates, peers and external stakeholders of the institution. The approach of having a multi-rater was deemed necessary to minimize the subjectivity or the so-called bias and provide a holistic understanding of a candidate's capabilities (Parfitt, 2022, p. 13). Furthermore, talent identification should not rely solely on past performance but should include an appraisal of potential for future success, guided by a vision of the organization's evolving needs.

The second component is the targeted development and mentoring, where identified individuals are provided with the opportunities for growth aligned with the leadership competencies required by an organization. This development phase includes specific, contextually relevant training and structured mentoring experiences. However, Parfitt (2022) warned against the generic training and he believes in stretch assignments and role-specific exposure to leadership tasks, which are substantial for preparing the candidates for having different facets of the nature of school leadership. Effective mentoring, both formal and informal, corroborates and supports the internalization of leadership practices and even facilitates the cultural integration within the school system.

The third critical component is retention, which Parfitt (2022) argued is important to prevent the loss of invested talent and sustain organizational leadership capacity over time. Retention is closely tied to organizational culture, as leaders who feel aligned with institutional core values and supported in their roles are more likely to stay in their positions, remain and contribute to the long-term stability of an organization. Creating a culture that values leadership development, recognizes potential and offers advancement opportunities contributes to the retention of high-performing staff (Parfitt, 2022, pp. 109–111).

An underlying pillar throughout all three components is organizational culture, which Parfitt (2022) defines using the framework of Owens and Valesky (2022) as the collection of norms, values and beliefs held by members of the organization. Succession planning must be congruent with this culture to be effective; otherwise, even high-potential leaders may struggle or fail. It is also important to understand cultural differences and it can guarantee that leadership transitions are not only smooth but also meaningful in sustaining the school's mission and goals (Parfitt, 2022, p. 2).

Sustainability is a fundamental, yet the most important goal of this succession planning framework. According to Parfitt (2022), succession planning is not merely a response to imminent vacancies but a proactive strategy that guarantees a long-term leadership continuity (Parfitt, 2022, p. 5). Sustainable leadership succession requires

organizations to have a commitment to building internal capacity, anticipating future challenges in a proactive manner and embedding succession practices into the school's strategic planning. This long-term view supports Fullan's (2005) assertion that school leaders must plan for their departure from day one to secure ongoing institutional progress.

It is imperative to conceptualize succession planning as a culturally responsive process as one should acknowledge that they deal with organizations as a whole, systematic and recursive process that enables educational institutions to build leadership capacity, support continuous improvement and guarantee organizational resilience.

### **2.3 Conceptual Framework of Succession Planning**

This section illustrates the critical components and interrelationships involved in the succession planning process for school principals in private schools, particularly in the Philippines and Indonesia. The framework is grounded in key theories from Chavez (2011), Arrieta et al., (2022) and Parfitt (2022) and is constructed to directly address the research questions posed in the study to further support it. A conceptual framework is needed to provide a structured lens through which researchers can interpret and analyze complex phenomena; thus, it guides the study's design, data collection and interpretation (Jabareen, 2009; Lutf et al., 2022; Varpio et al., 2020). This coheres with the theories and provides clarity by connecting research questions to existing literature and empirical evidence.

The principal part of this conceptual framework is organizational culture, which does refer to the shared values, beliefs and practices within a school that shape leadership behaviors and expectations (Chavez, 2011; Parfitt, 2022). A culture that values leadership development fosters trust, collaboration and openness to mentorship, making it fertile ground for succession planning. In private schools, especially those with religious missions, the culture must have the integration of spiritual and moral dimensions (Arrieta et al., 2022). This cultural backdrop determines how talent is identified and nurtured and whether leadership succession is treated as a strategic priority.

Succession begins with the identification of future leaders. This pertains to the recognition of certain individuals, often from within the teaching staff, who exemplify leadership potential, commitment and alignment with the institution's mission and its values. Parfitt (2022) stated the maximization of multiple evaluative measures such as peer feedback, supervisor assessments and 360-degree reviews to reduce bias and promote transparency.

Once the leaders are identified, potential leaders should be guided, hence succored or seconded with support, through targeted development programs, which may include mentoring, coaching, leadership training and job shadowing (Van Nieuwerburgh et al.,

2020). This phase guarantees that aspiring principals should acquire the necessary skills, competencies and emotional intelligence to lead their teams effectively, as researchers agree that leadership is about creating followers (Smith & Kirkman, 2012). Parfitt (2022) cautioned against generic leadership training, advocating instead for context-specific development aligned with school needs. Development initiatives not only prepare individuals technically but also spiritually and ethically, especially in faith-based contexts (Arrieta et al., 2022).

Leadership styles such as transformational and instructional leadership act as cross-cutting influences or main ingredients throughout the succession process. These styles show how leaders mentor others, shape organizational learning and inspire vision-driven action (Cruickshank, 2018; Northouse, 2022). A transformational leader, for example, is more likely to foster future leadership by promoting innovation and empowering others, making the process of succession more inclusive and sustainable.

A well-prepared talent pool needs to be retained. This is possible to achieve through selection and motivation strategies such as recognition, promotion pathways, incentives and organizational support (Phillips, 2020). Schools that fail to implement such strategies risk losing high-potential leaders to burnout or external opportunities (Salehi et al., 2024). Retention, however, is not only about filling roles but also about sustaining morale and institutional memory.

A central part of succession is the selection and appointment of new principals. This step must be criteria-driven, grounded in competencies, alignment with institutional vision and demonstrated leadership effectiveness (Rothwell, 2015). The framework emphasizes that clear, standardized criteria promote fairness and legitimacy in leadership transitions, especially in systems where political favoritism or seniority often undermines merit-based selection (Arrieta & Ancho, 2020; Sabina & Colwell, 2018).

With a successful appointment, schools must then ensure the continuity and sustainability of leadership. This is the culmination of all the previous steps. A school with a robust and strong leadership pipeline experiences smoother transitions, stronger strategic implementation and improved academic outcomes (Cruickshank, 2018; Parfitt, 2022). Continuity fortunately minimizes disruptions caused by turnover and supports long-term institutional development.

Formation of a leadership pool for principal roles is on the last stage, a sign that succession planning is embedded in institutional practice. This pool comprises educators who are trained, motivated, retained and ready to step into leadership when needed. Such

readiness is vital in both crisis situations such as sudden resignations and planned transitions such as retirements, guaranteeing that schools remain stable and future-oriented.

**Figure 2.3.** Conceptual Framework of Succession Planning

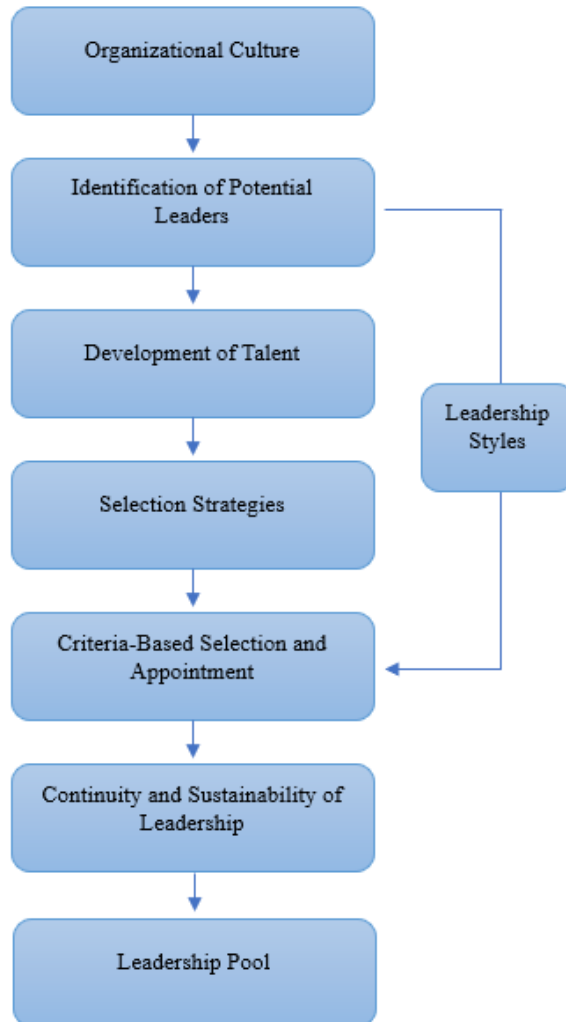


Figure 2.3 above shows the conceptual framework of succession planning as a proactive and strategic process rooted in organizational culture, leadership development and value-based selection. It shows the very importance of identifying and nurturing internal talent through mentoring, coaching and aligned leadership styles. Embedding clear criteria and retention strategies can help the schools ensure leadership continuity and institutional stability. This framework then supports the formation of a sustainable leadership pool as, in the long run, assuring a long-term educational success in the private schools in the Philippines and Indonesia to address the rising phenomenon in leadership in both countries.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The previous chapters discussed the Philippine and Indonesian succession planning system, which the literature found out that there is no systematic, structured and formalized succession planning in respective education systems to which it consequently resulted in the shortage of principals or key school leaders. The purpose of this thesis is to understand the processes of private school leaders in the Philippines and Indonesia how they identify and prepare future leaders and retain the incumbent leaders and how they address leadership continuity and sustainability within their institutions. Differentiating the method and methodology in this thesis, methodology, as whole, is a set of theory, method and other design elements of research, whereas method is a process or a tool that the researcher used as part of his or her qualitative study, normally to analyze or gather data (Abutabenjeh & Jaradat, 2018; Braun & Clark, 2021).

To make all these possible, the researcher tried to explore succession planning in private schools in the Philippines and Indonesia through the lived experiences of principals. The researcher used a comparative case study design to better understand the processes, challenges and strategies linked to leadership succession. The methodology selected was guided by and appropriate for the objectives and research questions of the study in uncovering contextual insights and comparing practices across different cultural and educational settings.

#### **3.1 Qualitative Approach**

This study used a qualitative approach to explore the lived experiences of school leaders in private schools in the Philippines and Indonesia regarding leadership succession planning. Qualitative research is particularly well-suited for studies that aim to understand processes, meanings and individual perspectives in depth and within real-world contexts. As Cohen et al. (2018) explained, qualitative approaches aim to understand behavior from the participants' own frames of reference and to capture the rich, detailed complexity of human experience. Since succession planning is often informal or underdeveloped in private school settings, a qualitative lens enables the researcher to uncover implicit strategies, values and challenges that would be difficult to measure through quantitative instruments alone (Lim, 2025).

Rather than testing a hypothesis, this study seeks to make sense of how school leaders prepare for leadership transitions, how they identify potential successors and how they navigate organizational dynamics and challenges within their schools. Cohen et al. (2018) emphasize that qualitative research values subjectivity and context, and it allows

researchers to investigate issues as they naturally unfold. Interviews and document reviews give a space for school leaders to voice their insights, concerns and practices in their own terms. This aligns well with the goal of this research, which is to offer a contextualized and interpretive understanding of succession planning as practiced in two distinct Southeast Asian educational environments.

### **3.2 Comparative Research**

This study adopts a comparative research approach as its central methodological framework to explore and understand leadership succession planning practices in private schools across two different yet contextually comparable Southeast Asian nations: the Philippines and Indonesia, as no other studies have ever compared two countries also, particularly their succession practices. Comparative research is important in educational inquiry because it enables the systematic analysis of similarities and differences across cultural, institutional and national contexts (Phillips, 2006). Bray et al. (2014) argued that comparative education research does not merely seek to juxtapose systems, but understand the cross-contextual perspectives that can uncover or reveal best practices, policy implications and contextual constraints, which can show practical and theoretical significance. In this study, the comparison seeks to generate knowledge about how leadership succession is approached in private educational settings where formalized succession structures may be underdeveloped or absent.

Bray et al. (2014) defined comparative education research as a methodologically diverse field that examines educational systems, processes, or outcomes in two or more countries or jurisdictions for the purpose of generating insights that would not be attainable through studying a single system in isolation. This aligns with the objective of this research to examine leadership succession strategies, mentoring structures and policy frameworks within private schools in the Philippines and Indonesia, countries that share similar regional affiliations and educational development trajectories, yet operate under different cultural and regulatory regimes. The study positions itself to extract meaningful patterns and identify context-sensitive strategies of the non-sectarian private schools that support leadership continuity and institutional sustainability.

Moreover, Bray et al. (2014) mentioned three levels of comparison: contextual, descriptive and analytical, each contributing uniquely to the research process. Contextual comparison focuses on the broader socio-political and educational environments of the case study locations. Descriptive comparison examines the actual practices of leadership succession in each setting. Analytical comparison then interrogates the deeper causes and consequences of similarities and differences observed. This study is structured around these

levels by first situating the national educational leadership context of both countries, followed by describing specific practices in private school settings and finally analyzing the institutional and cultural factors influencing succession planning. Through this structure, the study follows rigorous comparative research logic.

### **3.3 Case Study Design**

In line with its qualitative foundation, this researcher employs a case study approach to investigate leadership succession in private schools in the Philippines and Indonesia. The case study method is ideal for examining complex social phenomena within real-life settings, especially when the boundaries between the context and the phenomenon are not clearly defined (Yin, 2018). This research focuses on two bounded cases: one private school in the Philippines and one in Indonesia, which makes it a comparative case study. Each school serves as an individual case through which succession planning practices are explored in depth, which can allow the researcher to study and draw context-specific insights and compare patterns across settings.

According to Denscombe (2017), case studies are an in-depth examination of a single environment, a focus on processes, interactions and relationships, holism, a concern for a specific, different means or methods of data gathering and a concentration on natural settings. In this study where the researcher purposely took four (4) principals from two (2) schools as their participants from different countries, they, nonetheless, accorded with their focus on a single environment and natural settings (Denscombe, 2017) of respective countries, believing that this case study has their respective approaches to research and different contextual levels from local to national to see the differences and factors of a situation or context, which made the researcher spend time within the contexts of those being researched and involve different perspectives.

Yin (2018) commented that case studies are particularly useful when “how” and “why” questions are being asked and when researchers have little control over the events being studied. This is especially relevant here, as the study explores how private school leaders plan, or in some cases, do not plan, for leadership succession. Semi-structured interviews, reviewing relevant internal documents (if available) and observing contextual factors in the school can build a holistic picture of leadership processes and transitions in each school.

### **3.4 Comparative Case Study**

Comparative case study was selected as the framework of methodology because majority of the research questions focus on “how” and “why” succession planning processes unfold across different contexts, which are in the Philippines and Indonesia. In a

comparative case study, each country has its respective case study being studied and examined in-depth by the researcher so as to “enable systematic comparison.” This approach can preserve and even reveal the contextual detail of succession planning processes in these schools while explicitly contrasting them. As Yin (2018) noted, case studies are thus appropriate for investigating contemporary phenomena within their real-life context. With the researcher having the opportunity to study multiple cases, they can detect patterns or divergences in outcomes and processes that single-case designs might miss. In fact, Harrison et al. (2017) argued that comparative case studies have “grown in sophistication” as tools to explore broad, complex issues, which yield “generalizable knowledge about why and how” interventions may succeed or fail by making context explicit. The researcher chose this framework of methodology to justify that it leverages cross-case analysis to better understand the influence of context on educational outcomes (Bartlett & Vavrus, 2017; Harrison et al., 2017; Yin, 2018).

Importantly, a comparative case study is entirely different from other case-study forms by its explicit cross-case logic. In Stake’s (1995) terms, a comparative or collective case study involves multiple instances to generate broader perspectives (Crowe et al., 2011), whereas an intrinsic case study focuses on a single setting. Methodologically, this means each case is bounded and studied thoroughly on its own and then the researcher conducts a cross-case synthesis to identify common themes or differences. Crowe et al. (2011) explained that comparative case designs are well-suited to “explain, describe or explore” phenomena in context, in which they combine the depth of qualitative inquiry with systematic cross-case comparison. In practice, the study involved detailed within-case analysis of each educational setting, which is followed by cross-case comparison. This focus on both contextual depth and cross-case patterning distinguishes the comparative case approach from single-case designs, which is consistent with Yin’s (2018) notion of using multiple cases for analytical replication and theory building.

### **3.5 Research Paradigm**

The researcher’s paradigm integral in this study is interpretivism as it seeks to understand how individuals construct meaning from their lived experiences within specific social and institutional contexts. Given that succession planning in schools is shaped by the cultural, organizational and personal interpretations, an interpretivist gave the researcher the opportunity to explore these perspectives deeply. Interpretivism holds that reality is socially constructed and subjective, shaped by people’s interactions, interpretations and lived experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2016; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In this research, the goal was not to measure or quantify succession planning in schools, but to explore how

private school principals in the Philippines and Indonesia perceive, enact and experience succession planning within their respective institutions. As such, the researcher prioritized the voices, perspectives and meaning-making processes of participants to understand the complexity of leadership succession in education, which led them to conduct semi-structured interviews.

The interpretivist paradigm is especially suited for studies involving phenomena that are deeply contextual and value-laden, such as educational leadership and organizational change. Since both countries lack succession planning in the educational system, this indeed reckons that the research topic as an observed phenomenon. Succession planning, in this sense, as this study reveals, is not a uniform or objective process but one that varies depending on the cultural practices, institutional values, leadership beliefs and available resources. By adopting an interpretivist approach, the researcher was able to access the narratives and subjective understandings of school principals who shared their practices, challenges and insights about how future principals are identified, prepared and retained. This aligns with the interpretivist view that knowledge is co-constructed through interaction between the researcher and participants (Schwandt, 1994).

In this context, the study employed qualitative methods such as semi-structured interviews and document analysis to collect in-depth data that reflected the meanings participants attributed to succession planning practices. These methods allowed the researcher to interpret social realities rather than predict or generalize them. As Cohen et al. (2018) asserted, interpretivist research values depth over breadth, focusing on how people make sense of their world rather than testing hypotheses or establishing causal relationships. Thus, the study's findings give grounded understandings of succession planning in two culturally distinct educational systems rather than broad generalizations.

Ultimately, the interpretivist paradigm shaped every stage of this study, from the formulation of open-ended research questions, to the selection of qualitative data collection tools, to the use of Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis. It positioned the researcher as a co-constructor of meaning, rather than a distant observer. This paradigm allowed the researcher to remain reflexive and sensitive to context, especially when comparing how succession planning is perceived and practiced in private schools across the Philippines and Indonesia. The findings, therefore, are situated, interpretive and responsive to the realities as lived and told by school leaders themselves.

### **3.6 Research Setting**

The schools that fit the criteria of the researcher are non-sectarian Catholic schools in the Philippines and Indonesia. According to Merriam-Webster Dictionary, "non-

sectarian” is not “sectarian in character,” nor “affiliated with or restricted to a particular religious group.” These non-sectarian Catholic schools are educational institutions run by foundations and are affiliated with the Catholic Church but do not necessitate or prioritize religious affiliation from their students, faculty or staff because they may follow the Catholic educational tradition and values, such as an emphasis on moral development, social justice and community service, but they do not require students to be Catholic or adhere to Catholic doctrine in the same way as traditional and sectarian Catholic schools.

Despite being non-sectarian Catholic schools and offering religious education and foster a faith-based environment, they are mostly inclusive in nature, and welcoming students, staff and teachers of diverse religious backgrounds. The term “non-sectarian” suggests that these schools focus more on general education goals and values, while the connection is maintained and mandated to Catholic teachings and the broader Catholic community. Hence, aside from its Catholic students, the schools, in general, that the researcher purposively chose are accommodating Christians, Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists and others of different beliefs.

It is important to note that both Philippine and Indonesian non-sectarian Catholic schools share a similar educational system in terms of structure, governance and curricular emphasis, making them comparable for a cross-country study. These schools operate under the same foundational philosophy, anchored in Catholic values yet inclusive and non-restrictive to any particular religious affiliation. This shared system shows a sharp contrast with that of explicitly Catholic schools or international schools, which usually follow distinct frameworks such as evangelical missions or foreign curricula such as IB, Cambridge, or American systems, and it makes them significantly different and less suitable for direct comparison. The alignment between the selected schools in both countries supports the rationale and reasons for their use as research samples in a comparative case study and guarantees consistencies in key institutional elements while allowing for meaningful exploration of contextual differences.

