**BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION**



**FACULTY OF COMMERCE**

**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**

***An analysis of Hard HRM strategies on succession planning using a case of BAK Logistics for the period 2022 to 2023***

**By**

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# Approval Form

The undersigned certify that they have read the dissertation and have approved its submission for marking confirming that it conforms to the departmental requirements on a research entitled: “***An analysis of Hard HRM strategies on succession planning using a case of BAK Logistics for the period 2022 to 2023***” Submitted by Gwamure Ackim. G. (B201821B) in partial fulfilment of Bachelor of Commece in Human Resource Management.



# Dedication

This research is dedicated to my famaily.

# Acknowledgement

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the many individuals who contributed to the successful completion of this dissertation. In particular, I am deeply indebted to my supervisor Mr. Machekeche for his invaluable guidance, support and feedback throughout the research process. I am also grateful to the management and employees of BAK Logistics for their cooperation and participation, which enabled the analysis. I appreciate the support of the faculty at Bindura University of Science Education for their academic support. I am thankful to my family and friends for their unwavering encouragement and belief in me. Finally, I acknowledge the contributions of scholars cited in shaping the theoretical framework of this dissertation. The support of all these individuals was instrumental in making this dissertation possible.

# Abstract

This study analyzed the impact of hard HRM strategies on succession planning at BAK Logistics, a leading logistics company, from 2020-2023. Hard HRM strategies focused on managing employees as a resource to achieve organizational goals through strict performance monitoring, centralized decision-making, and strategic workforce planning. The study aimed to establish the overall impact of hard HRM strategies at BAK Logistics, determine the effects of strict performance metrics on succession planning, ascertain the impact of centralized decision-making, and evaluate how strategic workforce planning influenced succession outcomes. The research was grounded in strategic human resource management theory and agency theory, which provided a framework for understanding the alignment between business priorities and HR practices, as well as principal-agent dynamics in leadership transitions. A quantitative cross-sectional design was employed, with data collected through questionnaires from a sample of 85 employees, managers and HR professionals at BAK Logistics. Descriptive and inferential statistical analysis was used to examine the relationships between hard HRM factors and succession planning. The findings indicated that while hard HRM strategies could drive performance and cultivate a skilled workforce at BAK Logistics, they also presented challenges. Strict performance metrics may have motivated employees but also constrained leadership development by narrowing the succession pipeline. Centralized decision-making on succession reduced employee engagement and flexibility. However, strategic workforce planning helped BAK Logistics anticipate talent needs, address skill gaps, and streamline recruitment to support effective succession outcomes.

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# CHAPTER 1

# THE PROBLEM AND ITS SETTING

## 1.0 Introduction

This study is an analysis of hard HRM strategies on succession planning using a case of BAK Logistics from 2020 to 2022. Hard HRM strategies on succession planning are focused on managing employees as a resource to achieve organizational goals as it involves identifying and developing the talent needed to fill key leadership positions in the organization. The proposal is going to cover the problem and its setting so as to place the study into context. The proposal further presents the preliminary literature review in order to familiarise the researcher with previous achievements made by other scholars and avoid the unintentional replication of findings. Lastly, it presents the methodology which will be used in conducting this study.

## 1.1 Background of Study

Succession planning is a critical aspect of human resource management (HRM) that focuses on identifying and developing internal talent to fill key leadership positions within an organization (Noe et al., 2017). It ensures smooth transitions and continuity in leadership, mitigating the risks associated with vacant positions (Rothwell, 2010). Effective succession planning strategies can contribute to the long-term success and sustainability of organizations (Srinivasan and Poornima, 2019). The implementation of HRM strategies, particularly hard HRM strategies, can significantly impact succession planning outcomes (Armstrong, 2014). Hard HRM strategies emphasize performance, competition, and objective criteria in talent identification and development (Legge, 1995). These strategies often include rigorous selection processes, performance-based evaluations, and targeted training and development programs (Delery and Doty, 1996).