### **3.6.1 Demographic Profile of a Private School in the Philippines**

One of the schools is located in Lancaster New City (LNC) in Cavite Province (*Probinsya ng Kabite*) in the Philippines (*Pilipinas*), a suburban area near Metro Manila. This is owned and was developed by a private developer. It is also considered to form part of the expanding metropolis of the National Capital Region (NCR). Being within the Metro Manila region, Imus City (*Lungsod ng Imus*) is in proximity to several key commercial, educational and government centers. The size of the school is more than 500 students. The local education system uses the K-12 curriculum that was implemented by DepEd to

provide a comprehensive education system from kindergarten up to grade 12. Private schools in Imus also have a principal who usually heads the academic programs, teacher development and daily operations.

However, one problem related to schools in this aspect is that formal succession planning processes are not widely available. A principal's leadership often depends on personal recommendations or administrative appointments and promotions rather than being carefully chosen through a well-defined and structured development pathway. Again, it might lead to poor preparation of future leadership transitions and ensure the smooth continuity of the institutions' goals and objectives. The population in the private schools in Imus has grown during the last years and it reflects the urban expansion of the place.

The school's geographical context in Imus City is in a suburban environment, therefore, developing with great growth in the population; thus, growing competition in talent for leadership and other resources. The education system around here focuses much on the student's achievement academically, as well as preparation towards colleges. The school in Imus is a private one home to middle-income families who desire quality education. The school has a growing population of more than 500 students.

### **3.6.2 Demographic Profile of a Private School in Indonesia**

Also, the other school is located in Banten, Indonesia, BSD City (*Bumi Serpong Damai*) in South Tangerang City (*Tangsel* or *Tangerang Selatan*). The city was developed by a group of private developers in 1984. This city is a rapidly growing urban area that serves as part of the Greater Jakarta metropolitan region. Also, it is strategically positioned near the capital, it has benefits from strong economic ties and accessibility to Jakarta's business and educational institutions. The school has a student population of more than 300 students. As one of the fastest-developing cities in Indonesia, South Tangerang has experienced significant urbanization and it attracts families seeking quality education and better living standards.

With the diverse and expanding population, South Tangerang is home to a mix of residential, commercial and industrial areas. The city's infrastructure has continuously improved to support its growth, with modern facilities, transportation networks such as train and public buses and an increasing number of educational institutions. Private schools are the ones who mostly cater the needs of the community, as families increasingly prioritize quality education for their children.

Despite its urban setting, South Tangerang, especially in the BSD City, shows a balance between modern development and green spaces as it makes an attractive location for both residents and businesses within the city. The growth of this city has contributed to

the rise in student enrollments, especially in private schools and this reflects the increasing demand for high-quality education. Private schools in the area continue to grow, expand and adopt to the needs of the growing population of this city.

### **3.7 Data Collection Techniques**

The researcher employed semi-structured interviews and document analysis. Semi-structured interviews with the principals detailed individual narratives to understand the lived experiences and perspectives on leadership succession planning in both Imus City and South Tangerang City. Document review involved checking any available administrative manuals, school records and organizational reports to identify existing practice of principal succession, structured succession plans and its contextual factors.

#### **3.7.1 Research Subjects and Instrument**

The participants include private school principals. Purposive sampling was employed to select participants on purpose with direct experiences in leadership roles and succession planning. The number of principals chosen in this sampling that meets the criteria of the researcher is four (4): two (2) from a school in the Philippines and two (2) from a school in Indonesia. The school in the Philippines has two principals: one (1) principal for nursery, kindergarten and preparatory (NKP) up to grade eight (Junior High School) and one (1) principal for grade nine (JHS) up to 12 (SHS). Meanwhile, in Indonesia, the researcher purposely chose two principals: one (1) from Junior High School (SMP or *Sekolah Menengah Pertama*) levels seven up to nine and one (1) from senior high school (SMA or *Sekolah Menengah Atas*) levels 10 to 12. The main instrument of research is an interview guide developed in line with the objectives of this study. The guide was to ensure consistency while giving room for probing and follow-up questions that may arise during the interview process. It is to help the researcher explore more based on the responses of the participants.

#### **3.7.2 Semi-structured Interviews**

Semi-structured interviews are employed by this study as the data collection instrument to investigate private school principals' leadership succession planning in Indonesia and the Philippines. Semi-structured interviews are seen as flexible in design, where the researcher uses an open-ended list of questions but retains the freedom to follow-up based on the respondents' responses (Cohen et al, 2018). This structure allows the researcher to see the consistency across interviews but still permits rich, detailed and context-sensitive answers from the principals. The semi-structured nature of the interview permits examination of complex and often subtle leadership processes that may not be captured well by structured surveys or quantitative indicators.

The application of semi-structured interviews is warranted by the research's objective to reveal the lived experiences, attitudes and approaches of school principals to succession planning in their institutional and cultural settings. Cohen et al. (2018) stated that semi-structured interviews are especially appropriate when researchers aim to comprehend participants' perspectives in depth and where the issue under study necessitates sensitivity and flexibility. In this study, it is important that the principal feel comfortable in the exchange of not only formal practices but also informal norms, difficulties and values that influence leadership succession. The approach aligns with the qualitative, interpretive nature of the study, with rich empirical data to inform thematic analysis and comparative interpretation among the cases.

#### **3.7.2.1 Face-to-Face Interview**

The researcher facilitated semi-structured interviews with Indonesian private-school principals in the school where the researcher collected data. The researcher did choose face-to-face interviewing to build rapport and capture nonverbal cues in the school setting, which enhances the depth of data on succession planning. The researcher, though an outsider, became an insider in the school where they were able to observe the day-to-day operations of the school and how the principal would assign OIC when they have official business or important activities, such as meetings, whose availability is compromised. Cohen et al. (2018) noted that in a semi-structured interview, the researcher can adopt questions and use spontaneous prompts and probes to deepen respondents' answers. The researcher was able to immediately clarify questions and encourage more detailed discussion. This in-person format thus supported rich, context-sensitive dialogue, in line with the flexibility and participant-focused emphasis described by Cohen et al. (2018).

#### **3.7.2.2 Online Interview**

Cohen et al. (2018) describe semi-structured interviews as one in which "topics and questions are given," but the questions remain open-ended and tailored to each participant. In this case, the researcher interviewed Philippine private-school principals virtually (via *Zoom's* video conferencing) to accommodate their geographically dispersed locations and busy schedules due to the upcoming commencement exercises in their respective schools. The researcher once worked in this school as a teacher. Therefore, they were an insider as a teacher then and they witnessed how the principals would assign the sub-unit leaders as OIC when they were on official business activities, in which a similar case happened in an Indonesian school. Conducting interviews online preserved the flexibility of the semi-structured format: the researcher followed an interview guide but could adopt wording and sequencing of questions in real time to each principal's responses (Cohen et al., 2018).

Using prompts and probes to deepen understanding of initial answers, the interviewer could clarify the ideas and questions and explore the issues even at a distance. This approach reduced logistical constraints such as travel and time while still yielding rich qualitative insights, consistent with emphasis on adaptable, open-ended data collection (Trate et al., 2020).

### **3.7.3 Document Analysis**

To support the physical interviews, this study utilized document review as a supplementary method to validate and contextualize the data gathered from participants and to corroborate the interview data. The researcher requested institutional documents such as formal succession plans, leadership development programs, appointment memos, training guidelines, or internal policies related to leadership transitions. These documents were intended and yet important to triangulate the findings from interviews and to provide perspectives into how succession planning was implemented or documented in these private school organizations. This approach supports Bowen (2009), who argued that document analysis enhances and supports qualitative research by giving the contextual background, policy evidence and institutional norms within these organizations. O’Leary (2014), meanwhile, stated that documents can reveal the formal organizational stance on leadership planning, complementing the experiential data provided by participants.

## **3.8 Qualitative Data Analysis and Techniques**

This study analyzed qualitative data through thematic analysis, which helped the researcher identify the patterns, themes (Kiger & Varpio, 2020; Xu & Zammit, 2020) and insights from the two case studies. Precisely, the analysis followed the steps outlined below: familiarization-reading and rereading data to get an initial feel; coding-labeling of significant segments of data; and theme development codes into broader themes reflecting key aspects of leadership succession (Braun & Clark, 2021). The researcher then analyzed the themes across the two contexts to identify similarities and differences.

The researcher used *Quirkos* software to systematically identify patterns, themes and insights related to leadership succession practices. This software facilitated the coding and organization of data to conduct an in-depth comparative analysis of the leadership succession strategies, challenges and practices within each country. To add, the software is recommended by one of the thesis supervisors of the researcher to get familiarized with the emerging software that facilitates the qualitative data analysis, as it, in the future, will be useful added in his repertoire of research skills, especially data analysis. The researcher deemed the software, in nature, a user-friendly and intuitive, visual, bubble-based interface designed to make qualitative data analysis more approachable and usable, especially for

beginners, such as the researcher who wrote this thesis and has reckoned himself as a novice researcher, or non-technical users. Also, the software itself is ideal for the quick coding and smaller research projects.

### **3.8.1 Verbatim Transcription**

Verbatim transcription, as per the academic conventions, was not only applied and employed by the researcher in this study, but was strictly adhered to in order to ensure the accuracy, authenticity and transparency in the analysis. The researcher transcribed all the interviewees word-for-word, which the researcher believed in preserving the exact language, expressions and nuances of the participants (Hagens et al., 2009). This approach is important not only for the researcher, but also to other researchers to ensure the integrity of the interviews to capture not only the factual content of what was said but also the tone, emotion and emphasis, elements crucial in qualitative interpretation (McGrath et al., 2019). Verbatim transcription supports a deeper understanding of participants' lived experiences and maintains the integrity of their voices through the interviews. According to Halcomb and Davidson (2006), verbatim transcription is an important approach in qualitative research as it gives a thorough and transparent analysis, especially in thematic coding and interpretation of the interviews. Similarly, Poland (1995) believed that detailed and accurate transcriptions can have the ability to increase the credibility and reliability of qualitative data, as they give researchers the chance to engage with the data at a granular level.

The use of verbatim transcription was particularly deemed imperative in this study, which relied heavily on thematic analysis and participant narratives of their experiences to comprehend and understand succession planning practices in private schools in the Philippines and Indonesia. The fidelity of participants' words helped preserve context and ensured that no critical insights were lost in the process of coding and interpretation. It also supported consistency during the process of cross-checking and theme development, especially when drawing comparisons between schools in the Philippines and Indonesia. Research suggested that high-quality transcription is a foundational step in qualitative research that directly influences the trustworthiness of the thematic interview findings. Hence, the decision to adhere to the verbatim transcription was not only methodological but also ethical to ensure that the participants' voices were represented accurately and respectfully throughout the study (Bailey, 2008).

### **3.8.2 Six Phases of Thematic Analysis by Braun and Clarke (2021)**

The researcher followed Braun and Clarke's (2021) six-phase framework for thematic analysis to systematically analyze the interview transcripts and generate

meaningful themes. The first phase was the familiarization with the data, began with the transcription of each interview using verbatim transcription to preserve the participants' exact words. The researcher read repetitively through the interview transcripts to familiarize and engage himself with the data and they took initial notes and reflected on potential patterns and perspectives across the data. This deep engagement of the researcher within the data helped him to become thoroughly acquainted with the content and emotional tone of each response, which guided the subsequent phases of the thematic analysis.

In the second phase, the researcher began to generate initial codes by identifying meaningful units of text related to the research questions on succession planning. This involved a line-by-line reading of the transcripts, tagging significant statements or recurring ideas with brief labels or phrases using *Quirkos*. The researcher used descriptive codes for him to understand it more. These initial codes captured key aspects of participants' experiences, such as “grooming,” “lack of policy,” “OIC appointment,” or “no succession structure.” The researcher tried to ensure that the coding was data-driven, which would allow the gist of insights to emerge inductively rather than being imposed by pre-existing theories or assumptions.

The third phase involved searching for themes, where the researcher examined how codes could be grouped into broader patterns or conceptual categories. At this point, the researcher organized the initial codes into potential themes by clustering similar ideas together and creating thematic maps. For example, codes related to informal preparation and mentoring in Philippine schools were grouped under a theme such as “Informal but Intentional Succession Practices,” while codes from Indonesian schools reflecting a lack of planning were grouped into “Absence of Succession Framework.” This process was iterative and exploratory, with frequent revisions as new relationships between codes emerged.

Next, in the reviewing themes phase, the researcher refined and validated the candidate themes by checking how well they fit with the coded extracts and the overall dataset. Some themes were broken down into subthemes for greater clarity, while others were merged or discarded if they were too weak or redundant. The researcher compared themes across interviews from both countries to ensure coherence within themes and distinctiveness between them. This phase helped confirm that the themes accurately represented the lived experiences of school leaders and captured the core elements of the research questions.

In the process of defining and naming the themes phase, the researcher gave each theme a clear and concise label that captured its essence descriptively to make sure that they were relevant and representative of the data. A detailed analysis was written for each theme, which outlined the story it told and how it related to the broader context of succession planning. The researcher also revisited the theoretical frameworks by Chavez (2011) and Arrieta et al. (2022), which reflected on how each theme aligned or diverged from these succession frameworks and models. This interpretive phase is to assure that the themes did not simply or only describe the data, but also gave the fresh perspectives of experiences into the succession planning practices, or lack thereof, in private school settings.

Finally, in the sixth phase, the researcher produced the final report, weaving together the thematic findings with illustrative quotes from participants to support the analysis. Each theme was explained in relation to the research questions and the similarities and differences between the Philippine and Indonesian contexts were shown. This very last phase completed the thematic analysis as it guarantees that the results were grounded in the data while also contributing to the broader academic conversation on educational leadership and succession planning, proving its significance. The six-phase process of thematic analysis by Braun and Clarke (2021) helped the researcher ensure that the research was both methodologically sound and comprehensive.

### **3.8.3 Inductive, Descriptive and Thematic Coding**

In order to analyze the qualitative data, the researcher utilized inductive coding; it is a method that allows codes and themes to emerge directly from the data without wholly relying on pre-existing theoretical frameworks. This approach was suitable given that there is a scant research on succession planning in the education field, as the researcher predominantly argued. Inductive coding gave the researcher an opportunity to remain open to unexpected perspectives from the participants and to capture the complexities and context-specific experiences of the school principals. As Braun and Clarke (2006) believed, inductive thematic analysis is data-driven and particularly effective in exploratory studies, especially those unexplored ones, where patterns must be identified organically. Similarly, Thomas (2006) stated that an inductive approach is ideal when research aims to build the concepts, ideas or themes from raw textual data.

In the initial stages of data analysis, the researcher employed a descriptive coding to manage and organize the qualitative data systematically. This thematic coding in the second phase of thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2021). Descriptive coding involves summarizing segments of qualitative data with short labels or phrases that reflect the

primary topic or content (Saldaña, 2021). This method was directly to code each sentence, phrase or any utterance in the interview transcripts, which enabled the researcher to capture the meaning of participants' responses before engaging in deeper interpretation of the interviews. However, if there are unnecessary utterances or terms, the researcher only provided ellipsis to omit those, which are not that important as the researcher should only adhere to the research questions. For example, phrases such as "appointed as OIC," "lack of formal policy," or "mentored by principal" were assigned to corresponding data segments to represent specific ideas related to succession planning. Descriptive coding is particularly useful in managing the large volume of qualitative information and served as the foundation for identifying patterns and grouping codes into broader themes.

Descriptive coding is widely recognized as an effective method in the early stages of thematic analysis, especially for studies involving interviews and case-based data. According to Ridder (2014), it is especially appropriate for exploratory research where the aim is to understand participants' perspectives and experiences. To add, Namey et al. (2008) believed that descriptive coding facilitates data reduction without losing the original content of the data as it allows the researchers to maintain clarity as they move into more interpretive phases. In this study, descriptive coding was a huge help to the researcher to stay close to the data and ensure that the emergent themes were grounded in the actual words and lived experiences of the principals. This method provided a structured and rigorous pathway toward deeper thematic categorization and interpretive insight.

### **3.9 Trustworthiness**

Trustworthiness was ensured through the framework proposed by Lincoln and Guba (1985), which emphasizes four key criteria: credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. Credibility was established through prolonged engagement with participants, triangulation of data sources (interviews and document review) and member checking, in which participants were invited to review and validate their transcribed interviews to ensure that their experiences were accurately represented (Birt et al., 2016). The data transcribed by the researcher such as the recordings were emailed back to the participants for their verification. Several of them made corrections or clarified points they believed needed more context and this process helps ensure the accuracy and authenticity of their responses. This process was able to minimize the misinterpretation of the data and improve the accuracy of the findings.

Transferability was supported by providing descriptions of the research setting, participant contexts and thematic findings, which can enable the readers to evaluate the relevance of the results to other similar environments (Creswell & Poth, 2016). Also, the

researcher included contextual information such as the type of private school (non-sectarian Catholic), geographic location, school size and religious diversity as this gives readers idea to judge how the findings may apply to comparable schools in Southeast Asia or beyond.

Dependability was achieved through maintaining an audit trail that documented the research design, data collection procedures and coding decisions. It allows others to follow and assess the research process (Shenton, 2004). Throughout the study, the researcher kept a digital research journal that recorded the rationale behind methodological decisions, interview protocols, changes during data collection and coding choices in *Quirkos*, which makes that the research process traceable and repeatable.

Lastly, confirmability was enhanced through reflexivity. Here, the researcher acknowledged potential biases and maintained transparency and by subjecting the study to external scrutiny through peer debriefing and supervision, to assure that the findings reflected the data rather than personal assumptions (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). Practically, in layman's terms, the researcher was able to write reflexive memos after each interview to document thoughts and potential biases. They also were able to discuss the emerging themes with thesis supervisor/s and academic peers during informal meetings to guarantee that the interpretations were grounded in the data and not influenced by personal perspectives.

### **3.10 Ethical Issues**

For the researcher to protect the participants in this study, they were expected to abide by the ethical requirements throughout the research process (Sivasubramaniam et al., 2021). The participants ought to be assured of the privacy, anonymity and confidentiality of their responses (Wiles et al., 2008). In this study, participants were informed of their codenames such as FPA or Filipino Principal A and IPA or Indonesian Principal A. They were informed that these would be used in all transcripts, reports and publications and that any identifying details such as school names or exact locations would be excluded or altered to ensure anonymity. They should be informed of this thesis' purposes and procedures. Prior to each interview, the researcher conducted a brief orientation session, either in person or online, where purpose of the study, the voluntary nature of participation, the data collection methods and how their data would be used were explained. Participants were also given time to ask questions before proceeding. Written consent was obtained and it ensured that there is a voluntary participation of principal participants (Bhupathi & Ravi, 2017). For example, each participant was asked to sign a written informed consent form, physically or electronically via email, before the interview took place. This form clearly stated their right to withdraw from the study at any time without consequence. Ethical approval was taken

from the Faculty of Education of Indonesian International Islamic University. The study was reviewed and approved by the university prior to the data collection process to ensure that it met institutional standards for research involving human participants.

### **3.11 Time and Place of Study**

The researcher commenced the study in two private schools located in Imus City, Philippines and South Tangerang City, Indonesia since September during the proposal stage, until its defense in January, and data gathering, defending and presenting the thesis findings and finalizing it until August 2025. The process followed a sequential structure, starting with the proposal revisions until securing permissions in February. Letters of invitation, research plans and plain language statements were submitted to school principals in both locations for formal approval. In March, data collection instruments were approved and interview schedules were finalized. Semi-structured interviews were conducted in April. Filipino principals were interviewed in the first half of the month, followed by Indonesian principals in the latter half. Relevant school documents were also gathered to support data triangulation. Data analysis began in May, including transcription, coding and thematic analysis using *Quirkos* software. Chapter 4 was written from late May to mid-June. In June, the final phase focused on completing Chapter 5, synthesizing findings and preparing the manuscript for submission for thesis defense.

### **3.12 Researcher's Positionality**

The researcher acknowledged their positionality as a licensed professional educator in the Philippines and an academic with limited direct experience in formal school leadership roles, having only completed a leadership internship in Quality Assurance and School Development Department in Indonesia. Additionally, the researcher in this study experienced teaching in a private school in the Philippines for one year, did a teaching internship and tutoring volunteer in some schools in Indonesia. Hence, the researcher positioned themselves as an outsider in these schools, to which they may only have limited and little intimate knowledge (Griffith, 1998) of the leadership roles in the schools. This positionality informed the study design and interpretation of findings. The researcher approached participants as equals to support an open and collaborative atmosphere during data collection. Continuous self-reflection was instrumental to see that the personal views of the researcher do not overshadow participants' narratives.

**CHAPTER IV**  
**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**4.1 Results**

The sole purpose of the researcher why they intended to choose succession planning as their thesis topic is that they were driven by the urgency and novelty of this unseen phenomenon, overlooked by the education sector. Also, to see how succession planning is practiced in respective private schools in the Philippines and Indonesia; to see if these schools have structured and formalized succession plans; and to analyze the perceptions of principals. A comparative case study approach was employed by the researcher to investigate leadership succession in private schools in the Philippines and Indonesia; it is ideal for examining the complex social phenomena within the field of this study, especially when the boundaries between the context and the phenomenon are ambiguous (Yin, 2018).

**4.1.1 Profile of the Filipino Principals**

Filipino Principal A, coded as FPA is a male school leader who belongs to the age group of 25–35 years. He is a principal for 9–12 levels. His experience of principalship is approximately one year at this school. He had leadership experience before becoming a principal. His highest educational attainment was a Bachelor’s degree and he is a candidate to complete his Master’s degree. He also used to complete any leadership or management training programs internally and externally. He had 5–10 years of teaching experience before becoming a principal. The size of the school he has been leading in terms of student population is more than 500 students.

**Table 4.1.** Profile of Filipino Principals

Country	Principal	Gender	Age Group	Level Supervised	Teaching Experience	Principal Experience	Education
Philippines	A	Male	25–35	Grades 9–12	5–10 years	~1 year	Bachelor's (Master's candidate)
	B	Female	25–35	Pre-K to Grade 8	5–10 years	~1 year (w/ prior exp)	Bachelor's (Master's candidate)

Similar to Filipino Principal A, Filipino Principal B, coded as FPB, is a female school leader who belongs to the age group of 25-35 years. She is a principal of pre-kindergarten–8. Her experience of principalship is approximately one year at this school. She already had a principalship experience from other schools before becoming a principal at this school. Her highest educational attainment was a Bachelor’s degree and she is a candidate to complete her Master’s degree. She also used to complete any leadership or management training programs internally and externally. She also had 5–10 years of teaching experience

before becoming a principal. The size of the school she has been leading in terms of student population is more than 500 students.

#### **4.1.2 Qualitative Themes in the Philippines**

The following paragraphs below show the qualitative themes that emerged in the Filipino principals during the semi-structured interviews, including the succession planning document that they presented that helped the researcher triangulate the interview data with the document. Qualitative themes such as: succession planning as a sustainable and a proactive strategy for leadership; leadership transitions and organizational preparedness; grooming and mentoring future leaders; characteristics and criteria for succession; preference for internal candidates and cultural continuity; professional development and support as retention strategies; informal and formal approaches to succession; and challenges and risks in succession planning. These themes from the semi-structured interviews helped the researcher generate the results up until their interpretation in the discussion section, which are based upon the research questions.

##### **4.1.2.1 Succession Planning as Sustainable and Proactive Strategy for Leadership**

The first theme to emerge from the coding was succession planning as a sustainable and proactive strategy. When the researcher interviewed Filipino Principal A, coded as FPA, and Filipino Principal B, coded as FPB, from the Philippines, both principals expressed a similar or shared understanding of succession planning as an important mechanism that guarantees that there is long-term sustainability and stability of school leadership, especially for principals. FPA then described succession planning as a “sustainable means or a strategy to ensure that the leadership quality in a school is maintained.” They then stressed that schools are continuous institutions, and, as such, must not falter in their operations due to leadership gaps such as shortage of principals, including its sub-unit level of leadership. According to FPA, “schools do not cease to exist,” so there must always be someone ready and prepared to lead the teachers and the school to continue and sustain the school operations, which makes succession planning both an urgency, a necessity and a responsibility of each school to have it as part of its policy. Meaning that the principal strongly stated that schools should be proactive, acknowledge their vulnerability to leadership gaps and be prepared for unexpected and sudden transitions.

FPB shared similar awareness about the importance of having contingency plans for leadership exits due to retirement, resignation, or career change of principals. When the researcher asked the FPB about "How would you describe succession planning in your school?" The FPB responded that “Succession planning is a plan that the school can use or refer to whenever leaders resign.” However, FPB then believed that the schools themselves

should have a proactive culture as an organization, as an institution and overall as a school, where planning is not merely reactive, but something integrated into the institution's long-term vision. They added, "You do not have to wait until that leader retires before you choose who is next in line... we must be proactive; being proactive means embracing succession planning in our institution," implying that a school organization is vulnerable to sudden leadership changes, which are inevitable. This forward-thinking mindset shows the school's readiness and agility in managing leadership changes.

"You do not have to wait until that leader retires before you choose who is next in line... we must be proactive; being proactive means embracing succession planning in our institution," – FPB

#### **4.1.2.2 Leadership Transitions and Organizational Preparedness**

The second theme to emerge from the coding was leadership transitions and organizational preparedness. The two principals from this school had firsthand experiences of abrupt leadership transitions that stressed the need for better leadership preparation and foresight. When the researcher asked the FPA, "When you assumed your role as a principal, was the transition planned?" they revealed that their promotion to the principalship came as a shock and yet a surprise. They were forthwith informed right before onboarding and expressed how it caused "anxiety" and "confusion" and they were initially preparing for the second year as Vice Principals of Academics in this school when they were suddenly thrust into the leadership role, which reflected a lack of adequate information, notice and preparation.

"At that time, we were called for a meeting to learn that we were chosen; we were very unsure because my partner and I were the vice principals for academics during the past school year. So, we were preparing for our second year as vice principals. We were already planning what to do with our teacher training, curriculum plans, and all other academic activities. We were told about it right before the training or the onboarding, so we were in total shock; we were very anxious then. So, it is a big adjustment for us; it was not planned, and it is more like giving a bigger responsibility than you have to carry on your own." – FPA

FPB also described their experience as "partly planned but not 100%." She noted that the outgoing principal had not originally intended to resign. Although grooming and some mentorship had taken place within the school, the actual transition still made them unprepared. Nonetheless, FPB then acknowledged that the school was able to manage and cope with similar transitions in the past: "Since it happened already, such as the resignation of principals, the school has been able to cope with the situation... and should it happen again, the school is ready." These reflections, thus, stress the importance of creating structured, well-communicated transition protocols, including onboarding, documentation

turnover and preparation time for successors so that the potential successors are not left unprepared.

#### **4.1.2.3 Grooming and Mentoring Future Leaders**

The third theme to emerge from the coding was grooming and mentoring the future leaders. In this theme, mentorship emerged as a central theme in both principals' approach to succession planning to see and groom someone's potential. FPA described how future leaders are groomed, identified and gradually entrusted with huge responsibilities through deliberate task delegation by the incumbent leaders. The researcher asked them, "How does your school approach preparing for leadership changes?" They mentioned that they invite these promising and potential leaders to participate in meetings and are included in decision-making processes to build confidence and leadership insight and to be immersed in how the processes work. FPA said that grooming successors involve exposure, as it should be, to "various roles," believing that taking on increasing and progressive responsibilities is deemed a preparation for the principalship.

FPB, meanwhile, amplified the importance of structured mentorship, which he remembered and noted that their predecessor (previous principal) had been grooming them and others informally: "He has been mentoring me for this decision as well." They also discussed using leadership camps and assigning teachers the major responsibilities as developmental tools or approaches. However, FPB raised a critical point about the emotional risks of such exposure. They explained that while grooming can inspire, it may discourage candidates if the burden seems overwhelming: "Sometimes those who are exposed to the role also become scared... it affects how you prepare and select future principals; you either scare them or inspire them." Likewise, the Indonesian case showed informal and inconsistent mentoring, indicating a missed opportunity for systemic leadership preparation. This means these candidates may not be prepared for the roles that they are being assigned to on the grounds that these potential leaders, in their perspective, can lead any other certain sub-unit leadership such as student affairs, students in the classroom, being a Person-in-Charge (PIC) of a program and any other responsibilities that require leadership but cannot lead the teachers or the school operations as a whole as a principal. This dual effect reveals the importance of emotional sensitivity in mentorship approaches.

#### **4.1.2.4 Characteristics and Criteria for Succession**

The fourth theme to emerge from the coding was the characteristics and criteria for succession plan. Filipino Principals A and B, in this case, then asserted that it is important to have multi-dimensional criteria in identifying and determining the characteristics and

criteria of potential leaders in a school. Principal A would describe their school's succession plan as comprehensive and structured. At its core were transparency, objectivity and alignment with its school's core values. The plan includes measurable criteria such as teaching performance, leadership experience, communication skills and even soft skills. They remarked that a good succession plan has detailed steps, criteria and the basis for choosing the prospective leaders are transparent and objective, adding that the plan should encourage reflection and self-assessment to determine a potential candidate's readiness to assume a leadership role.

FPB said that credentials, performance and alignment with school values are important as part of the qualifications to become a school leader in a school. They mentioned that potential leaders are then assessed and evaluated using Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), as well as their character traits and long-term professional goals. "Character is also important in the selection process because you must deal with many people and other leaders," said the FPB. Consultant-led interviews are also an integral part of the screening and selection process in assessing vision alignment, composure and the ability to lead collaboratively. Principals A and B affirmed that integrity, communication and a growth mindset are of the utmost importance, yet crucial indicators and determinants of leadership potential, whether they will become qualified or not. These criteria are imperative not only for choosing capable leaders but also for maintaining the cultural fabric and goals of the institution.

"Character is also important in the selection process because you must deal with many people and other leaders...we want to see if you as a teacher have the same goal because there are leaders that they see themselves leading in different areas of the institution rather than being the principal of the institution... So, the consultants would ask about the vision, the mission, how they think the school is performing and even you as a person, how you are performing in the school, how aligned you are with the vision and mission, your plans professionally, and so forth." – FPB

#### **4.1.2.5 Preference for Internal Candidates and Cultural Continuity**

The fifth theme to emerge from the coding was their preference for internal candidates and cultural familiarity. Promoting internal candidates has become the important preference and was a firmly held belief by Filipino Principals A and B. Yet, it is not just a belief or a preference; they rooted this in organizational continuity, cultural alignment and the familiarity of potential successors with the school culture and system. FPA affirmed the utmost importance of having homegrown leaders in a school. They explained that bringing in outsiders often creates a disconnection between faculty and staff. They will have difficulty establishing rapport with colleagues as leaders should create followers, which is believed to take longer. According to them, leaders who have risen from within understand

the school's unique culture, values and system, which are the main ingredients for effective leadership. They also emphasized the importance of aligning succession planning with the school's mission and spiritual character.

"The people included in the succession plan should be internal, meaning those are the personnel or those leaders, mid-level administrators, who have been in the school for quite some time because I believe [they] should also embody the school, learn from its history, its culture because those are very important." – FPB

FPB, when asked, "What does a good succession plan look like to you?" They then asserted that those parts included in the succession plan "should be internal... because they should embody the school, learn from its history, its culture." Internal leaders are seen as more invested, experienced and better equipped to manage the school's unique challenges. This insider perspective ensures a smoother transition and stronger stakeholder trust. Both leaders' views underscore succession is about capacity and belonging and alignment with the school's evolving story.

#### **4.1.2.6 Professional Development and Support as Retention Strategies**

The sixth theme to emerge from the coding was professional development and support as strategies to retain leaders. This part shows the recognition by Principals A and B of the importance of professional development, mentorship and organizational support in retaining the incumbent school leaders. Principal A candidly shared what they felt of being underprepared for the role: "As a principal, I still consider myself a novice... I need lots of experience and someone who will guide and provide me with mentorship." They also emphasized the emotional toll of leadership, referencing the importance of psychological and emotional support systems: "It is a very stressful job... take care of the emotional and psychological well-being of the principals." They identified three key retention factors: development and training, fair compensation and a supportive management culture.

FPB mentioned a more structured support by mentioning opportunities for graduate studies, attendance at training seminars and even access to healthcare benefits: "We have a health card; nowadays, you must have one." They told that the school offers "official business" privilege to not only for the teachers, but also for the leaders to pursue graduate education and are not penalized during work hours. Additionally, personal growth activities, such as spiritual retreats and human resource-led initiatives, were reckoned important for nurturing leaders' overall well-being. This principal believed that this comprehensive support system is a reflection of an institutional commitment to leader longevity, retention and satisfaction that are correlated with the benefits that they received.

Both principals agree that leadership retention is not just a function of salary, but of the broader professional environment.

“For example, you have a regular class day or a school day in this school. You have graduate studies like a class or a forum. You will be given an official business form not to be marked absent. So, when you are given different opportunities to expand your knowledge, to participate in different seminars and training that are related to the field, and of course, the school also gives opportunities for personal energy and spiritual growth...” – FPB

#### **4.1.2.7 Informal and Formal Approaches to Succession**

The seventh theme to emerge from the coding was the informal and formal approaches to succession. Despite the existence of a succession plan in this school, both principals described a blend of formal processes and informal, relational strategies in leadership identification. Principal A shared that beyond structured evaluations, the process often involves “conversations and getting the pulse of the high-potential teacher” to become a leader. They described how leaders are gradually entrusted with more and bigger responsibilities and sometimes even selected based on personal mentorship experiences. For instance, they recalled how a former principal used reflective questioning to help them assess their fit for leadership: “She made me reflect on my experience... I was a student council moderator.”

Meanwhile, FPB provided a similar picture, which they noted that leadership conversations normally take place in casual settings when the researcher asked this principal on "How do you involve current leaders/stakeholders in preparing future school principals?" They said that “sometimes it is not even formal, but rather a simple conversation wherein you can gather thoughts.” While formal screening by HR and consultants exists, FPB accentuated that succession often begins with subtle, personal interactions, giving “hints” or signals to potential leaders and quietly gauging their interest and readiness. The school also employs a kind of “pooling” strategy, where several candidates are nurtured concurrently and observed over time. This hybrid model demonstrates how cultural fit, trust and intuition play significant roles in the succession process alongside formal metrics and evaluations in leadership succession.

#### **4.1.2.8 Challenges and Risks in Succession Planning**

The eighth theme to emerge from the coding was the challenges and risks experienced in succession planning. Succession planning is nothing without its challenges and risks. Principals A and B addressed the realities and risks that may hinder an effective succession planning, especially in the high-pressure leadership environments. Principal A underlined the danger of toxic relationships and internal conflict within colleagues, which have previously caused leaders to resign and leave their positions.

“There were internal conflicts between the school leaders, which became why they left, maybe because it was their working environment or their working relationship with their fellow school leaders. So, it has affected the way they work. Also, the problems outweigh the benefits or the reasons for staying. It has been too stressful, or you know, it is oversaturated to the point that it made you forget why you chose to accept the roles.” – FPA

FPB identified additional structural and interpersonal risks. A key concern for them was the lack of collaboration between co-leaders: “If the two principals do not collaborate, it will be a problem.” The selection process now includes informal vetting of compatibility: “They asked me: Can you work with this leader or work well together?” Other challenges here included the burnout, conflicting leadership styles and instances where unqualified individuals were appointed, leading to questions about the transparency of appointment. They noted, “Sometimes... some faculty members questioned why that person was appointed.” Both principals agree that beyond credentials, succession planning must consider interpersonal relationships, institutional support and leader morale to be truly effective.

“Mainly the differences of the school leaders. As I have mentioned, collaboration is very important. If the two principals do not collaborate, it will be a problem because we are one school; we are one with one system, so we must speak as one. So, selecting principals that can work together or collaborate is challenging. I remember being interviewed, maybe part of their screening before. They asked me: can you work with this leader or work well together? So, it would be a significant factor if you could collaborate. So, that is the challenging part when they select principals. They need to see if the principals they choose are not only principals but also key leaders. They need to see if these people can work together collaboratively.” – FPB

#### **4.1.2.9 Triangulation of Results**

A document was located in a school in the Philippines. Meaning, this school was able to present a formal succession planning model document to the researcher. The presence of a comprehensive succession plan in a school in the Philippines points to a deliberate, strategic approach to preparing future leaders (*See Appendix 8.1–8.3*).

The succession plan from a school in the Philippines is grounded in strategic alignment with institutional goals. It follows a structured, phased approach: assess, evaluate and develop, which begins with identifying future challenges and critical roles. The process then moves toward evaluating high-potential employees and developing them through targeted interventions. The succession planning model of this school is a guarantee that a leadership preparation is not left to chance, but is integrated into the long-term planning and operational fabric of the organization.

The plan also employs a competency-based model that focuses on the identification of skills, institutional knowledge and leadership qualities required for key positions. High-potential employees are identified and given supports such as coaching, mentorship and

formal training, while all staff members are encouraged to engage in certain professional development. Standardized worksheets are given to the potential candidates for them to answer, such as environmental scans, position worksheets and career development plans, demonstrates the focus on the importance of transparency, consistency and intentionality in the talent development. The strategic and structured approach seen in a school in the Philippines suggests or shows greater preparedness for leadership transitions and institutional resilience by acknowledging that the leadership gap is inevitable.

#### 4.1.3 Profile of the Indonesian Principals

Indonesian Principal A, coded as IPA in Indonesia is male and belongs to the age group 36-45. He has been a principal for approximately a year in this school and has 1–5 years of overall experience. Currently, he is a junior high school principal. His highest educational qualification is a Master’s degree and he has never completed any leadership or management training programs. He had 11–15 years of teaching experience before becoming a principal. The school he has been serving has a student population of 100-300 students.

**Table 4.2.** Profile of Filipino Principals

Country	Principal	Gender	Age Group	Level Supervised	Teaching Experience	Principal Experience	Education
Indonesia	A	Male	36–45	Junior High School	11–15 years	~1 year	Master’s
	B	Female	36–45	Senior High School	15+ years	~1 year	Master’s

Indonesian Principal B, coded as IPB, meanwhile, is a female and belongs to the age group of 36–45. She has been serving as a principal, likewise with IPA, for approximately a year in this school as a senior high school principal. Her highest educational attainment is a Master’s degree and she used to complete any leadership or management training programs. Before becoming a principal, she had over 15 years of teaching experience first. Currently, the student population of the school she is serving is 100-300 students.

#### 4.1.4 Qualitative Themes in Indonesia

The following paragraphs are the themes that emerged from the Indonesian principals, including the triangulated, which, unfortunately, the school was not able to provide any documents of their succession processes, especially the succession planning model, like what the Philippines school has. Nevertheless, the following themes are as follows: succession planning as an intentional process; vice principals as leadership

pipeline; internal or external candidates; mentorship and informal leadership preparation; practical experience over formal leadership training; selection influenced by stakeholder consensus and observation; criteria for principalship: performance, consistency and character; and succession challenges and dilemma. The interview codes helped the researcher generate the themes, enabling them to see the patterns and connections that later would become the themes of the results.

#### **4.1.4.1 Succession Planning as an Intentional Process**

For the Indonesian principals, the first theme that emerged here was the succession plan as an intentional process. Indonesian Principals A and B in Indonesia mentioned and emphasized a unique perspective for their succession processes, which succession planning in their school is an evolving but necessary process, although they differed in how explicitly they believed it is managed well by their school. When the researcher asked the IPA to describe their succession planning in their school, they described their succession as “typically reactive,” which is often triggered by the previous leader leaving due to illness, promotion, or new opportunities.

“Succession planning here is more into when a principal or the previous one, perhaps they are going to have another job or experience, either it is still inside the school or maybe outside the school, then the next person who will be elected or selected by the school will be the one who will be in charge to replace the person...” – IPA

While there is some foresight, the planning is mostly discussed at the upper levels of management without extensive involvement from mid-level leaders. For example, IPA was directly asked by the researcher if their assumption of their position as a principal was planned, they stated, “Honestly, no... it was quite a sudden... but maybe up there, the planning itself from the top management, from the director and foundation, maybe they already discuss it before.” This response from the IPA showed a top-down structure where formal succession strategies are assumed but are not always visible to those directly affected by the decision.

“Honestly, no... planning itself from the, from the top management, from the director and foundation... the deliberation already [was] done before... like my previous principal, she was not feeling well, so she was sick that time and, probably when she started to feel unwell at that time...” – IPA

In contrast, IPB framed succession as a something more systematic and deliberate effort. They described the concept using the Indonesian term *kaderisasi*, which refers to grooming potential leaders through gradual exposure and preparation. “It is a process to identify, evaluate, determine and prepare the future leader that will replace the current one,” as IPB explained and defined. This proactive perspective by this principal means and then

suggests a stronger personal and institutional commitment to continuity and readiness in leadership.