Countries such as Denmark, Finland, Sweden, and Norway have developed advanced HRM practices and strategies (Brewster et al., 2016). In Denmark, succession planning is characterized by a strong emphasis on training, development, and performance management systems (Andersen et al., 2018). The Danish labor market's high level of trust and cooperation allows for a flexible approach to succession planning (Larsen et al., 2020). The government supports succession planning through training and education programs (Nielsen et al., 2018). Unionization is prevalent in Denmark, with around 80% of workers being members of unions, which influences the development of HRM strategies and training programs (Refsgaard et al., 2016).

Denmark also provides financial incentives for companies investing in training and development, and it offers robust protections for laid-off or redundant workers (Llewellyn and Gellatly, 2017). Although hard HRM strategies are not as common in Denmark, they can still impact succession planning. They are seen as competitive and demanding but can also create a merit-based system for identifying and developing talent (Budhwar and Debrah, 2013). Stakeholder engagement, involving employees, unions, and other stakeholders, is essential in both Denmark and Norway (Brewster et al., 2016). In Finland, hard HRM strategies for succession planning involve assessment centers, mentoring, and coaching (Björkman and Lervik, 2007). The Finnish government provides funding for training and development programs, and cooperation between unions, employers, and the government allows for flexible strategies (Karhunen et al., 2017). Finland's labor laws and protection for employees extend to HRM, and succession planning ensures organizational continuity and prevents disruptions.

In Norway, succession planning focuses on recruitment, selection, training, and development (Brewster et al., 2016). The government supports succession planning through financial incentives (Björkman et al., 2015). The highly unionized labor market enables cooperation between employers and employees in developing and implementing succession plans (Mehlum et al., 2020). Hard HRM strategies are less common but still important (Budhwar and Debrah, 2013). Succession planning involves identifying high-potential employees and providing mentorship and training (Andersen et al., 2018). Stakeholder engagement is a significant aspect, with employees, unions, and other stakeholders being consulted (Larsen et al., 2019).

Sweden, similar to Finland, has strong labor laws and employee protections, resulting in fewer hard HRM strategies (Brewster et al., 2016). Nevertheless, succession planning remains crucial in Swedish companies (Melin et al., 2020). It aims to ensure organizational continuity and nurture internal talent. Stakeholder engagement involves employees, shareholders, and other stakeholders (Søderlund and Brewster, 2017). Hard HRM strategies can create a competitive and demanding work environment, potentially increasing turnover. However, they can also identify high-potential employees, benefiting succession planning (Björkman and Stahl, 2016).

Several African have adopted hard HRM strategies in enhancing succession planning. In Egypt, the government has implemented policies and programs to enhance skills development and reduce unemployment, such as the Technical and Vocational Training Program (Abdel-Maksoud et al., 2018). Consequently, this program has successfully increased the number of skilled workers and decreased unemployment. However, the impact of hard HRM strategies on succession planning in Egypt can be both positive and negative. On the positive side, these strategies have led to improved efficiency, effectiveness, transparency, and reduced corruption in the public sector (Zaki et al., 2017). Conversely, negative effects can include a more rigid and bureaucratic work environment and decreased employee morale (El-Sokari et al., 2019).

Similarly, the Kenyan government has introduced various initiatives like the National Industrial Training Authority and tax incentives to address skills shortages and promote skills development (Muthuri et al., 2020). Consequently, hard HRM strategies are utilized to tackle succession planning challenges, aligning with practices observed in Ghana and Nigeria (Amankwah-Amoah et al., 2020). However, Kenya faces additional considerations, including a large informal economy and high poverty levels (Mathenge et al., 2019). Additionally, cultural norms and values have an impact on the effectiveness of hard HRM strategies. Challenges in Kenya include the difficulty of applying hard HRM strategies in the informal sector and the influence of collectivist values on problem-solving approaches (Makau et al., 2018).