#### **4.1.4.2 Vice Principals as a Leadership Pipeline**

The second theme that emerged here was vice principals seen as a leadership pipeline or pool of candidates. Indonesian Principals A and B saw the importance of being a vice principal (VP) as a requisite role and process, hence, a stepping stone for becoming a principal on the grounds that what prepares them. Principal A then noted that VPs are typically chosen based on their leadership potential and existing familiarity with the school's operations. They remarked when they were asked, "What does a good succession plan look like to you?" they responded, "Choosing vice principals in this case will be crucial in terms of grooming the next potential leaders," and emphasized that these individuals often "already know what the job or the responsibility of a principal is." This pathway does not only guarantee that there is an evident smoother leadership transition but, also, is a reflection of a strategy in investing in internal talent pool of candidates.

"Choosing vice principals in this case, will be crucial in terms of grooming the next potential leaders, because... they are potential, but then, at the same time, it might not be always the case... let's say... all the stakeholders will agree with all the names like that. So, they might have another option..." – IPA

IPB, meanwhile, who told the researcher that they personally transitioned from VP to principal, provided firsthand experience. The researcher asked, "When you assumed your role as a principal, was the transition planned?" They shared, "Actually, yes. This one is planned... I was the VP for Student Affairs... and the school is preparing someone to become the principal." They strongly underlined that VPs must learn all aspects of school operations, even those outside their immediate domain, to be effective in future leadership roles. The belief that VPs serve as the main pool for succession is well entrenched, with both principals agreeing that this approach enables better preparation and reduces disruption during leadership transitions.

"Actually, yes. This one is planned because earlier, I was the VPA. So actually, in the beginning, I was the VP for Student Affairs... they are preparing me for becoming the principal, but because of my personal reason at the time, I resigned from the VPSA and then after that I was appointed again as the VPA and then when my first year as a VPA, my principal at the time has already informed me that actually the school is preparing someone to become the principal, so the VP needs to know every aspects, even though, for example, I am the VPA, I have to also get aware for under aspect from the student activities, from the disciplinary, infrastructure, something like that. So, we have already heard about that one. So, when I was appointed... I think this one is already being planned..." – IPB

#### **4.1.4.3 Internal or External Candidates?**

The third theme emerged here is whether internal or external candidates as choices. Both Indonesian principals stated their clear and strong preference for promoting the

internal pool of candidates within their department over hiring externally or the ones from outside school or other departments. For IPA, the concern centered around the cultural alignment, “even though maybe this person was experienced in other schools... but then, again, because leadership is good, it's one thing, but knowing that culture of a certain place is something crucial as well,” they explained. This view underlines a belief that effective leadership requires more than technical skills, it also depends on understanding the institutional values, norms and relationships within the school.

IPB supported this sentiment and expressed worry about resistance from staff when external leaders are appointed. “Our principal is not coming from us... that one could be an issue and also a challenge... not only for the principal but also for the school,” they said. They told that choosing someone unfamiliar could cause difficulties in building trust, rapport and authority. In fact, IPB stated that even when considering vice principal candidates, they preferred internal options over those transferring from other units, unless the school in question was brand new or newly erected. This shows a strong institutional bias toward internal promotion as a safeguard against relational and cultural disruptions.

“...so from [an] outsider, [who was] appointed, bec[a]me the principal, and then I think that one could be an issue and also a challenge, not only for the principal himself or herself, but also for the school because when the principal needs to lead a group of teachers and then these teachers are not willing to be led by a certain person... it will be better if you would like to get the principal, you get from your own team. It is easier for the other members to accept this one. The same thing happen[ed] with me when I would like to choose the VP...I also ha[d] a suggestion from the other members to choose from other units...for example, there is someone from another unit would like to move to our unit is a potential one. And I do agree he or she can become a good VP... but then, it could be a problem in the future. So better, I choose from my own team...” – IPB

#### **4.1.4.4 Mentorship and Informal Leadership Preparation**

The fourth theme to emerge here is the mentorship and informal leadership preparation. Mentorship, in general, has an imperative role in both principals’ development, though it was largely informal. IPA described being mentored through weekly meetings and guidance from directors and foundation members. “We are being guided by the directors... and then every week we have these kinds of meetings... professional development... is more informal,” they shared. Instead of structured leadership programs, the school relies on these ongoing interactions to shape leadership readiness. This approach, while effective in some ways, may lack the consistency and rigor of a formal training curriculum.

IPB experienced a more personalized mentorship process. They were asked, "What strategies does your school employ to ensure a smooth transition when principals change?" They mentioned that their former principal would introduce them to the external

stakeholders and involve them in key responsibilities to facilitate their leadership transition and get them ready. “He would ask me to accompany him when he has meeting in governmental institution... at least I have already known the other principals,” they explained. This exposure to such activities would provide practical preparation and immersion into stakeholder engagement, parent communication and administrative duties. Principal B regarded this as a hands-on mentoring, which they see as instrumental in preparing for the demands of principalship and cited it as a model worth replicating.

#### **4.1.4.5 Practical Experience Over Formal Leadership Training**

The fifth theme to emerge here is the pragmatic approach of leadership over formal leadership training. Both school leaders did recognize that leadership development in their school tends to be or something based on practical experience rather than a formal instruction. IPA described this approach as “learning by doing,” or something pragmatic, which shows its benefits but also acknowledges its limitations: “That is something good, but at the same time, challenging as well.” They added that formal leadership training was that “rare” and “mostly” focused on curriculum and teaching rather than leadership or managerial skills. Hence, this shows that limited leadership training leaves future leaders coping with the leadership challenges without structured support such as any leadership training.

IPB, meanwhile, shared similar concerns, which she noted that training sessions usually focus on theoretical content rather than practical application. “Maybe it is more theoretical, not really practical... we need something which is more practical,” the principal stressed, believing that it is important for them to have a greater exposure to leadership roles and responsibilities as a means of preparation to succeed in a leadership position, such as principalship. Their preference for immersive practice over formal instruction which for is theoretical was reinforced and then suggested by their own experience being trained through activity involvement and real-life problem solving, showing that these principals deal and handle leadership pragmatically and these perspectives are giving an emphasis of a school culture that prioritizes experiential learning but may benefit from integrating more formal and systematic leadership training, which they thought that it may prepare them for leadership roles.

#### **4.1.4.6 Selection Influenced by Stakeholder Consensus and Observation**

The sixth theme to emerge here is the selection influenced by the stakeholder consensus and observation. Both Indonesian principals are aware about the role of stakeholder input in the selection process, although the level of involvement technically differed. IPA described a top-heavy model where key decisions are made and decided by

upper management and the school's foundation: "Selecting a principal... all the stakeholders need to meet and discuss... foundations, members, the directors, the HR." However, they also mentioned feeling excluded from the process: "I was not involved directly... but I believe it will involve all the stakeholders." What this means is that although decisions are made by top management, this remains centralized and opaque to mid-level leaders.

IPB mentioned a more participatory picture at the vice principal selection stage, which they believe in a team consensus and collective deliberation. "I choose my VP based on their performance and also based on the result of discussion," they explained. Nevertheless, when it comes to appointing the principal, higher authorities still retain final decision-making power. "The director of curriculum, together with the foundation members, will choose who among the names will be chosen as the VP... then there is a bigger opportunity to become the principal." It shows here that there is a collaborative selection at lower levels, but centralized control and selection at the top.

#### **4.1.4.7 Criteria for Principals: Performance, Consistency and Character**

The seventh theme to emerge here is the criteria for principals. Both Indonesian principals stated that it is important to have multiple criteria for leadership selection. For IPA, experience is foundational and yet the most important: "We cannot... select a principal from a new teacher... it must be someone who has been teaching... more than even ten years." Beyond experience, they stated that emotional consistency and leadership behavior also matter. "Being a leader... when you are not consistent in terms of mood, in terms of personal attitude... that is going to be a difficult problem," they stressed. The underlying assumption is that effective leadership is as much about personal integrity and reliability as it is about competence.

IPB agreed with this but introduced an additional filter: the motivation to serve. "You also need a willingness. With your sincere heart to serve," they said. They recognized that many teachers are intellectually capable, but not all are genuinely committed to leadership responsibilities. This idea of "willingness" goes beyond skills to include character and intent. IPB also recognized challenges in balancing seniority with performance, stating: "If you get the seniors, you get it, but the performance [will be] up and down... If you get someone whose performance is good... usually this one is a young teacher." This shows a leadership dilemma that the school continually faces.

#### **4.1.4.8 Succession Challenges and Dilemmas**

The seventh theme to emerge here is the challenges and dilemmas in succession. In spite of succession planning, both Indonesian principals admitted that leadership transitions

are not always smooth or well-prepared. IPA remarked that some transitions appear sudden to those directly affected, though top management may have planned in advance. “Maybe they already discussed it before,” they speculated. Still, IPA believed that the school is now taking a more deliberate approach: “They are already observing someone, grooming someone... so when it comes to my turn to leave... they already have some candidates.”

IPB painted a more cautious picture in this sense, which she raised concerns about unpreparedness in case of sudden resignation. “If I resign in a short period of time... maybe they are not prepared yet,” they warned, following that there may be a dilemma when choosing a successor. IPB also stated the importance of having clearer policies such as leadership term limits and having an open recruitment internally. This Indonesian principal considered and recommended to institutionalize succession planning rather than rely solely on informal observation or interpersonal judgments.

"The school will have a bit difficulty to find the substitute if I resign in a short period of time... If you would like to get the seniors, you get it, but the performance [might be different]. If you would like to get someone who's performance is good, consistent, usually this one is a young teacher..., you might have another issue, [the] challenge [might come] from the senior teachers, so just like this one is dilemma for you."

– IPB

#### **4.1.4.9 Triangulation of Results**

No document was located and shown in a school in Indonesia. This means that there is a lack of formal mechanisms to guarantee leadership continuity. The absence of a succession plan in Indonesia shows an indication of reliance on pragmatic, informal, or reactive methods for leadership transitions.

A school in Indonesia, where there is an absence of a succession plan, may lead to potential gaps in leadership pipeline planning. This difference shows the importance of having a clearly articulated and institutionally supported succession planning strategy through a document. The context of Indonesia may benefit from it by developing such a formal plan to ensure sustainable leadership practices.

**Table 4.3.** Philippine and Indonesian comparison of succession planning practices as per findings.

<b>Dimension</b>	<b>Philippines</b>	<b>Indonesia</b>
Existence of Succession Plan	Documented formal succession plan found in one school	No formal document presented; practices are mostly informal and top-down
Nature of Succession Planning	Structured and proactive; involves phases (assess, evaluate, develop)	Reactive or evolving; school uses <i>kaderisasi</i> (grooming), but generally informal
Transition Preparedness	Often unplanned or only partly planned; appointments were sudden or loosely mentored	Mixed – one unplanned (top-down decision), another planned (via VP role)
Leadership Pipeline	Mid-level leaders are included in planning; mentoring and task delegation used	Vice Principals seen as main pool for succession; expected to learn all operational aspects
Mentorship and Development	Active mentorship, leadership camps, training, internal delegation	Informal mentorship by former leaders and directors; lacks structured leadership training
Candidate Preference	Strong preference for internal candidates to preserve culture and continuity	Strong preference for internal candidates; external hires viewed as potentially disruptive
Selection Criteria	KPIs, teaching experience, leadership skills, character, integrity, school value alignment	Teaching experience, performance, character, willingness to serve, emotional consistency
Formal and Informal Approaches	Hybrid: Formal process with informal elements like reflective conversations and mentorship	Mostly informal: Top-down planning, guided exposure, observation-based readiness
Challenges and Risks Identified	Emotional burnout, lack of collaboration, transparency, unqualified appointments, internal conflict	Lack of clear policies, performance-seniority dilemma, stakeholder resistance, limited training

## 4.2 Discussion

Succession planning indeed is necessary for organizations to ensure that there is stability and continuity through the process and identification and development of internal talent (Conger & Fulmer, 2003). As such, Neefe (2009) not only argued, but strongly believed that the education sector is slow in adopting models of succession planning from other fields, which the researcher who wrote this thesis would agree with, drawing their

argument based on the existing literature about succession planning from other fields up to seeing the novelty and gaps. Therefore, the researcher focused on exploring and investigating the perceptions and experiences of private school principals toward the concept of so-called succession planning. The researcher was also able to explore the succession practices in private schools in the Philippines and Indonesia. It revealed similarities and divergences in terms of approach, institutional readiness, perceptions and leadership preparation. The results, thus, showed that while these two countries are aware of the necessity and urgency of succession planning, the level of formalization structure and implementation may differ and vary significantly between the Philippines and Indonesia.

The researcher also addressed the important components of succession planning drawn from the framework of Chavez (2011): (a) identification of talent; (b) development of talent; (c) retention of talent; (d) organizational culture. By understanding the perceptions, lived experiences and practices of private school principals in the Philippines and Indonesia, education sector in general, be it private or public, can adopt, draft and propose effective, formalized and structured succession plans and develop programs for potential leaders. It is to achieve the needs of school organizations and education sector in general, through the framework of succession plan. Though a private school in the Philippines presented a succession planning model, a private school in Indonesia can adopt this model according to their organizational needs to better prepare the aspiring leaders to ensure if a certain school leader leaves, they will be prepared at any time.

#### **4.2.1 How Principals Defined Succession Planning in the Philippines and Indonesia**

Succession planning, as defined by school principals in the Philippines and Indonesia, emerges as a strategic and proactive mechanism framed for leadership continuity and organizational stability. In the Philippine context, principals defined succession planning as a sustainable, forward-thinking approach embedded within institutional policy and daily practice. Their definition supports Chavez's (2011) framework, particularly in its focus on leadership readiness and organizational culture, likewise this proactive approach is also consistent with Atalla et al. (2024), who asserted that identifying leadership gaps early and preparing successors hones the institutional and leadership growth and readiness. Principals recognized that succession planning helps to avoid the school operations to interrupt, especially during transitions brought about by the resignations or retirements of key leaders. Additionally, Parfitt (2022) defines succession planning not as a replacement mechanism but as a strategic, future-oriented process for building a pipeline of school leaders; how the principal defined it reflected on Parfitt (2022)'s definition than succession

as a proactive capacity-building rather than a reactive substitution of leaders. This proactive orientation of succession rooted from the foundation on embedding succession planning with school-wide strategic planning to ascertain that there is leadership continuity.

Meanwhile, Indonesian principals revealed a more varied understanding of succession planning. While IPB described a formalized and intentional grooming process known as *kaderisasi*, IPA observed it as largely reactive and it is merely initiated from the upper management with limited mid-level input. This top-down approach demonstrates a disconnect between strategic planning and operational execution, a misalignment that may hinder institutional resilience. These mentioned discrepancies are not congruent with the participatory and systemic succession model proposed by Arrieta et al. (2022), which showed the importance of engaging multiple stakeholders in leadership development and aligning succession with institutional identity and vision. The Indonesian experience suggests that while there may be implicit succession processes, their effectiveness is diminished without structured communication and shared ownership.

The dual definitions across both countries reflect broader patterns in the literature. In sectors like business and nursing, succession planning is widely regarded as a deliberate, long-term investment in human capital (Phillips, 2020; Vincent, 2017). However, in education, particularly in Southeast Asia, succession planning remains underdeveloped (Arrieta & Ancho, 2020; Parfitt, 2017a, 2017b, 2022). This gap underscores Sabina and Colwell's (2018) concerns that without formal succession strategies, schools risk instability, loss of institutional knowledge and compromised leadership transitions. The findings showed that it reaffirms this evident critique that while Philippine schools showed some awareness and documentation of succession plans, the Indonesian schools lacked formalized documents altogether, which reflected the broader regional lag in adopting structured succession frameworks.

The researcher learned that the private school principals in the Philippines and Indonesia acknowledge that there is the necessity and urgency of succession planning in schools, but they are different in terms of how it is understood and operationalized. The disparity highlights the need for educational institutions to evolve from reactive approaches to proactive strategies. While business and healthcare sectors have institutionalized succession planning with measurable outcomes and performance indicators (Salehi et al., 2024; Schepker et al., 2018), educational institutions, especially in the Global South, are still catching up. The absence of a unified understanding and implementation model suggests an urgent need for capacity building and policy reforms to institutionalize

succession planning in schools, with guidance from contextually relevant models such as those of Chavez (2011) and Arrieta et al. (2022).

#### **4.2.2 Succession Practices: Structure and Informality**

The current practices in succession planning across Philippine and Indonesian private schools reflect a continuum from structured systems to informal, ad hoc approaches. In the Philippines, the school presented a formal succession plan aligned with Chavez's (2011) and Parfitt's (2022) dimensions of leadership readiness and talent management. The plan included career development tools, competency assessments and targeted training interventions, clearly showing that there is practical application of structured succession frameworks seen in other fields (Atalla et al., 2024; Rothwell, 2015). These formal efforts are also congruent with Arrieta et al.'s (2022) emphasis on policy clarity, vision-mission alignment and institutional preparation. Conversely, in Indonesia, succession practices leaned heavily toward informal mentorship and practical exposure, such as assigning vice principals and inviting them to external meetings. This reactive, top-down model shows very limited institutionalization and mirrors the findings of Sumintono et al. (2015) regarding the bureaucratic leadership structures in Indonesia.

Despite some formal efforts, both contexts demonstrate a reliance on informal conversations, mentorship and stakeholder observation in leadership preparation and selection. In the Philippines, leadership identification begins with relational strategies, gauging interest and "getting the pulse" of promising teachers who are considered potential leaders, rather than relying solely on structured evaluations. This hybrid model supports the findings in Catholic schools, where leadership development is normally informal and personalized (Canavan, 2001; Butler et al., 2014). However, inconsistency was seen as a risk and the potential favoritism, as informal approaches may lack transparency and objectivity. Sabina and Colwell (2018) warned that such informal mechanisms can lead to tension between internal and external candidates, while Lashway (2003) warned that without structured mentoring, transitions may be uneven and stressful for new leaders.

Retention strategies, particularly in the Philippine case, reflect a strong recognition of professional development as essential for leader longevity. Supports are provided by the school such as graduate studies, healthcare benefits and spiritual retreats to nurture the leadership capacity and well-being. These practices align with Chavez's (2011) framework on talent management and organizational support, and likewise, reflect Atalla et al.'s (2024) findings that career development hones leader performance and commitment. Indonesian schools, nevertheless, presented fewer formal retention structures, which they mostly rely on practical applications of leadership (pragmatic) and director-led mentorship.

This discrepancy shows a key limitation in succession planning within Indonesian private education: without institutionalized support systems, leadership retention and preparedness may be compromised.

Interestingly, despite these emerging practices, succession planning in education remains underdeveloped compared to business and nursing sectors. In those mentioned fields, succession strategies are mostly integrated into human resource systems and it is complete with performance indicators and transition plans (Phillips, 2020; Vincent, 2017). While some educational institutions are on the process of formalization and adoption of succession practices from other fields, others continue to depend on experience-based pathways without standardized guidance. This aperture reflects what Parfitt (2017a, 2017b) mentioned as education's slow adoption of succession planning, showing the urgency for more contextually grounded and systematically applied models.

#### **4.2.3 Identification and Preparation of Future Principals**

In both countries, identifying and preparing future leaders begins with performance observation, mentorship and gradual role delegation. Parfitt (2022) considered targeted development and mentoring a critical phase of succession, cautioning against generic training and instead supporting stretch assignments, coaching and leadership role exposure. The Philippine principals emphasized the use of exposure, delegating responsibilities, inviting teachers to decision-making forums and monitoring leadership potential through KPIs. These practices strongly reflect the leadership readiness and talent management dimensions of Chavez's (2011) model and are consistent with the coaching and mentorship strategies advocated by Van Nieuwerburgh et al. (2020). Furthermore, the Philippine school's formal succession plan includes competency-based worksheets and reflection tools, which mirror the leadership standards and holistic development principles promoted by Arrieta et al. (2022), particularly in aligning spiritual and professional preparation.

In contrast, the Indonesian principals primarily emphasized informal mentorship and experiential learning. Practical experience (pragmatic approach) and director guidance were the main strategies for grooming candidates. For instance, a principal was asked to accompany their predecessor to external meetings as a preparation mechanism. However, there was little evidence of structured assessments or competency frameworks guiding this process. The heavy and sole reliance on "learning by doing," while pragmatic, lacks the predictive indicators or developmental roadmaps seen in more structured systems. This divergence from Chavez's (2011) focus on structured development exposes that there shows a gap in leadership readiness and reveals a potential weakness in leadership pipelines in Indonesian schools. The literature from business (Schepker et al., 2018) and nursing

(Phillips, 2020) stated the importance of pre-defined leadership competencies and systematic preparation, elements largely absent in the Indonesian model.