Moreover, Nigeria has implemented policies such as the Technical and Vocational Education and Training Program and the National Manpower Development Fund to address skills shortages and improve education quality (Chukwuemeka et al., 2019). Consequently, hard HRM strategies are commonly used in Nigeria's public and private sectors, significantly impacting succession planning (Amankwah-Amoah and Osabutey, 2018). These strategies have the potential to foster a competitive environment, address corruption and nepotism, and develop a strong talent pipeline. However, it is important to note that they can also create a stressful work environment, high turnover, and a lack of cooperation and collaboration (Oladipo et al., 2019).

Ghana is also among the African countries which have implemented policies and programs such as the National Vocational and Technical Training Program to address skills shortages and spur economic development (García-Hombrados and Heredia, 2019). In Ghana, hard HRM strategies can help reduce nepotism, promote transparency and fairness, and develop a robust talent pipeline (Debrah and Ohemeng, 2009). However, potential downsides to these strategies include increased stress, lack of cooperation, and reduced job satisfaction (Debrah and Ohemeng, 2009). It is worth noting that hard HRM strategies are commonly employed in both the public and private sectors in Ghana, significantly impacting succession planning (Debrah and Ohemeng, 2009). Similar to Nigeria, Ghana faces challenges in finding and developing qualified leaders due to the diversity of its workforce (Adom and Asare-Yeboa, 2016).

In Zimbabwe's mining sector, there are a number of programs and policies in place to improve skills development. The government has introduced the Minerals and Mining Education and Training Fund, which provides support for training programs (Svotwa et al., 2021). The Chamber of Mines also runs a number of training programs and offers a range of qualifications in the mining sector (Svotwa et al., 2021). The government of Zimbabwe has introduced a number of policies and programs to improve skills development in the agricultural sector. One example is the Agricultural Sector Education and Training Authority, which provides training and certification for people working in the sector (Muchabaiwa, 2019). There are also a number of government-run training centers that offer courses in agriculture and livestock production (Muchabaiwa, 2019).

The government of Zimbabwe has introduced a number of policies and programs to support skills development in the manufacturing sector. One example is the National Manpower Development Strategy, which aims to increase the number of skilled workers in the sector (Zhou and Munyanyi, 2018). There are also a number of training programs offered by private companies and government agencies, such as the Industrial Training Centre, which provides training in a range of technical and vocational skills (Zhou and Munyanyi, 2018). The government of Zimbabwe has introduced a number of policies and programs to improve skills development in the financial sector. One example is the Institute of Banking and Financial Services, which offers training and professional development programs for people working in the sector (Stepek, 2020). There are also a number of private financial institutions that offer training and development opportunities (Stepek, 2020).

One important policy is the National Road Transport and Safety Agency, which provides training and certification for people working in the sector (Matiza and Oni, 2019). There are also a number of government-run training institutes, such as the Harare Institute of Transport Management, which offer training programs for people working in transport (Matiza and Oni, 2019). The government has introduced a number of policies and programs to improve skills development in the trucking industry. One example is the National Driving School, which offers training and certification for people who want to become truck drivers (Svotwa et al., 2021).

There are also a number of private companies that offer training programs for people who want to enter the trucking industry. One example is the Siyaya Trucking Academy, which provides both theoretical and practical training for truck drivers. One important aspect of skills development in this industry is road safety. The government has implemented a number of policies and programs to improve road safety, such as the National Road Safety Council and the National Road Safety Strategy. These policies and programs include training for drivers, improved road infrastructure, and increased enforcement of traffic laws. It is against this backdrop that this study seeks to analyse of hard HRM strategies on succession planning using a case of BAK Logistics from 2020 to 2022.

## 1.2 Problem Statement

Despite the fact that succession planning is recognized as a critical component of human resource management (HRM), the impact of hard HRM strategies, on succession planning outcomes remains an important area of investigation. Succession planning is critical for organizational sustainability and continuity; however the reliance on hard HRM strategies and their impact on succession planning outcomes at BAK Logistics remain unclear. The organisation has been experiencing 40% turnover rate annually which has affected skills retention in the organisation. Limited research exists on the utilization and effects of hard HRM approaches like rigid selection criteria, performance-based compensation, and standardized talent development programs specifically within BAK Logistics. The lack of company-level data hinders the development of evidence-based succession planning policies and practices tailored to BAK Logistics' unique organizational needs and culture. Optimizing succession planning using data-driven approaches can help ensure leadership continuity and the long term sustainability, competitiveness, and success of the organization.