As for selection criteria, both Philippine and Indonesian principals agreed that multiple attributes should guide appointments; experience, performance, emotional consistency, character and cultural alignment. Interestingly, the prioritization of internal candidates in both contexts was driven by a belief in cultural continuity, familiarity with institutional history and trust from stakeholders. Parfitt (2022) positions organizational culture as a central pillar of succession planning, asserting that leadership development must be congruent with the school's identity to be effective. Internal promotions preserve cultural alignment, institutional memory and staff trust; all of which contribute to higher retention of high-performing leaders, another pillar in Parfitt's framework. Also, multi-rater assessments and potential-focused evaluations are needed, not just the past performance (Parfitt, 2022). These views are congruent with Rothwell's (2015) assertion that succession criteria must align with organizational goals and values, and Parfitt (2022), as he stated that holistic evaluations assure that selected candidates possess both technical competence and alignment with the school's evolving mission. Yet, both countries also identified dilemmas: in Indonesia, appointing young high performers risked conflict with senior teachers, while Philippine principals highlighted the emotional burden of the leadership role, which may discourage aspirants. These present the urgency for clearer and more inclusive succession criteria that balance merit, performance and institutional harmony.

The findings also raise critical contradictions with the literature. While structured frameworks advocate for formal, competency-based succession (Arrieta et al., 2022; Chavez, 2011), many schools, especially in Indonesia, continue to rely on informal, opaque methods. Furthermore, there is little alignment with the performance management systems found in other sectors (Atalla et al., 2024; Salehi et al., 2024). This disjunction may lead to the urgency of educational policy reform and leadership development initiatives that are not only strategic but contextually sensitive to the realities of school environments.

#### **4.2.4 Challenges and Concerns in the Succession Process**

Filipino and Indonesian principals state that there are some persistent challenges they experienced such as emotional strain, leadership burnout, internal conflicts and the absence of clear and well-defined policy guidelines within their respective school organizations. Parfitt (2022) stated in his framework that effective succession planning has documented procedures, role-specific leadership exposure and transition protocols to circumvent the so-called disruption in leadership roles. In the Philippines, the sudden promotion of vice principals to principalship without sufficient onboarding implies a disruptive impact of

unplanned transitions as the FPA expressed anxiety and unpreparedness, while revealing their emotional and operational toll of abrupt leadership changes or promotion stated an absence of structured onboarding, which Parfitt (2022) warned of that can undermine a leader's confidence. This emotional burden that these leaders experienced during transitions reveals that there must be a clearer handover mechanisms and communication, both key recommendations in Parfitt's (2022) framework to safeguard smooth leadership change. These concerns support Lashway's (2003) critique of "sink-or-swim" leadership transitions and reflect the psychological vulnerability noted by Van Nieuwerburgh et al. (2020). Without structured handovers or mentoring, even capable leaders may struggle to adopt, an issue that undermines Chavez's (2011) leadership readiness dimension.

Indonesia faced similar concerns. While IPA mentioned about a deliberate grooming process, both principals acknowledged and believed that there is an absence of backup plans in the event of sudden resignations. This fragility shows the presence of systemic gaps and raises questions about institutional resilience without a structured succession plan. IPB described a leadership dilemma: while older candidates lack consistency, younger candidates, despite strong performance, may face resistance from senior staff. These relational tensions resemble what Salehi et al. (2024) referred to as "succession evasion," organizational behaviors that obstruct leadership development through fear, talent suppression, or interpersonal conflict. Such dynamics not only discourage aspiring leaders but also compromise succession planning's very purpose.

Concerns related to selection transparency and collaborative decision-making also surfaced prominently in both the Philippine and Indonesian contexts. In the Philippines, internal conflict among leaders and mismatched leadership styles between co-principals, were reported as serious challenges. Similarly, in Indonesia, the final selection authority solely lied upon and rested with upper management or foundations as they normally exclude the mid-level leaders from the decision-making process. This centralized model of governance stands in contrast to Arrieta et al.'s (2022) support for participatory leadership structures and transparent institutional policies. The tendency to prioritize the emotional compatibility over formalized criteria in leadership appointments may have the possibility to lead to a persistent gap between official leadership goals and on-the-ground practices.

Retention challenges are another critical area. Emotional exhaustion, insufficient compensation and lack of growth opportunities were cited by principals in both contexts. These challenges echo research from nursing and public sectors, where burnout and lack of support are primary reasons for leadership attrition (Mitchell, 2014; Phillips, 2020). While some Philippine schools addressed this with development programs and support

systems, Indonesian schools revealed fewer institutionalized retention mechanisms. The differences show varying organizational cultures and this stresses Chavez's (2011) argument that a strong, supportive culture is foundational to effective succession planning. Without it, schools risk leadership gaps that disrupt educational outcomes and long-term sustainability.

#### **4.2.5 Strategies for Succession: Leadership Style, Internal Promotion and Retention**

To assure that leadership continuity is observed, both Philippine and Indonesian schools implement a combination of formal and informal strategies in their succession process. In the Philippines, structured professional development programs, coaching and clear succession documentation were the key strategies. FPA'S statement about needing an ongoing mentorship as a novice leader shows the importance of continuous support. These efforts resonate with Chavez's (2011) focus on talent management and Arrieta et al.'s (2022) focus on a vision-aligned professional growth. The emotional well-being support and institutionalized training grants signify an understanding that retention strategies are integral to succession that is why supports are available and provided for the school leaders. These initiatives mirror best practices from nursing and business sectors, where succession is closely linked to career development and institutional commitment (Atalla et al., 2024; Schepker et al., 2018).

In Indonesia, succession strategies are less formalized but revolve around mentoring and stakeholder engagement. The use of vice principal roles as a pool leadership pipeline and the exposure of future leaders to governmental and administrative roles and duties indicate a reliance on experiential and pragmatic learning to prepare someone to become a principal. IPB's approach and strategy of gradually involving vice principals in school operations and duties reflect a hands-on approach but, the lack of leadership-specific training and standardized preparation protocols can indicate that leadership development is not always intentional or yet strategic. The gap mentioned here contradicts Arrieta et al.'s (2022) research that calls for structured leadership formation aligned with institutional identity and points to the need for clearer policy integration.

Leadership styles also shape how succession planning is implemented. In both countries, a relational and transformational leadership approach, rooted in trust-building, cultural alignment and mentoring, is seen to have helped contribute to the succession planning. This aligns with Cruickshank (2018), who believed that transformational leadership hones institutional performance and supports the development of successors through empowerment but, sole reliance on individual leadership traits may be insufficient when systemic structures are lacking. Therefore, if the educational organizations or

educational system, in general, is lacking the standardized tools and evaluation frameworks for succession planning, this concept can only be overly dependent on the goodwill and personal commitment of the current school leaders. This overreliance may raise concerns about sustainability and consistency.

While the Philippine schools have already had integrating succession planning into institutional systems, but Indonesian schools remain largely reliant on informal models and practical applications. The absence of documented succession plans in Indonesia contrasts sharply with the triangulated evidence from the Philippines. This discrepancy stresses the importance of Chavez's (2011) recommendation for embedding succession planning within the institutions' structure and policy. Besides, education must move beyond ad hoc practices and adopt the sector-specific strategies, which are informed by cross-sectoral perspectives yet adopted to the unique culture, values and realities of schools that not only other sectors can have succession planning, but this is adaptable in education as the phenomenon of leadership gap arises.

## **CHAPTER V**

### **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Summary**

This paper examined and investigated the succession planning practices in private schools in the Philippines and Indonesia. The researcher purposively selected the principals as the main participants on the grounds that they are the ones who have the lived experiences on the process, from onboarding to assuming the leadership roles. As the researcher mentioned in the introduction, their thesis statement is that the education sector must now recognize and adopt succession planning as part of the organizational process and other succession planning models to ensure that schools are proactive and prepared for some unexpected leadership challenges.

The researcher focused on how school leaders identify, prepare, appoint and retain potential candidates for principalship to have leadership continuity and circumvent leadership turnovers. Also, the researcher deemed this research an endeavor as they were able to delve into the literature, which the researcher stemmed their argument from, deductively up to the field of education until finding the novelty and gap. They pursue this field research on succession planning. The gap stemmed from the meager literature of succession planning helped the researcher see the novelty of the research and formulate their thesis statement and the certain gap is reckoned as both knowledge and practical gap.

The findings revealed an evident, significant and marked contrast between the two countries. In the Philippines, succession planning, while not always formalized, but available, is evident in actual practices within the organization. The school, especially its principals, is engaged in leadership grooming through mentorship, assigning Officer-in-Charge (OIC) roles to sub-unit level of leadership, encouraging professional development and gradually preparing potential successors over time. Assignment of these roles to the sub-unit level of leadership fosters trust in the potential ones and gets them familiarized with the roles while the incumbent principal is away. These practices show an evident relational and proactive approach to leadership continuity, even without centralized policy mandates from the top management. However, a private school in Indonesia generally lacks structured or even informal succession planning processes in its structure, as a succession planning document was not located in this school. Leadership transitions are mostly abrupt, with limited preparation or grooming for successors or potential candidates, showing that the process here is a reactive approach that depends heavily and normally on immediate necessity rather than long-term strategic planning.

## 5.2 Conclusion

The presence of succession planning practices in a Philippine private school can show that its school leaders, including the previous ones who initiated it, are aware of the importance of leadership continuity, showing that they are proactive leaders who believe that they need to prepare for leadership transitions and expect that leadership turnovers may happen at any time. The Filipino principals actively identify promising individuals within their institutions and provide them the professional or leadership development opportunities, including temporary leadership roles and formal training internally and externally. This approach is congruent with the succession planning framework of Chavez's (2011), which puts importance on the talent identification, development and retention of leaders.

The succession metaphor of "courtship" used by the researcher aptly captures this deliberate, personalized process. In contrast, an Indonesian private school demonstrated either a reliance on top-down appointments without leadership development, or an absence of transition planning altogether. No significant evidence was found of leadership pipelines, mentoring, or capacity-building structures. The stark differences here suggest that succession planning as a strategic concept has yet to be widely recognized or practiced in Indonesian private school settings.

## 5.3 Study Implications

The findings of this comparative case study hold several implications for policy, leadership development and school governance in Southeast Asia, particularly in the Philippines and Indonesia. First, the proactive and structured approach explored and observed in the Philippine private school context states the very importance of integrating succession planning into school leadership frameworks, showing that resolute proactivity is a solution to foil unexpected leadership turnovers. This suggests that educational institutions must move beyond ad hoc or reactive practices and adopt systematic and structured strategies that include identification, mentorship and preparation of future leaders. This prudence of a school organization shows a circumspect orientation that they are vulnerable to such challenges. Schools that embed succession planning as part of their organizations' processes are better positioned that leadership continuity is guaranteed, cultural coherence is maintained and unexpected transitions are responded without compromising institutional stability.

Second, the case of the Indonesian private school, as evidently stated in the results, needs a policy intervention, institutional capacity-building, and leadership training programs. The reliance on informal norms, such as seniority or *kaderisasi*, without formal

leadership pipelines, may inhibit sustainable leadership development. Therefore, this study suggests that both governmental and non-governmental educational stakeholders in Indonesia should prioritize the development of clear, transparent and competency-based leadership succession policies. Leadership training programs, therefore, must be institutionalized, with built-in succession planning components and ongoing support mechanisms that guarantee leadership readiness at all levels.

This study can be contributory to the limited literature on succession planning in Southeast Asia by providing grounded perspectives from two under-examined contexts. It calls for broader regional collaboration in establishing best practices, building leadership pipelines and sharing resources among schools, especially in under-resourced and developing settings. The integration or adoption of context-specific models can frame schools' decisions and give practical guidance that school leaders, administrators and policymakers can adopt to suit their institutional cultures and needs. Thus, the study encourages educational systems to treat leadership succession not as a contingency but as an essential pillar of school sustainability and improvement.

#### **5.4 Challenges Experienced**

One of the challenges experienced by the researcher was to coordinate the interview schedules with the school principals in both the Philippines and Indonesia. Due to their workloads and responsibilities, these principals had limited availability, especially during peak academic periods such as graduation preparations, leadership meetings and other crucial agendas. In the Philippines, the researcher waited roughly four to five days after sending the initial invitation before receiving a response or confirming a schedule for semi-structured interviews via *Zoom*. In Indonesia, the process proved to be even more time-consuming, with responses taking between one to two weeks. The delays significantly extended the timeline for the data collection, as interviews could not proceed without the confirmed appointments with the principals.

Despite the delays, the researcher remained committed to conducting the interviews in an ethical and respectful manner, as they fully recognized the heavy demands on the participants' time, especially since they are the ones who have leadership roles. Understanding that school leaders normally operate within hectic and rigid schedules, the researcher exercised patience and flexibility. There were instances when follow-up reminders were necessary, but the researcher refrained from excessive follow-ups to avoid appearing intrusive or burdensome. The process was able to reinforce an important lesson in qualitative research, that gaining access to participants, particularly those in leadership

positions, requires empathy, perseverance and respect for their autonomy and professional responsibilities of their job.

The researcher also recognized that some factors in the field are beyond one's control, such as participants' availability and willingness to participate within a desired timeframe. Nonetheless, the researcher waited for the school principals until they were readily available, while maintaining open communication and expressing gratitude for their eventual cooperation for this study. This experience, while deemed challenging by the novice researcher, led to successful and meaningful and insightful interviews. It demonstrated the importance of adoptability in the research fieldwork and showing the value of building rapport and trust with the principal participants, especially when researching sensitive or high-stakes topics such as leadership succession in their contexts.

### **5.5 Research Limitations**

It is not the researcher's intention to glean the findings presented here, but this thesis is a report from the study conducted by the researcher. Readers should acknowledge that the findings of this study do not infer that all school organizations are either proactive or reactive, and schools have varied approaches in handling and managing succession processes. Several limitations ought to be understood and thereby acknowledged in this study. First, the research was confined to two specific urban locations: Imus City in the Philippines and South Tangerang in Indonesia, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to rural or other educational contexts; both of these cities are close to the metropolitan capital of their respective countries. Second, the researcher focused exclusively on private schools, thus excluding public institutions that may operate under very different regulatory and cultural conditions. Third, the reliance on qualitative methods such as interviews and document analysis introduces potential subjectivity and restricts quantifiable generalizations of the study. Convolution on culture, language differences and access constraints may have also influenced the breadth, depth and framing of the data collected by the researcher. The scant existing literature on educational leadership succession planning, particularly in Southeast Asia, posed challenges in comparative synthesis; the reader should therefore acknowledge and read the significance of the study of this thesis and literature review to know more and understand how succession planning has been rarely researched, especially in the field of education.

### **5.6 Recommendations**

In light of the findings shown above, the researcher offers the following recommendations. First, the Philippine private schools should build on their existing informal practices by developing more structured and institutionalized succession planning

frameworks. These better include the formal leadership identification mechanisms, mentorship programs and career development pathways linked to strategic school goals. Second, Indonesian private schools need to urgently recognize the value of succession planning and begin integrating leadership development into their organizational priorities. Initial steps can include identifying potential leaders within the school, who offer targeted training and establishing transition protocols. Third, education policymakers, especially the public sector of education and accrediting bodies in both countries, should include succession planning as a component in school evaluation and leadership assessment standards. Fourth, partnerships between private schools and higher education institutions can help deliver formal training modules and certification programs for future school leaders. Therefore, schools should foster and thereby support leadership cultures that value continuity, preparation and shared responsibility to reduce reliance on emergency and abrupt appointments.

### **5.7 Future Directions**

As Neefe (2009) and Parfitt (2017a, 2017b) argued, educational organizations or the sector itself is slow in adopting models of succession planning from other fields. This study confirmed that a school organization in the Philippines is proactive, and was able to present a comprehensive succession plan in place, while a school organization in Indonesia is reactive, and was not able to present any records of the succession process or any plan for how they managed the process. Results reflected their strengths and weaknesses in having succession plan as part of their organizations' processes.

Building on the findings of this thesis, future research should expand the scope beyond private schools to include public educational institutions where succession planning is often constrained by rigid bureaucracies, outdated policies, or leadership turnovers and shortages, and even to see how politics, whether internally and externally, influences or affects the school operations and governance. Investigating the differences between public and private sectors can give a more comprehensive view of how succession planning mechanisms function or fail under different governance structures. A multi-site case study, which encompasses both rural and urban settings, could even reveal context-specific challenges and innovations in leadership transitions that are not visible in single-site studies. The findings show that there is a need for research focusing on the impact of informal leadership pipelines.

Future studies may explore the perspectives of middle leaders and teachers, and also consider using mixed-methods approaches, though Parfitt's (2017a) dissertation employed a mixed methods study, to quantify the impact of succession planning on school outcomes

such as teacher retention, student performance and organizational stability. Quantitative perspectives, such as the turnover rates or leadership pipeline effectiveness, could complement qualitative results and improve the generalizability of findings. Longitudinal research that tracks the development and appointment of potential school leaders over time would also deepen understanding of how succession planning evolves in practice. Likewise, testing the instrument of succession planning created by Parfitt (2017b) to prove its validity and reliability that the said instrument can be of help to researchers, to even see its effectiveness.

There is significant potential to further develop and validate frameworks within broader regional contexts in Southeast Asia. Future studies may localize these models to reflect spiritual, cultural and institutional values that are unique to Muslim-majority or pluralistic societies, Indonesia as a good example. This would bridge the theory-practice gap in leadership development and provide tailored solutions to education systems grappling with leadership sustainability. Scholars, policymakers and school organizations should therefore collaborate to institutionalize research-informed succession planning policies that prepare the next generation of school leaders with foresight, resilience and strategic alignment.

## REFERENCES

- Abdullah, Z., Samah, S. A. A., Jusoff, K., & Isa, P. M. (2009). Succession Planning in Malaysian Institution of Higher Education. *International Education Studies*, 2(1), 129–132.
- Abutabenjeh, S., & Jaradat, R. (2018). Clarification of research design, research methods, and research methodology: A guide for public administration researchers and practitioners. *Teaching public administration*, 36(3), 237–258.
- Aedi, N. (2014). Leadership succession in Pesantren. *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 1(2), 247–262.
- Ahmad, A. R., Keerio, N., Jameel, A. S., & Karem, M. A. (2020a). The Relationship between National Culture and Succession Planning in Malaysian Public Universities. *Journal of Education and E-Learning Research*, 7(3), 242–249.
- Ahmad, A. R., Ming, T. Z., & Sapry, H. R. M. (2020b). Effective Strategy for Succession Planning in Higher Education Institutions. *Journal of Education and e-Learning Research*, 7(2), 203–208.
- Al Hajri, A. K. (2024). Succession Planning and Leadership Development in Nursing: A Bibliometric Analysis (2000–2023). *Nursing Research and Practice*, 2024(1), 6191008. <https://doi.org/10.1155/2024/6191008>
- Arrieta, G. S., & Ancho, I. V. (2020). Ready or not: The experiences of novice academic heads in school leadership. *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research*, 19(5), 78–98.
- Arrieta, G. S., Barrameda, C. N., & Sudarsana, I. K. (2022). A succession planning model for academic heads. *Jurnal Penjaminan Mutu*, 8(1), 113–135.
- Ashghali-Farahani, M., Salehi, T., & Mirzaee, M. (2024). Content analysis of succession planning in nursing management: A qualitative study. *BMJ Leader*, leader-2024-000973. <https://doi.org/10.1136/leader-2024-000973>
- Associated Press. (2022, December 31). *Benedict's resignation sparked calls for retirement protocol*. <https://apnews.com/article/benedict-xvi-vatican-the-two-popes-0abdf0c3f85289d91e4970d5f3aaa58>
- Atalla, A., Elbassal, N., & Elseesy, N. (2024). Linking Succession Planning to Nurses' Performance Management: The Mediating Role of Career Development. *Alexandria Scientific Nursing Journal*, 26(1), 117–130. <https://doi.org/10.21608/asalexu.2024.354349>
- Atwood, C. (2020). *Succession planning basics*. Association for Talent Development.