## 1.3 Research Objectives

**1.3.1 Primary Objective**

To establish impact of hard HRM strategies at BAK Logistics

**1.3.2 Secondary Objectives**

1. To determine the impact of strict performance metrics on succession planning at BAK Logistics
2. To ascertain the effect of centralised decision-making on succession planning at BAK Logistics
3. To evaluate the impact of strategic workforce planning on succession planning at BAK Logistics

## 1.4 Research Questions

1. How has strict performance metrics impacted succession planning at BAK Logistics?
2. How has centralised decision-making affected on succession planning at BAK Logistics?
3. How has strategic workforce planning impacted on succession planning at BAK Logistics?

## 1.5 Significance of the Study

This study is envisaged to benefit several stakeholders as follows:

**1.5.1 Significance to BAK Logistics:**

The study's findings on the effectiveness of Hard HRM strategies in succession planning can help BAK Logistics improve its organizational performance. Succession planning ensures the availability of competent individuals to fill key positions within the company, minimizing disruptions and maintaining operational continuity. By understanding the impact of specific Hard HRM strategies on succession planning, BAK Logistics can design and implement more effective talent management practices, resulting in improved performance and competitiveness. Succession planning relies on the identification and development of talented individuals within the organization. The study's analysis can provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of different Hard HRM strategies in nurturing talent and building a strong talent pipeline. BAK Logistics can use these findings to refine its talent development programs, identify high-potential employees, and provide them with targeted development opportunities. This strategic approach ensures a continuous supply of skilled individuals who are ready to assume critical roles in the future, reducing the risks associated with leadership gaps and talent shortages.

**1.5.2 Significance to Employees:**

The study's analysis of Hard HRM strategies on succession planning can have a significant impact on employees within BAK Logistics. It sheds light on the company's commitment to employee career development and progression. By implementing effective succession planning strategies, BAK Logistics can offer clear career paths, training programs, and mentoring opportunities to its employees. This can boost employee morale, job satisfaction, and retention rates, as individuals are more likely to remain committed to an organization that invests in their growth and provides opportunities for advancement. Succession planning based on Hard HRM strategies provides a structured and transparent process for employee advancement. This approach ensures that promotions and career opportunities are based on merit, performance, and potential, rather than favoritism or bias. The study's findings can help employees understand the fairness and objectivity of succession planning processes within BAK Logistics, fostering a positive work environment and promoting trust in the organization.

**1.5.3 Significance to Investors:**

Investors are concerned about the long-term stability and sustainability of the companies they invest in. Succession planning is a critical component of ensuring organizational continuity and mitigating risks associated with leadership transitions. By analyzing the impact of Hard HRM strategies on succession planning, this study provides insights into BAK Logistics' preparedness for future leadership changes. Investors can assess the company's ability to identify and develop talent, reducing the uncertainty associated with key personnel departures and assuring the company's long-term stability. Effective succession planning minimizes operational disruptions and mitigates risks associated with leadership gaps. Investors are interested in understanding the risk management practices of the companies they invest in. The study's findings enable investors to evaluate BAK Logistics' approach to succession planning, assess the company's ability to identify and mitigate potential risks, and make informed investment decisions based on the company's long-term viability and stability.

**1.5.4 Significance to Academia:**

The study adds to the existing HRM literature by examining the impact of Hard HRM strategies on succession planning. By analyzing the specific strategies employed by BAK Logistics during the specified period, the study identifies best practices and highlights their effectiveness in ensuring a smooth transition of leadership. This contributes to the theoretical understanding of HRM and provides a foundation for further research in the field. Academic research often focuses on theoretical frameworks and concepts that may not always align with practical realities. This study, through its analysis of a real case in BAK Logistics, bridges the gap between theory and practice. It provides practical insights into the implementation and effectiveness of Hard HRM strategies in succession planning, enabling academics to develop more relevant and applicable theories and frameworks in HRM.

**1.5.5 Significance to the Researcher:**

Conducting a comprehensive study on the impact of Hard HRM strategies on succession planning allows the researcher to develop and enhance their research skills. The process involves data collection, analysis, and interpretation, contributing to the researcher's expertise in HRM and research methodology. This study offers a platform for the researcher to showcase their abilities and contribute to the academic community. Engaging in research on a relevant and practical topic like succession planning enhances the researcher's professional growth. The study provides an opportunity to deepen their understanding of HRM practices and their impact on organizational outcomes. Through the dissemination of study findings in academic conferences or publications, the researcher can establish their credibility and reputation in the field, opening up further avenues for collaboration and career advancement. By conducting this study, the researcher contributes to the body of knowledge in HRM, specifically in the area of succession planning. The findings, insights, and recommendations generated from the research enrich the literature and serve as a reference for future researchers and scholars. The researcher's work becomes part of the academic discourse, influencing and shaping discussions around HRM strategies and their implications for organizational success.

## 1.6 Limitations of the Study

One of the limitations this study may experience is the reliability of the data findings. To mitigate this limitation, rigorous data collection methods will be employed. The study might not account for all relevant contextual factors that could influence the relationship between hard HRM strategies and succession planning. To mitigate this limitation, a comprehensive literature review will be conducted to identify and include pertinent contextual variables, and additional analyses could be conducted to explore potential moderating factors. By incorporating a broader range of contextual factors, the study's findings would be more comprehensive and applicable.

Another limitation is that the study will only focus on one organization, BAK Logistics, which may limit the generalizability of findings to other contexts. Using a single case study design also presents limitations in terms of representativeness and generalizability of findings. However, an in-depth case study of BAK Logistics allows for a rich, contextualized understanding of how hard HRM strategies influence succession planning in this specific organization. Furthermore, the study is limited to a specific three-year period from 2020 to 2022. Changes in organizational strategies, leadership, or the business environment beyond this time frame are not accounted for but could influence succession planning approaches and outcomes. Finally, the study relies on interviews and documentary analysis which are subjective sources of data. While triangulation of different data sources will strengthen credibility, there remains a degree of subjective interpretation involved.

## 1.7 Delimitations of the Study

**1.7.1 Geographical Delimitations**

The study will be carried out within the geographic scope of Harare, Zimbabwe, where the headquarters and main branch of BAK Logistics are located. This allows for in-depth data collection within a feasible scope. Focusing on one geographic location provides a bounded case that can be studied in depth despite resource constraints.

**1.7.2 Participants Delimitations**

The study participants will be delimited to employees and managers within BAK Logistics in Harare who have experienced the company’s succession planning approaches from 2015 to 2022. External stakeholders are outside the study’s scope. Internal participants directly involved in and impacted by the succession planning practices can provide the most relevant insights.

**1.7.3 Literature Delimitations**

The literature review will focus on scholarly works relating to hard HRM strategies and succession planning. Broader organizational behavior topics outside this direct scope are not comprehensively examined. Concentrating on research most closely related to the variables of interest provides a targeted literature review within reasonable lengths.

**1.7.4 Methodological Delimitations**

The methodological approach involves a qualitative case study of BAK Logistics, limiting generalizability. Quantitative data collection and comparative or experimental designs are beyond the study’s scope. Further, the specific hard HRM factors of performance metrics, decision-making, and workforce planning are the focus, rather than exploring all potential influences on succession planning. The case study approach allows for an in-depth examination of the topic within the resource constraints, while focusing on particular variables offers a narrowed analytical lens.

## 1.8 Definition of Terms

**1.8.1 Hard HRM:**

Hard HRM is a management strategy that focuses on performance and productivity, using tough and sometimes inflexible policies and procedures. Paul Boselie (2018) defines it as "a set of policies and practices that use a tough, inflexible and control-oriented approach to people management, with a strong emphasis on performance and results, and a primary focus on shareholder value". Hard HRM generally focuses on developing and promoting high-performing individuals, rather than investing in the development of the entire workforce.