- Bailey, J. (2008). First steps in qualitative data analysis: transcribing. *Family practice, 25*(2), 127–131.
- Bakare, A. (2021). Succession planning as a developmental tool for sustainability. In *Human resource management practices for promoting sustainability* (pp. 56–72). IGI Global.
- Bano, Y., Omar, S. S., & Ismail, F. (2022). Succession planning best practices for organizations: A systematic literature review approach. *International Journal of Global Optimization and Its Application, 1*(1), 39–48.
- Barker, S. L. (1997). Is your successor in your schoolhouse? Finding principal candidates. *NASSP Bulletin, 81*(592), 85–91.
- Bartlett, L., & Vavrus, F. (2017). Comparative case studies: An innovative approach. *Nordic journal of comparative and international education (NJCIE), 1*(1).
- Barton, A. (2019). Preparing for leadership turnover in Christian higher education: Best practices in succession planning. *Christian Higher Education, 18*(1–2), 37–53.
- Beasley, S. F., & Ard, N. (2021). The future of nursing: Succession planning. *Teaching and Learning in Nursing, 16*(2), 105–109.
- Berke, D. (2005). *Succession planning and management: A guide to organizational systems and practices*. Center for Creative Leadership.
- Beycioglu, K., & Kondakci, Y. (2021). Organizational change in schools. *ECNU Review of Education, 4*(4), 788–807.
- Bhupathi, P. A., & Ravi, G. R. (2017). Comprehensive format of informed consent in research and practice: A tool to uphold the ethical and moral standards. *International journal of clinical pediatric dentistry, 10*(1), 73.
- Birt, L., Scott, S., Cavers, D., Campbell, C., & Walter, F. (2016). Member checking: a tool to enhance trustworthiness or merely a nod to validation?. *Qualitative health research, 26*(13), 1802–1811.
- Blank, R. K. (1987). The role of principal as leader: Analysis of variation in leadership of urban high schools. *The Journal of Educational Research, 81*(2), 69–80.
- Boris-Schacter, S., & Langer, S. (2006). *Balanced leadership: How effective principals manage their work*. Teachers College Press.
- Bowen, G. A. (2009). Document analysis as a qualitative research method. *Qualitative research journal, 9*(2), 27–40.
- Boyle, M. J., Haller, A., & Hunt, E. (2016). The leadership challenge: Preparing and developing Catholic school principals. *Journal of Catholic Education, 19*(3), 293–316.

- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative research in psychology*, 3(2), 77–101.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2021). Thematic analysis: a practical guide.
- Bray, M., Adamson, B., & Mason, M. (Eds.). (2014). *Comparative education research: Approaches and methods* (Vol. 19). Springer.
- Brock, B. L., & Grady, M. L. (2000). *Rekindling the flame: Principals combating teacher burnout*. Corwin Press.
- Brundrett, M., & Rhodes, C. (2010). *Leadership for quality and accountability in education*. Routledge.
- Burdick, B. (2024, October 8). Succession Planning for Public Finance Retirement Wave | ClearGov. *ClearGov | Transparency & Budgeting Software for Local Governments*. <https://cleargov.com/rc/article/local-government-finance-succession-planning>
- Bureau of Justice Assistance and Office of Community Oriented Policing Services. (2023). *Recruitment and Retention for the Modern Law Enforcement Agency: Revised*. Washington, DC: Office of Community Oriented Policing Services.
- Bush, T. (2011). Succession planning in England: New leaders and new forms of leadership. *School leadership & management*, 31(3), 181–198.
- Butler, H., Summers, B., & Tobin, M. (2014). A systems approach to enhancing the capacity of teachers and leaders in Catholic school communities to link learning, student wellbeing, values and social justice. *International handbook of learning, teaching and leading in faith-based schools*, 639–656.
- Canavan, K. (2001). Leadership Succession in Catholic Schools: Planned or Unplanned?. *Journal of Catholic Education*, 5(1), 72–84.
- Catechism of the Catholic Church. (1994). Libreria Editrice Vaticana
- Chavez, J. (2011). The case for succession planning. *Strategic Finance*, 92(8).
- Chia, C. K., Ghavifekr, S., & Razak, A. Z. A. (2021). Succession planning practices and challenges in Malaysia's public universities: A systematic review. *International Online Journal of Educational Leadership*, 5(1), 44–60.
- Cieminski, A. B. (2018). Practices That Support Leadership Succession and Principal Retention. *Education Leadership Review*, 19(1), 21–41.
- Cocklin, B., & Wilkinson, J. (2011). A case study of leadership transition: Continuity and change. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, 39(6), 661–675.
- Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2018). *Research methods in education* (8th ed.). Routledge.

- Conger, J. A., & Fulmer, R. M. (2003). Developing your leadership pipeline. *Harvard business review*, 81(12), 76–85.
- Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. (1998). The primacy of the successor of Peter in the mystery of the Church. Libreria Editrice Vaticana.
- Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2016). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches*. Sage publications.
- Crowe, S., Cresswell, K., Robertson, A., Huby, G., Avery, A., & Sheikh, A. (2011). The case study approach. *BMC Medical Research Methodology*, 11(1), 100. <https://doi.org/10.1186/1471-2288-11-100>
- Cruickshank, V. (2018). Capacity building and succession planning.
- Dake, L. (2021). *Crisis Management: Effective School Leadership to Avoid Early Burnout*. Rowman & Littlefield.
- Damer, L. (2020). *Successful talent management strategies business leaders use to improve succession planning* (Doctoral dissertation, Walden University).
- Dareh, J. (2004). Mentoring school leaders: professional promise or predictable problems?. *Educational administration quarterly*, 40(4), 495–517.
- Davis, S., Darling-Hammond, L., LaPointe, M., & Meyerson, D. (2005). Developing successful principals. *Stanford Educational Leadership Institute, Ed.*. Retrieved February, 20, 2009.
- De Villa, K. (2024, November 9). *More than half of PH public schools lack qualified principals*. Philippine Daily Inquirer. [https://plus.inquirer.net/news/more-than-half-of-ph-public-schools-lack-qualified-principals/?fbclid=IwZXh0bgNhZW0CMTEAAR0DEt-oUajGXnduKBg4bAsNzC-\\_xKS6PdNDIz6k5yssHJY2HYsleCZAYXQ\\_aem\\_HVEmHIiXlArLPiUChSrLpA](https://plus.inquirer.net/news/more-than-half-of-ph-public-schools-lack-qualified-principals/?fbclid=IwZXh0bgNhZW0CMTEAAR0DEt-oUajGXnduKBg4bAsNzC-_xKS6PdNDIz6k5yssHJY2HYsleCZAYXQ_aem_HVEmHIiXlArLPiUChSrLpA)
- Deloitte Insights. (2018, September 27). *The holy grail of effective leadership succession planning: How to overcome the succession planning paradox*. <https://www2.deloitte.com/us/en/insights/topics/leadership/effective-leadership-succession-planning.html>
- Denscombe, M. (2017). *EBOOK: The good research guide: For small-scale social research projects*. McGraw-Hill Education (UK).
- Department of Education. (2011). *DepEd Order No. 97, s. 2011: Revised Guidelines on the allocation and reclassification of school head positions*.

- Dinas Pendidikan Kabupaten Jember. (2024, October 24). *Kekurangan kepala sekolah dan pengawas di Jember; Dispendik percepat program Guru Penggerak*. Pemerintah Kabupaten Jember. <https://ppid.jemberkab.go.id/berita-ppid/detail/kekurangan-kepala-sekolah-dan-pengawas-di-jember-dispendik-percepat-program-guru-penggerak>
- Donmoyer, R., & Wagstaff, J. G. (1990). Principals can be effective managers and instructional leaders. *Nassp Bulletin*, 74(525), 20–29.
- EDCOM 2. (2024, November 8). Address 24,480 schools without principals; update 1997 policies for school staffing. Retrieved from <https://edcom2.gov.ph/address-24480-schools-without-principals-update-1997-policies-for-school-staffing/>
- EDCOM 2. (2025, January 20). EDCOM 2 set to release Year Two Report. Retrieved from <https://edcom2.gov.ph/edcom-2-set-to-release-year-two-report/>
- Ejakpomewhe, R. (2017). Influence of succession planning on knowledge transfer. Encyclopaedia Britannica. (2025, April 29). Papal conclave. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/papal-conclave>
- Forsting, R. M. (2018). *Raising Heirs to the Throne in Nineteenth-Century Spain: The Education of the Constitutional Monarch*. Springer.
- Fullan, M. (2005). *Sustainable leadership*. Corwin Press.
- Fusarelli, B. C., Fusarelli, L. D., & Riddick, F. (2018). Planning for the future: Leadership development and succession planning in education. *Journal of Research on Leadership Education*, 13(3), 286–313.
- Gabriel, P. I., Biriowu, C. S., & Dagogo, E. L. J. (2020). Examining succession and replacement planning in work organizations. *European Journal of Business and Management Research*, 5(2).
- Gawlik, M. A. (2015). Are you leaving? A case of succession in the Willow Tree Charter School. *Journal of Cases in Educational Leadership*, 18(2), 167–175.
- Ge, B., & Campopiano, G. (2022). Knowledge management in family business succession: Current trends and future directions. *Journal of Knowledge Management*, 26(2), 326–349.
- Gentilucci, J. L., & Muto, C. C. (2007). Principals' influence on academic achievement: The student perspective. *NASSP bulletin*, 91(3), 219–236.
- Gentry, W. A., Eckert, R. H., Stawiski, S. A., & Zhao, S. (2014). The challenges leaders face around the world: More similar than different. *Center for Creative Leadership White Paper*. Retrieved January, 6(2015), 10-35613.

- Gooden, M. A., Khalifa, M., Arnold, N. W., Brown, K. D., Meyers, C. V., & Welsh, R. O. (2023). *A Culturally Responsive School Leadership Approach to Developing Equity-Centered Principals: Considerations for Principal Pipeline*
- Gramerci. (2024, May 15). *Succession Planning: Preparing for tomorrow's leaders today*. <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/succession-planning-preparing-tomorrows-leaders-today-pvvke/>
- Griffith, A. I. (1998). Insider/outsider: Epistemological privilege and mothering work. *Human studies*, 21(4), 361–376.
- Gul, T., Demir, K., & Criswell, B. (2019). Constructing teacher leadership through mentoring: Functionality of mentoring practices in evolving teacher leadership. *Journal of Science Teacher Education*, 30(3), 209–228.
- Gülşen, C., & Gülenay, G. B. (2014). The principal and healthy school climate. *Social Behavior and Personality: an international journal*, 42(1), 93S-100S.
- Hagens, V., Dobrow, M. J., & Chafe, R. (2009). Interviewee transcript review: assessing the impact on qualitative research. *BMC medical research methodology*, 9, 1–8.
- Halcomb, E. J., & Davidson, P. M. (2006). Is verbatim transcription of interview data always necessary?. *Applied nursing research*, 19(1), 38–42.
- Half, R. (2024, October 30). *What Is Succession Planning? 7 Steps to Success*. Robert Half. <https://www.roberthalf.com/us/en/insights/management-tips/7-steps-to-building-a-succession-plan-for-success>
- Hallinger, P. (2018). Bringing context out of the shadows of leadership. *Educational management administration & leadership*, 46(1), 5–24.
- Harris, A., & Spillane, J. (2013). *Distributed school leadership: Developing tomorrow's leaders*. Routledge.
- Harrison, H., Birks, M., Franklin, R., & Mills, J. (2017). Case study research: Foundations and methodological orientations. In *Forum qualitative Sozialforschung/Forum: qualitative social research*, 18(1).
- Harrison, M., McKinnon, T., & Terry, P. (2006). Effective succession planning. *T+D*, 60(10), 22–23.
- Hayes, S. D., & Burkett, J. R. (2021). Almost a principal: Coaching and training assistant principals for the next level of leadership. *Journal of School Leadership*, 31(6), 502–525.
- Hosseini, S. H., Barzoki, A. S., & Isfahani, A. N. (2018). Analysis of the effects of succession planning implementation on organisational performance. *International Journal of Productivity and Quality Management*, 25(2), 198–211.

- Hosseini, S. H., Barzoki, A. S., & Isfahani, A. N. (2018). Designing a model of succession management system and explaining its impact on organisational performance (case study: Esfahan Steel Company). *International Journal of Business Excellence*, 15(3), 335–351.
- IBM. (2023, October 16). Talent development. *What is talent development?* <https://www.ibm.com/topics/talent-development>
- Investopedia. (2025, June 06). *Succession Planning Basics: How It Works, Why It's Important*. <https://www.investopedia.com/terms/s/succession-planning.asp>
- Jabareen, Y. (2009). Building a conceptual framework: philosophy, definitions, and procedure. *International journal of qualitative methods*, 8(4), 49–62.
- Jazzar, M. (2004). Instructional or Managerial Leadership: The Principal Role!. *Journal of cases in educational leadership*, 7(3), 28–34.
- John Paul II. (1996). *Universi Dominici Gregis: On the vacancy of the Apostolic See and the election of the Roman Pontiff*. Libreria Editrice Vaticana.
- Johnson, M. C., & Douglas, J. R. (1990). "Grow-Your-Own"—a Model for Selecting Administrators. *NASSP Bulletin*, 74(526), 34–38.
- Karam, C., & Ghoul, W. (2010). The impact of timely succession planning on a firm's continuity: case of Lebanon. *International Journal of Business and Globalisation*, 5(2), 200–210.
- Kaslow, F. W., & Soehner, G. (1980). Administrative supervision. *New Directions for Mental Health Services*, 1980(8), 33–42.
- Keller, K. (2018). Building the Case for Succession Planning in Higher Education: A study of succession planning pilots within the Minnesota state colleges and universities system.
- Kelly, H. (2023). *School leaders matter: Preventing burnout, managing stress, and improving wellbeing*. Routledge.
- Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Republik Indonesia. (2018). *Peraturan Menteri Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Republik Indonesia Nomor 6 Tahun 2018 tentang Penugasan Guru sebagai Kepala Sekolah*. <https://peraturan.bpk.go.id>
- Kesner, I. F., and Sebora, T. C. (1994). Executive Succession: Past, Present & Future. *Journal of Management*, 20(2), 327–372. <https://doi.org/10.1177/014920639402000204>
- Kiger, M. E., & Varpio, L. (2020). Thematic analysis of qualitative data: AMEE Guide No. 131. *Medical teacher*, 42(8), 846–854.

- Korstjens, I., & Moser, A. (2018). Series: Practical guidance to qualitative research. Part 4: Trustworthiness and publishing. *European Journal of General Practice, 24*(1), 120–124.
- Kurebwa, M., Wadesango, N., & Wadesango, V. O. (2015). Challenges faced by deputy heads in supervising teachers in primary schools. *International journal of educational sciences, 9*(2), 187–197.
- Kusumaningrum, D. E., Sumarsono, R. B., & Gunawan, I. (2018, October). Empowering the Principal of Boarding House-Based Junior High School in East Java Province Indonesia. In *3rd International Conference on Educational Management and Administration (CoEMA 2018)* (pp. 147–151). Atlantis Press.
- Lacey, K. (2003). Succession planning in education. *Leading and Managing, 9*(2), 192–195.
- Lashway, L. (2003). Inducting School Leaders. ERIC Digest.
- LeCounte, J. F. (2022). Founder-CEOs: Succession planning for the success, growth, and legacy of family firms. *Journal of Small Business Management, 60*(3), 616–633.
- Leithwood, K., Day, C., Sammons, P., Harris, A., & Hopkins, D. (2006). *Successful school leadership: What it is and how it influences pupil learning* (Vol. 800). Research report.
- Leithwood, K., Harris, A., & Hopkins, D. (2008). Seven strong claims about successful school leadership. *School Leadership & Management, 28*(1), 27–42. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13632430701800060>
- Leithwood, K., & Sun, J. (2012). The nature and effects of transformational school leadership: A meta-analytic review of unpublished research. *Educational administration quarterly, 48*(3), 387–423.
- Leithwood, K., Harris, A., & Hopkins, D. (2020). Seven strong claims about successful school leadership revisited. *School leadership & management, 40*(1), 5–22.
- Lim, W. M. (2025). What is qualitative research? An overview and guidelines. *Australasian Marketing Journal, 33*(2), 199–229.
- Lincoln, Y. & Guba, E. (1985). Naturalistic inquiry. *Beverly Hills: Sage. Lincoln Naturalistic Inquiry 1985.*
- Lucas, R. E. (2012). Rules and tools of succession in the Gulf Monarchies. *Journal of Arabian Studies, 2*(1), 75–91.
- Luft, J. A., Jeong, S., Idsardi, R., & Gardner, G. (2022). Literature reviews, theoretical frameworks, and conceptual frameworks: An introduction for new biology education researchers. *CBE—Life Sciences Education, 21*(3), rm33.

- Marques-Quinteiro, P., van Dijk, H., Peterson, D. R., Adamovic, M., Buengeler, C., & Santos, C. M. (2022). A model of leadership transitions in teams. *Group & Organization Management*, 47(2), 342–372.
- Marrelli, A. F. (2022). Innovation in government succession planning: A case study. *Industrial and Organizational Psychology*, 15(4), 630–638.
- Mascall, B., & Leithwood, K. (2010). Investing in leadership: The district's role in managing principal turnover. *Leadership and Policy in Schools*, 9(4), 367–383.
- Mbatha, L., Grobler, B., & Looock, C. (2006). Delegation of authority by school principals— an Education Law perspective. *Education as change*, 10(1), 3–15.
- McGrath, C., Palmgren, P. J., & Liljedahl, M. (2019). Twelve tips for conducting qualitative research interviews. *Medical teacher*, 41(9), 1002-1006.
- McMahon, R. (2013, February 28). *Papal succession in the Catholic Church* [Backgrounder]. Council on Foreign Relations. <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/papal-succession-catholic-church>
- Merriam-Webster. (n.d.). Nonsectarian. In Merriam-Webster.com dictionary. Retrieved March 17, 2025, from <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/nonsectarian>
- Mintzberg, H. (1993). *Structure in fives: Designing effective organizations*. Prentice-Hall, Inc.
- Mitchell, K. (2014). *Succession Planning in the Federal Government*. [Unpublished Doctoral dissertation]. Trinity Washington University.
- Mwansa, M. M., & Serumaga-Zake, P. A. (2023). Leadership Succession Planning Contributions Towards Family-Owned Business Performance and Sustainability in South Africa. *International Journal of Applied Research in Business and Management*, 4(2), 18–34. <https://doi.org/10.51137/ijarbm.2023.4.2.2>
- Namey, E., Guest, G., Thairu, L., & Johnson, L. (2008). Data reduction techniques for large qualitative data sets. *Handbook for team-based qualitative research*, 2(1), 137–161.
- Nazer, J. R., & Llorca-Jaña, M. (2022). Succession in large nineteenth-century Chilean family businesses. *Business History*, 64(3), 511–536.
- Neefe, D. O. (2009). *Succession planning in a two-year technical college system* (Doctoral dissertation). Available from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Global database. (UMI No. 3360378)
- Nisar, N., Shahzad, A., & Rabica, M. (2020). Transformational leadership style training for school leaders. *International Journal of Innovation in Teaching and Learning (IJITL)*, 6(1), 17–34.
- Northouse, P. G. (2022). *Leadership: Theory and practice*. Sage publications.

- Nowak, H. E., & Scanlan, J. M. (2021). Strategy to stay ahead of the curve: A concept analysis of talent management. *Nursing Forum*, 56(3), 717–723. <https://doi.org/10.1111/nuf.12571>
- Office of Human Capital Strategy (2022). *Succession Planning and Management Guide*. U.S. Department of Commerce.
- O’leary, Z., & Hunt, J. (2014). Primary data: Surveys, interviews and observation. *The essential guide to doing your research project*, 201–216.
- Owens, R. G., & Valesky, T. C. (2022). *Organizational behavior in education: Leadership and school reform* (12th ed.). Pearson Education.
- Parfitt, C. M. (2017a). *Perceptions of succession planning in educational organizations: A mixed-method study of four Florida School Districts* (Doctoral dissertation, Florida Gulf Coast University).
- Parfitt, C. M. (2017b). Creating a Succession-Planning Instrument for Educational Leadership. *Education Leadership Review*, 18(1), 21–36.
- Parfitt, C. M. (2022). *Succession Planning: A Framework and Guidelines for School Leaders*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Incorporated.
- Pelatihan Kepemimpinan dan Manajemen Sekolah Untuk Mewujudkan Sekolah Berkualitas – BBPPMPV BBL*. (2024, November 4). <https://bbppmpvbbl.kemdikbud.go.id/bbppmpvbbl/2024/11/04/pelatihan-kepemimpinan-dan-manajemen-sekolah-untuk-mewujudkan-sekolah-berkualitas/>
- Peters-Hawkins, A. L., Reed, L. C., & Kingsberry, F. (2018). Dynamic leadership succession: Strengthening urban principal succession planning. *Urban Education*, 53(1), 26–54.
- Phillips, D. (2006). Comparative education: method. *Research in Comparative and International Education*, 1(4), 304–319.
- Phillips, L. K. (2020). Concept analysis: Succession planning. *Nursing Forum*, 55(4), 730–736. <https://doi.org/10.1111/nuf.12490>
- Pladdys, J. (2024). Mitigating Workplace Burnout Through Transformational Leadership and Employee Participation in Recovery Experiences. *HCA Healthcare Journal of Medicine*, 5(3), 215.
- Poland, B. D. (1995). Transcription quality as an aspect of rigor in qualitative research. *Qualitative inquiry*, 1(3), 290–310.
- Poulin, B. J., Hackman, M. Z., & Barbarasa-Mihai, C. (2007). Leadership and succession: The challenge to succeed and the vortex of failure. *Leadership*, 3(3), 301–324.
- Quaglia, R. J. (2016). *Principal voice: Listen, learn, lead*. Corwin Press.

- Quataert, D. (2005). *The Ottoman Empire, 1700-1922* (Vol. 34). Cambridge University Press.
- Raharjo, A. (2023a, May 15). *Disdik Depok: Puluhan jabatan kepala sekolah yang kosong akan diisi Juni*. *Republika Online*. <https://news.republika.co.id/berita/rup41d436/disdik-depok-puluhan-jabatan-kepala-sekolah-yang-kosong-akan-diisi-juni>
- Raharjo, A. (2023b, May 15). Puluhan Jabatan Kepala Sekolah Dasar di Kota Depok Kosong. *Republika Online*. <https://news.republika.co.id/berita/rup216436/puluhan-jabatan-kepala-sekolah-dasar-di-kota-depok-kosong>
- Rahman, M. A., Santosa, A. B., & Sihotang, H. (2020). The Influence of Principal's Leadership, Teacher Performance And Internal Quality Assurance System in Improving The Quality of Education in Vocational High School: he Quality of Education in Vocational High School. *Kelola: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan*, 7(2), 162–175.
- Reeves, T. Z. (2010). Mentoring Programs in Succession Planning. *State and Local Government Review*, 42(1), 61–66. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0160323X10368036>
- Reyes, D. (2025, January 28). *Edcom: Almost 25,000 public schools have no principals*. *Philippine Daily Inquirer*. <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/2028741/edcom-almost-25000-public-schools-have-no-principals>
- Ridder, H. G. (2014). Book Review: Qualitative data analysis. A methods sourcebook.
- Ritchie, M. (2020). Succession planning for successful leadership: why we need to talk about succession planning!. *Management in Education*, 34(1), 33–37.
- Rothwell, W. J. (2015). *Effective succession planning: Ensuring leadership continuity and building talent from within*. HarperChristian+ ORM.
- Rothwell, W. J., Jackson, R. D., Brower, M., Jones, M. C., & Ressler, C. L. (2015). Career planning and succession management.
- Sabina, L. L., & Colwell, C. (2018). Challenges of Principal Succession – Examining the Challenges of Hiring Internal vs. External Candidates. *Athens Journal of Education*, 5(4), 375–396. <https://doi.org/10.30958/aje.5-4-3>
- Saldaña, J. (2021). The coding manual for qualitative researchers.
- Salehi, T., Ashghali-Farahani, M., & Mirzaee, M. (2024). The concept of succession evasion: An invisible behavior in the organization. *Journal of Education and Health Promotion*, 13(1). [https://doi.org/10.4103/jehp.jehp\\_650\\_23](https://doi.org/10.4103/jehp.jehp_650_23)
- Salvato, C., & Corbetta, G. (2013). Transitional leadership of advisors as a facilitator of successors' leadership construction. *Family business review*, 26(3), 235–255.

- Second Vatican Council. (1964). *Lumen Gentium: Dogmatic constitution on the Church*. St. Paul Editions.
- Schaeffer, B. S., & Akhavan, K. E. (2016). Succession planning for franchisees. *Franchise LJ*, 36, 643.
- Schepker, D. J., Nyberg, A. J., Ulrich, M. D., & Wright, P. M. (2018). Planning for future leadership: Procedural rationality, formalized succession processes, and CEO influence in CEO succession planning. *Academy of Management Journal*, 61(2), 523–552.
- Schwandt, T. A. (1994). Constructivist, interpretivist approaches to human inquiry. *Handbook of qualitative research*, 1(1994), 118–137.
- Schwartz, P. J. (2024). Building Leadership Capacity & Succession Planning in the Archdiocese of Seattle Catholic Schools.
- Schweitzer, K., & Graebe, J. (2024). Leadership Succession Planning for ANCC Accredited Providers in Nursing Continuing Professional Development. *The Journal of Continuing Education in Nursing*, 55(7), 321–325.
- Shakeri, S. S., & Nasri, M. H. (2021). Study of succession planning and its impact on organizational effectiveness Department of Education Amol. *Journal of Social, Management and Tourism Letter*, 2021, 1–18.
- Sebastian, J., & Allensworth, E. (2012). The influence of principal leadership on classroom instruction and student learning: A study of mediated pathways to learning. *Educational administration quarterly*, 48(4), 626–663.
- Security Bank Foundation, Inc. (n.d.). SBF mentoring future leaders: Principals. Retrieved from <https://www.securitybank.com/sbf-mentoring-future-leaders-principals/>
- Shaked, H., & Schechter, C. (2017). School principals as mediating agents in education reforms. *School Leadership & Management*, 37(1-2), 19–37.
- Sharma, C. L. (1966). Administration as a Field of Study. *International Review of Administrative Sciences*, 32(4), 287–300.
- Shenton, A. K. (2004). *Strategies for ensuring trustworthiness in qualitative research projects*. *Education for Information*, 22(2), 63–75. <https://doi.org/10.3233/EFI-2004-22201>
- Siambi, J. K. (2022). Leadership succession planning and organization transition: A review of literature. *International Journal of Managerial Studies and Research*, 10(3), 16–30.

- Sivasubramaniam, S., Dlabolová, D. H., Kralikova, V., & Khan, Z. R. (2021). Assisting you to advance with ethics in research: an introduction to ethical governance and application procedures. *International Journal for Educational Integrity*, 17, 1–18.
- Smith, T., & Kirkman, B. L. (2012, July). Understanding leadership: The followers' influence on leader effectiveness. In *Academy of Management Proceedings* (Vol. 2012, No. 1, p. 17334). Briarcliff Manor, NY 10510: Academy of Management.
- Stake, R. E. (1995). The art of case study research.
- Stanton Chase. (2023). *Preparing for Change in the C-Suite: Succession Planning in 2024*. <https://www.stantonchase.com/insights/blog/preparing-for-change-in-the-c-suite-succession-planning-in-2024>
- Sullivan, D., & Pena, J. (2019). The NSBECS: The foundation for effective catholic principal preparation. *Journal of Catholic Education*, 22(1).
- Sumintono, B., Sheyoputri, E. Y., Jiang, N., Misbach, I. H., & Jumintono. (2015). Becoming a principal in Indonesia: possibility, pitfalls and potential. *Asia Pacific Journal of Education*, 35(3), 342–352.
- Suresh, M. (2023, April 10). *Strategies for Effective succession planning in Organization*. <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/strategies-effective-succession-planning-your-madhavan-suresh/>
- Susilo, S., & Winarto, O. P. (2023). The Influence of Succession Planning on Organizational Sustainability. *Scaffolding: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam dan Multikulturalisme*, 5(3), 490–518.
- Tauro, D. A. (2021). *Strategies for retaining organizational knowledge from retiring employees* (Doctoral dissertation, Walden University).
- Thomas, D. R. (2006). A general inductive approach for analyzing qualitative evaluation data. *American journal of evaluation*, 27(2), 237–246.
- Trate, J. M., Teichert, M. A., Murphy, K. L., Srinivasan, S., Luxford, C. J., & Schneider, J. L. (2020). Remote interview methods in chemical education research. *Journal of Chemical Education*, 97(9), 2421–2429.
- Tschannen-Moran, M., & Gareis, C. R. (2004). Principals' sense of efficacy: Assessing a promising construct. *Journal of Educational administration*, 42(5), 573–585.
- U.S. Department of Commerce. (2022, April). *Succession planning guide*. [https://www.commerce.gov/sites/default/files/2022-08/FINAL\\_DOC%20HCS\\_Succession%20Planning%20Guide\\_04.2022%20%281%29\\_0.pdf](https://www.commerce.gov/sites/default/files/2022-08/FINAL_DOC%20HCS_Succession%20Planning%20Guide_04.2022%20%281%29_0.pdf)

- United States Fire Administration. (n.d.). *Retention and recruitment for the volunteer emergency services: Challenges and solutions*. U.S. Department of Homeland Security. <https://www.usfa.fema.gov/downloads/pdf/publications/retention-and-recruitment-for-volunteer-emergency-services.pdf>
- Van Nieuwerburgh, C., Barr, M., Munro, C., Noon, H., & Arifin, D. (2020). Experiences of aspiring school principals receiving coaching as part of a leadership development programme. *International Journal of Mentoring and Coaching in Education, 9*(3), 291–306.
- Varpio, L., Paradis, E., Uijtdehaage, S., & Young, M. (2020). The distinctions between theory, theoretical framework, and conceptual framework. *Academic medicine, 95*(7), 989–994.
- Vatican News. (2025, April 27). *Conclave to begin May 7 following death of Pope Francis*. <https://www.vaticannews.va>
- Vaticana, L. E. (1994). *Catechism of the catholic church*.
- Vincent, W. S. (2017). Succession Planning for the Family-Owned Business. *GPSolo, 34*(5), 34–37.
- Wallin, D. (2007). Succession planning: Developing future leaders from within. *Academic Leader, 23*(1), 2–8.
- Weick, K. E. (1976). Educational Organizations as Loosely Coupled Systems. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 21*(1), 1–19. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2391875>
- Weitz, L. (1961). The problem of delegating responsibility in a large high school. *The bulletin of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, 45*(267), 109–122.
- Wiles, R., Crow, G., Heath, S., & Charles, V. (2008). The management of confidentiality and anonymity in social research. *International journal of social research methodology, 11*(5), 417–428.
- Wilson, A. S. (2022). *Stress and burnout of principals who lead historically underperforming schools*. The University of Texas at Austin.
- Xu, W., & Zammit, K. (2020). Applying thematic analysis to education: A hybrid approach to interpreting data in practitioner research. *International journal of qualitative methods, 19*, 1609406920918810.
- Yin, R. K. (2018). *Case study research and applications: Design and methods* (6th ed.). Sage Publications.

- Yudianto, K., Sekawarna, N., Susilaningsih, F. S., Ramoo, V., & Somantri, I. (2023). Succession planning leadership model for nurse managers in hospitals: a narrative review. In *Healthcare* (Vol. 11, No. 4, p. 454). MDPI.
- Zafar, S. M., Al Ajmi, Q., Chaubey, D. S., & Salando, J. B. (2018). Analysing leadership style to become a legend leader: An exploration. *International Journal of Engineering and Management Research (IJEMR)*, 8(3), 49–56.

## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1. Research Permit Form



Kementerian Agama Republik Indonesia  
Universitas Islam Internasional Indonesia  
Jalan Raya Bogor KM. 33.5  
Cisalak, Sukmajaya, Depok, Jawa Barat 16416  
secretariat@uiii.ac.id  
www.uiii.ac.id

#### RESEARCH PERMIT FORM

The undersigned below:

Name : Erickson V. Samson  
Student ID Number : 04212320006  
Faculty : Education  
Study Program : Master of Arts in Education

Request for a research permit letter for my master's thesis entitled:

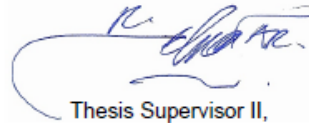
**IN SEARCH OF SUCCESSION PLANNING IN SCHOOL ORGANIZATIONS: A  
COMPARATIVE CASE STUDY OF SCHOOL LEADERSHIP IN THE PHILIPPINES  
AND INDONESIA"**

Research Location : Imus City, Philippines and Tangerang City,  
Indonesia  
Research Duration : 3 months

This form indicates that the two thesis supervisors have approved chapters 1-3 and  
the research instrument of the thesis.



Thesis Supervisor I,



Thesis Supervisor II,

Dr. Bambang Sumintono

Dr. Alpha Ammirachman

Depok, March 19, 2025  
Student,



## Appendix 2. Qualitative Participant Request

Dear NAME:

I am Erickson Samson, a Master of Arts in Education student at Universitas Islam Internasional Indonesia (UIII), Depok, Jawa Barat. I am conducting a research project titled: “In Search of Succession Planning in School Organizations: A Comparative Case Study of School Leadership in the Philippines and Indonesia.” This study includes fieldwork in Imus City, Philippines and South Tangerang City, Indonesia, involving semi-structured interviews and document analysis.

You are invited to participate in a semi-structured interview as part of this research. The interview will be scheduled in April 2025 at a date, time and location that is most convenient for you, either in person or online. If you cannot attend in person or if the researcher cannot meet you in person for any valid reason, online options shall be provided. The discussion will focus on your lived experiences regarding succession planning in your respective schools, how you have become a principal, and its processes, with participants from the Philippines and Indonesia.

No identifying information will be used during the interview, including the names, schools, or districts. I will assign a certain code for you that will be used during the interview. The interview process will be audio recorded and transcribed. You will be provided a copy of the transcription to recheck, review and clarify any statement. Please note that participation in this study is entirely voluntary; all results will be confidential and you may withdraw consent at any time, and no financial payment or reimbursement will be provided. Every effort will be made to protect your identification. I have attached an information sheet with further details about the research for your review.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions or contact my thesis supervisors: Dr. Bambang Sumintono at bambang.sumintono@uiii.ac.id and Dr. Alpha Amirrachman at alpha.amirrachman@uiii.ac.id.

Thank you for considering this invitation. Your valuable insights will contribute significantly to the success of this study.

Very sincerely,

**Erickson Samson**

### Appendix 3. Qualitative Interview Consent Form

**Study Title:** In Search of Succession Planning in School Organizations: A Comparative Case Study of School Leadership in the Philippines and Indonesia

**Researcher's Name:** Erickson V. Samson

**Supervisor(s) Name(s):** Dr. Bambang Sumintono & Dr. Alpha Amirrachman

You are invited to participate in a semi-structured interview as part of this research. The interview will be scheduled in April 2025 at a time and location that is most convenient for you, either in person or online. Online options shall be provided if you cannot attend in person or if the researcher cannot meet you in person for any valid reason. The discussion will focus on your lived experiences regarding succession planning in your respective schools, how you have become a principal and its processes, with participants from the Philippines and Indonesia. This research is being conducted to fulfill the requirements for Master's degree from Universitas Islam Internasional Indonesia (UIII). For you to participate in this study, the University requires that I obtain your signed consent.

Although participating in this research may not benefit you personally, it will help the researcher understand how the principals undergo, view and manage the succession-planning processes. Thus, their lived experiences on becoming a principal.

If you participate in this study, the researcher will make every effort to keep your information confidential and secure by taking the following steps: (a) participants' identity will be protected to the maximum possibility; (b) participants' names will not be shared; (c) access to the data will be limited to the researcher and the faculty's thesis committee; (d) identities of the participants will not be published in any platforms.

The researcher will not release any information about you unless you authorize the researcher to do so or unless the researcher is required to do so by law. Should the results of this study be published or presented at a professional meeting or conference, no information will be included that would make it possible to identify you as a study participant. Any reports or publications based on this research will solely use data and will not include any information that would make you identify as affiliated with this project.

#### **Participant Consent**

By signing this form, I confirm that:

- I have received detailed information about this research project, including its purpose and scope.
- I understand the purpose of the research project and my role as a participant.

- I acknowledge that I can withdraw from the study at any stage without providing a reason.
- I understand that the information collected during this study may be published, but my identity and personal details will remain confidential.
- I consent to being audiotaped during the interview for the purpose of data collection.

**Participant Information**

**Name of Participant:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Researcher Declaration**

I have provided comprehensive information about the research project to the participant and am confident that they understand what their participation involves.

**Researcher's Signature and Date**

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix 4. Basic Information Questions for Principals**

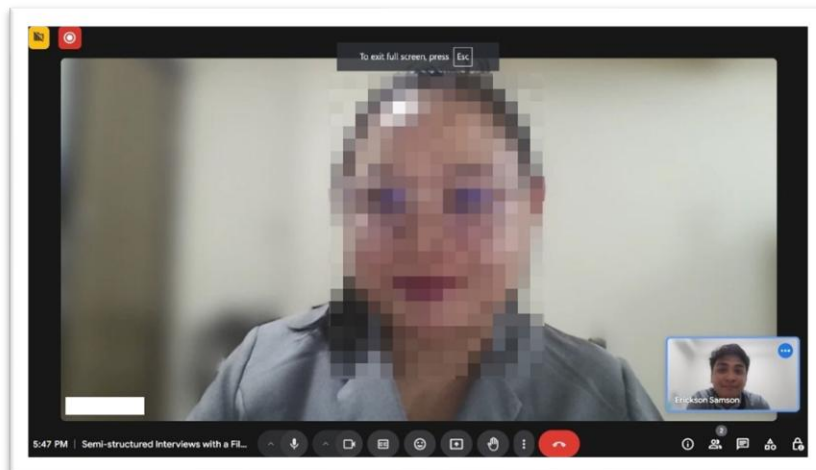
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What is your gender?             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Male</li> <li>Female</li> </ol> </li> <li>What age group do you belong to?             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>25–35</li> <li>36–45</li> <li>46–55</li> <li>56 and above</li> </ol> </li> <li>How long have you been principal (in this school)?             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Less than 5 years</li> <li>5–10 years</li> <li>11–15 years</li> <li>16–20 years</li> <li>More than 20 years</li> </ol> </li> <li>How long have you been serving as a school principal?             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Less than 1 year</li> <li>1–5 years</li> <li>6–10 years</li> <li>11–15 years</li> <li>More than 15 years</li> </ol> </li> <li>What is your highest educational qualification?             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bachelor's degree</li> <li>Master's degree</li> <li>Doctorate degree (Ph.D./Ed.D.)</li> <li>Other (please specify) _____</li> </ol> </li> <li>Have you completed any leadership or management training programs?             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Yes</li> <li>No</li> </ol> </li> </ol>
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

7. How many years of teaching experience did you have before becoming a principal?
  - a. Less than 5 years
  - b. 5–10 years
  - c. 11–15 years
  - d. More than 15 years
8. What is the size of the school you lead in terms of student population?
  - a. Less than 100 students
  - b. 100–300 students
  - c. 301–500 students
  - d. More than 500 students

**Appendix 5.1.** Interview with the Filipino Principal A (FPA)



**Appendix 5.2.** Interview with the Filipino Principal B (FPB)



**Appendix 5.3.** Interview with the Indonesian Principal A (IPA)



**Appendix 5.4.** Interview with the Indonesian Principal B (IPB)



## Appendix 6. Semi-structured Interview Questions for Principals

<b>Principals' Definition of Succession Planning in their Schools</b>	
<b>Q-1</b>	How would you describe succession planning in your school?
<b>Q-2</b>	What do you think is the main purpose of succession planning?
<b>Q-3</b>	How does your school approach preparing for leadership changes?
<b>Q-4</b>	Most succession plans lack input from all stakeholders, what has been your experience with this?
<b>Q-5</b>	What does a good succession plan look like to you?
<b>Q-6</b>	When you assumed your role as a principal, was the transition planned?
<b>Current practices in preparation, selection, appointment and retention</b>	
<b>Q-7</b>	Can you describe how your school selects principals?
<b>Q-8</b>	What steps are involved in preparing a teacher or potential leaders to become a principal?
<b>Q-9</b>	How does your school decide to appoint someone as principal?
<b>Q-10</b>	What measures do you take to encourage principals to stay in their role?
<b>Q-11</b>	Do you have any input or suggestions on who might be a potential successor for your role?
<b>Q-12</b>	Are there policies or guidelines in place for selecting and retaining school leaders?
<b>Identifying and preparing potential candidates and criteria for selection</b>	
<b>Q-13</b>	How does your school identify individuals who may be potential principals?
<b>Q-14</b>	What kind of training or development programs does your school provide to prepare future principals? If there is any.
<b>Q-15</b>	What do you think are the most important qualities or qualifications for selecting a principal?
<b>Q-16</b>	How does your school ensure that candidates meet the criteria for principalship?
<b>Q-17</b>	What specific steps does your school take to retain effective principals?

<b>Issues and concerns in preparation, selection, appointment and retention</b>	
<b>Q-18</b>	What challenges has your school faced in preparing candidates for the role of principal?
<b>Q-19</b>	Are there difficulties in finding suitable candidates for principalship? If yes, what are they?
<b>Q-20</b>	Have you encountered any issues during the selection or appointment of principals?
<b>Q-21</b>	What are the common reasons principals leave their position, in your experience?
<b>Q-22</b>	How does your school address conflicts or disagreements in the principal selection process?
<b>Strategies for effective succession planning and the role of leadership styles</b>	
<b>Q-23</b>	What strategies does your school employ to ensure a smooth transition when principals change?
<b>Q-24</b>	How do you involve current leaders/stakeholders in preparing future school principals?
<b>Q-25</b>	What role do leadership styles play in selecting and training future principals in your school?
<b>Q-26</b>	Does your school have a particular way or method for preparing new principals to take over?
<b>Q-27</b>	How do you check if your school's process for preparing and choosing new principals is working well?
<b>Q-28</b>	Any final thoughts or suggestions?
<b>Q-29</b>	<b>Follow up:</b> Will the school be prepared if you resign, find another opportunity or any other reasons that may result to leadership gap?

## Appendix 7. Sample of Real Interview Script with a School Principal

Interviewee : Filipino Principal A

Inquiry : Lived Experiences

Date of Interview : April 07, 2025

**Interviewer:** How would you describe succession planning in your school?

**Participant:** In general, succession planning is a sustainable means or a strategy to ensure that the leadership quality in a school is maintained. In the context of our school, it is empowerment or giving the teachers the opportunities to lead or to take on responsibilities so that they can discover their potential and contribute to the school in different ways. Besides, the context of a principal is helping others or those in the pipeline to take on bigger responsibilities or having a bigger perspective of school leadership, because one cannot be a principal without being a teacher alone. It requires a lot of development and progress, wherein you have to take on various roles before becoming a principal. It is developmental and a process that involves empowerment, trust, and taking on multiple responsibilities.

**Interviewer:** What do you think is the main purpose of succession planning?

**Participant:** It is mainly because schools do not cease to exist. It is not. If a principal retires today, there should be someone who will take charge or continue the function in the absence of the former principal. So, that is important because it ensures that the quality of the school practices is attained.

**Interviewer:** How does your school approach preparing for leadership changes?

**Participant:** Our school experienced sudden organizational changes in the past years because our principals had to take another opportunity outside the school. Based on my experience, it is challenging now because we are in the adjustment stage in the current school year. So, I will look at it in the current situation. In that case, it is like taking on a new challenge or adjusting to the role. Still, as I saw in the past years, our school systematically takes on succession planning because we have our own existing succession planning model. Also, some sorts of opportunities are given; we call them "one down" or "the next in line." So, there are opportunities given to them. We invite them to the meetings where they can be engaged, and we delegate tasks to those promising or in the pipeline.

**Interviewer:** Most succession plans lack input from all stakeholders, what has been your experience with this?

**Participant:** For me, planning in the context of our school and how it was created was done through benchmarking. Also, I was not involved in making the school's succession plan. Still, from what I can observe based on the existing documents, it is more of a benchmarking from other schools. I must agree with the statement because I was not involved in creating the model or the succession plan. Still, I appreciate how comprehensive it is because it is very detailed. There are steps, but I have not studied them yet. However, that is also my observation because succession planning, if it requires input from different stakeholders, is something I have not observed in the past.

**Interviewer:** What does a good succession plan look like to you?

**Participant:** For me, a good succession plan has detailed steps, meaning it is very clear what steps must be taken. Also, it is very objective in that the criteria and the basis for choosing the prospective leaders are transparent and objective. This means it is based on credentials, leadership experience, teaching performance, organizational skills, communication skills, and even soft skills. It is more detailed, clear, objective, fair, and transparent, and the ideal succession plan should also align with the school's vision and mission. So, I think that is very important because it must be aligned, especially if you are in a Catholic school. How you create your succession plan should align with the charisma or the spirituality because, in some schools, one primary consideration is formation rather than competence. It should also be aligned with the school's vision and mission.

**Interviewer:** When you assumed your role as a principal, was the transition planned?

**Participant:** At that time, we were called for a meeting to learn that we were chosen; we were very unsure because my partner and I were the vice principals for academics during the past school year. So, we were preparing for our second year as vice principals. We were already planning what to do with our teacher training, curriculum plans, and all other academic activities. We were told about it right before the training or the onboarding, so we were in total shock; we were very anxious then. So, it is a big adjustment for us; it was not planned, and it is more like giving a bigger responsibility than you have to carry on your own.

**Interviewer:** Can you describe how your school selects principals?

**Participant:** In our keys, we had our long-time principal, who was the one, I think, who had established most of the things here in our school since it was erected. At that time, though, I am not sure how he was elected, but definitely, because he was, I think, an acquaintance or someone the developer knows. So, it is more of who has the connection. In the next two years of changing a principal, it was more of the decision of the school president and consultants. We have our consultants from Ateneo de Manila University (ADMU) and former school teachers, so from what I know, we were selected based on an interview before that; there was an interview and a deliberation between the school president and the consultants. We were up in the bucket.

**Interviewer:** What steps are involved in preparing a teacher or potential leaders to become a principal?

**Participant:** From my experience, how I was primed for this was that it took me different steps like a ladder, so I took various roles leading to this position, but what was done and what the steps were was more of a combination of different efforts and strategies. These are faculty development, training, mentoring, and engaging future leaders in developmental tasks. I started as a teacher, and then I was involved in the role of an English unit head. After that, I was also given responsibilities, which led me to become the academic coordinator, so it was like a progressive approach wherein I got introduced to various tasks that were slowly becoming challenging. On the one hand, it was guided because I learned the purpose of what I was doing and the step-by-step processes. There was also mentoring. I was given feedback on how I was performing, and we also got to have our self-reading, so we got to read ourselves to reflect on our performance. It is the feedback from our immediate heads and our reflection. From there, we get to reflect on our accomplishments based on the standards and metrics from our PMS or Performance Management Systems.

**Interviewer:** How does your school decide to appoint someone as principal?

**Participant:** As I shared earlier, they consider the previous school leaders' perspectives because they have previously worked with us. It is more of input from other people who work with the candidates. The basis will be the deliberation with the president, including the consultants.

**Interviewer:** What measures do you take to encourage principals to stay in their role?

**Participant:** What would make me stay would be continuous training or development because, as a principal, I still consider myself a novice. I need lots of experience and someone who will guide and provide me with mentorship because I have so many things that I am still clueless about. It may be somebody who would allow me to reflect on my practice and attitude. I just get to learn them by experience. Those are the privileges, incentives, and compensation. We must know that teachers are underpaid and overworked in the Philippines. So, the leader must have that sense of privilege and motivation to move for it because the problems are so burdensome, so many things to do, so many concerns going on, day by day, in and day out, so many various concerns. So, sometimes, those problems arise, especially if a leader gets easily discouraged. We would make them stay if we gave them the things they need. As I have mentioned, it is the development and training, fair compensation, and supportive management, because we do not want a school leader to always mediate between the management and the teachers or the staff. Support acknowledges that whoever the principal is, as needed by the school, should be supported by the management. Those are the things that would give them the fulfillment and assurance that they are doing the right thing. It is more of compensation, continuous development, and support.

**Interviewer:** Do you have any input or suggestions on who might be a potential successor for your role?

**Participant:** Yes, I have someone in mind. We are very open about it. I am talking to that person because that person is also my mentor. I am very open to discussing those things as well.

**Interviewer:** Are there policies or guidelines for selecting and retaining school leaders?

**Participant:** We have policies on promotion. I am not well-versed, but the promotion has guidelines and bodies. There are exercises in our succession plan involving reflective questions. It is more of reflecting on the person's potential to become a school leader. There are existing guidelines.

**Interviewer:** How does your school identify individuals who may be potential principals?

**Participant:** Our succession plan has a portion where we evaluate high-potential employees, assessing their performance, educational attainment, contributions to the school, developmental needs, challenges, and gaps. Aside from evaluation, it is more about being candid about them, wherein opportunities are given to them, and we get to ask them if they are very willing to take a leadership role or if they see themselves stepping up. That is one way we approach succession planning because, in my experience, I was a teacher before I got promoted. My principal told me to reflect on my experience that year because I was a student council moderator. They made me reflect on it, and I did not see myself as very effective in moderating students. So, they asked me if I would be better at moderating or leading the teachers. That may be better because I see them as more mature, so it is less for me because I know I have to give instructions, and less supervision. That was what I said. The following year, I was given the role of subject unit head. It is more of conversations and getting the pulse of the high-potential teacher.

**Interviewer:** What training or development programs does your school provide to prepare future principals? If there is any.

**Participant:** Currently, we do not have existing training, but opportunities are available. For example, if training is conducted outside, we delegate our teachers to be trained on communication or leadership, even subject-specific topics like teaching a specific subject; we encourage and delegate our teachers in this training. Regarding leadership training, our principals and other senior leaders went to the Leaders in Education Programme International (LEPI) in Singapore. There are opportunities like that wherein they get to involve themselves in training from top schools globally, wherein they get best practices and see the application of that in the context of our school.

**Interviewer:** What are the most important qualities or qualifications for selecting a principal?

**Participant:** Important qualities are not about the person's intelligence but character. Character is broad in that it involves many characteristics, like integrity, the willingness to serve, and a heart for service, because one must not be just thinking about oneself. It is like how they want to help others and the school itself, and how they want to contribute to the development of the school. I also need a growth mindset wherein the leader should take challenges and failure as a learning checkpoint. Moreover, it is also about grip, wherein they bounce back despite difficulties or challenges. They get to continue or move forward with a journey. Still, it is also important for a principal to love learning because being a principal means overseeing the overall school operations. It is not just about academics, the formation of students, and improving facilities, financial aspects, and even legal aspects. So, a principal needs to have an open mind and zest for learning, wherein they want to pursue or continue learning for graduate studies and research. Even if it is not your specialization, you must be open to the tiny details about something because you should also reflect that love for learning from the students. So, if they see that their principal or teachers have that openness to learning, they would emulate that.

**Interviewer:** How does your school ensure that candidates meet the criteria for principalship?

**Participant:** It is very important to conduct background checks through the human resource officer. It is like a mapping and an inventory of qualifications. That includes educational attainment and years of leadership experience in line with the criteria for selecting a principal.

**Interviewer:** What specific steps does your school take to retain effective principals?

**Participant:** It is more about providing a supportive environment for leaders. From my experience, even if I am a beginner principal, my season, my team was very seasoned in the job. They give us background for unfamiliar things, and they also tell us about the critical points, such as why we need to decide on this and that. So, there is a supportive environment. I do not feel incompetent for my lack of knowledge of what I am unaware of. So, I get to be educated, and I also get to experience things. More than the supportive environment made me experience things; even if they are new, I learn from them through experience.

**Interviewer:** What challenges has your school faced in preparing candidates for the principal role?

**Participant:** It is hard to put yourself on the level of our former principal because of the qualifications, experiences, and contributions to the school. It is intimidating to be the successor of that very seasoned principal. But that can be an opportunity because everything is already established, and you must keep improving or enhancing it. Another thing is the pool of candidates. In our experience, we were told that it is the right time for our school to make the whole decision to choose young leaders because, in the past, they have been selecting more seasoned and experienced, and even older principals. But this year, it is another opportunity because young people are more dynamic. They have more ideas, or they are more creative. On their end, I do not know what the challenges were when they chose us from my perspective.

**Interviewer:** Are there difficulties in finding suitable candidates for principalship? If yes, what are they?

**Participant:** It is not that much because they could choose us. It did not come to the point where they had to get someone outside the school to become the principal. It is very important for a school to have homegrown leaders, meaning, you know, you do not import principals because it would definitely be a challenge for the teachers. After all, they are getting to know this new principal, and at the same time, the principal is adjusting. There are certain risks to that. And I am happy it did not happen because I cannot imagine what that would look like.

**Interviewer:** Have you encountered any issues during the selection or appointment of principals?

**Participant:** So far, I have no experience.

**Interviewer:** What are the common reasons principals leave their position, in your experience?

**Participant:** There are many factors. Based on my observation, there were internal conflicts between the school leaders, which became why they left, maybe because it was their working environment or their working relationship with their fellow school leaders. So, it has affected the way they work. Also, the problems outweigh the benefits or the reasons for staying. It has been too stressful, or you know, it is oversaturated to the point that it made you forget why you chose to accept the roles. Another thing, perhaps in my perspective, because in the Philippines, I do not have any benchmark, but the tax is very high; of course, your salary is relatively higher if you are a principal, but the tax is taking so much from your income to the point that I you do not feel like your salary adjusted significantly, or increased dramatically because it is painful to see the taxes it is very high. So that is also one of the reasons I mentioned last time: what do you call this compensation? It is very important to keep them and make the principal stay. After all, in this economy, you must provide employees a living wage. And more so for senior leaders like principals. Another is that there is no supportive or enabling learning environment. After all, school principals may feel stagnant or not see themselves in their position because of the lack of support or continuous developmental improvement. And well, it is more existential if there is a reason; it could be the existential reason.

**Interviewer:** How does your school address conflicts or disagreements in the principal selection process? If there is any.

**Participant:** Deliberation and respectful communication would solve that because if there are two varying opinions on who should be the most qualified candidate, it should undergo deliberation, wherein the school management should consider all the aspects, look at it holistically in a way that there are no biases and that the point of view of the management is for the sustainability of leadership in the school. It is more about respectful and clear communication through a deliberate deliberative process, even though I have not heard anything.

**Interviewer:** What strategies does your school employ to ensure a smooth transition when principals change?

**Participant:** I have not seen any smooth transition yet. However, the ideal smooth transition would be the preparation, wherein we provide proper training and inform them. Of course, the candidates should know that they are the next in line, but not to the point that we are making them arrogant about it, but just making them aware that they are the next leader of this school. Also, aside from that, the proper turnover of the documents, processes, manuals, and all other things should be given to the successors so that they will be prepared for us with the steps they need to take to perform the role. And after that, of course, it does not stop there. It is important to have continuous monitoring or regular check-ins with future school leaders.

**Interviewer:** How do you involve current leaders/stakeholders in preparing future school principals?

**Participant:** In terms of the involvement of the stakeholders, it is important to identify the relevant stakeholders as a whole. For instance, if we are talking about an academic position, we need to involve stakeholders in the educational process, such as teachers, students, or even guidance counselors. So, it is more about choosing the right people to engage to have that holistic and deliberate approach in the succession plan.

**Interviewer:** What role do leadership styles play in selecting and training future principals in your school?

**Participant:** Leadership style is a significant factor in practicing succession planning. Leadership style may affect it because it is more about how you would personalize your leadership. So, it has an impact. I do not know how, but it has an effect.

**Interviewer:** Does your school have a particular way of preparing new principals to take over?

**Participant:** As I shared earlier, to engage our one-down, we look at succession planning to engage them in more challenging tasks. We also have faculty development programs that involve various trainings, such as internal and external training, and even enrollment in degree programs. So, these programs encourage potential leaders to pursue graduate studies with the support of the school. So, that is one way the school selects and empowers future principals.

**Interviewer:** How do you check if your school's preparation process and choosing new principals work well? If there is any.

**Participant:** Part of our internal quality assurance is our performance management system. So, this is one way that we practice accountability amongst ourselves. We get to assess ourselves based on the criteria. Those criteria are also aligned with the job description. So that we are all aware of how effective we are in performing our role. In addition, we also get to seek feedback from our fellow school leaders and our immediate heads. It is more of feedback and evaluation.

**Interviewer:** Any final thoughts or suggestions?

**Participant:** About succession planning, I would like to add that it is important to take care of the emotional and psychological well-being of the principals because, as we know, it is a very stressful job, so I guess I am not sure if that is part of our plan. However, there should be more support than technical support. It is psychological support because the principal has to face many responsibilities. Accomplish and resolve, and so at the end of the day, principals must have that, you know, a breather and a support system for them to function well in their role continuously.

**Additional Question**

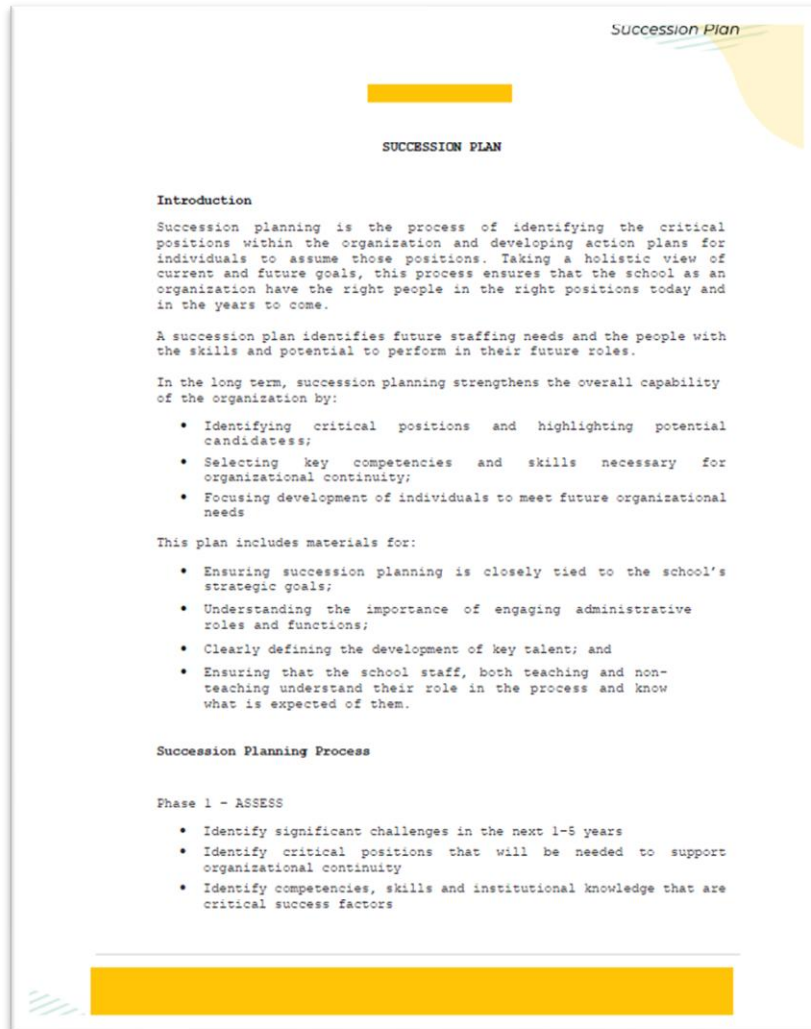
**Interviewer:** Will the school be prepared if one of the principals resigns?

**Participant:** The school is prepared for the transition because the ecosystem is very supportive. So, I mentioned supportive and enabling learning environments. The school will be alright if that is maintained and a new principal is onboarded. With a new leader, the leader serves and learns simultaneously.

**Appendix 8.1.** Cover of the Succession Plan of a Philippine Private School



## Appendix 8.2. Introduction Part of the Succession Plan including its Definition and Description, and One of its Phases



**Appendix 8.3.** One of the Templates of the Succession Plan (Template No. 4) Named High Potential Employee Identification

*Succession Plan*

Succession Planning Template No. 4 - High Potential Employee Identification

**HIGH POTENTIAL EMPLOYEE IDENTIFICATION**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Position Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Unit: \_\_\_\_\_

Years in Current Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Current Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_

Target Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Target Position Key Competencies: \_\_\_\_\_

Ready:  now  within 1 year  within 2 years  within 3-5 years

**ACTION PLAN:**

**Appendix 9.** A Real Sample of Quirks Canvas Coding for Filipino Principal A