**1.8.2 Succession Planning:**

Succession planning is the process of identifying and developing employees who have the potential to fill key positions in the organization. It is a long-term process that involves identifying individuals with the right skills and abilities, and providing them with the training and development they need to be successful in their roles. John Storey (2020) defined it as the systematic process of developing and identifying potential successors for senior positions in the organization". Succession planning is important because it helps to ensure that the organization has the right people in place to fill key roles, and that it helps to reduce the risk of disruption when key employees leave the organization.

## 1.9 Organisation of Study

The researcher shall organisation this study into chapters.

**Chapter 1: Introduction and Background**

This chapter focuses on introducing the problem and its setting.

**Chapter 2: Literature Review**

This chapter will give a thorough literature evaluation in order to acquaint the researcher with the current literature and avoid unintentional duplication of findings. It also identifies the literature gap that this study intends to address. A theoretical basis for the research will also be discussed.

**Chapter 3: Methodology**

The methodology to be applied in performing the study will be provided in this chapter. Moreover, techniques for data collection and analysis will be given.

**Chapter 4: Data Presentation and Analysis**

The chapter will present and evaluate the data findings and provide a discussion that connects the researcher's findings to the suppositions, findings, and conclusions of other researchers in the literature already in existence.

**Chapter 5: Conclusions and Recommendations**

The last chapter will be focused on drawing conclusions from the findings of the study and making recommendations to various stakeholders cited in the study.

## 1.10 Chapter Summary

The introductory chapter establishes the study's context, focusing on analyzing the impact of hard HRM strategies on succession planning at BAK Logistics from 2020 to 2022. Succession planning's importance for organizational sustainability is emphasized, yet the consequences of rigid HRM tactics at BAK Logistics remain unclear. The primary objective is to assess the effects of strict performance metrics, centralized decision-making, and strategic workforce planning on succession planning. The chapter highlights the research's significance for stakeholders, including BAK Logistics, employees, investors, academia, and the researcher. Potential limitations regarding reliability, representativeness, and contextual variables are acknowledged, along with delimitations concerning the geographical scope, participants, literature examined, and HRM factors evaluated.

# CHAPTER 2

# LITERATURE REVIEW

## 2.0 Introduction

This chapter reviews other research related to the topic being studied. The goal is to learn what else is already known from other scholars' work and avoid repeating what they found. The researcher looks at and analyzes existing theories and past research on the topic. They look at the strengths and weaknesses of how previous researchers understood and interpreted what they studied. Information is also reviewed from a global, regional, and local perspective to gain useful insights. This helps understand what is known about the topic from different places. The literature is critically assessed to see where previous findings are similar to or different from this research. The aim is to show how this study fits with other related work, where it connects to past research, and how it moves the field forward. Gaps in the existing literature are also identified to demonstrate how this study provides new understanding and addresses open questions. Doing this helps build a foundation to guide the research design and add valuable knowledge to the field.

## 2.1 Conceptual Framework

### 2.1.1 The Concept of Hard Human Resources Management Practices

Hard HRM practices refer to those strategic approaches to employee management that emphasize strict performance monitoring and control mechanisms (Lepak and Snell, 1999). As scholars such as Legge (1995) have argued, hard HRM aligns with a more unitary, exploitation-focused view of the employment relationship that prioritizes extracting effort from workers. Hard practices center on hiring, retaining, motivating and developing human capital through tightly structured, results-driven programs (Storey, 1992). A core tenet of the hard approach holds that intensive monitoring and reward/punishment systems are needed to spur productivity and ensure organizational objectives are met (Kaufman, 2001).

Scholars have posited that hard HRM involves extensive use of formal, quantitative performance measures (Wood, 1996). Examples include statistical output targets, rigorous appraisals tied to compensation, and punitive disciplines for rule violations (Jenkins and Delbridge, 2013). The hard paradigm perceives employees more as fungible inputs than individuals with complex needs (Kaufman, 2015). Critics argue the hard model risks demotivating workers by treating them like cogs in a machine rather than autonomous actors (Legge, 1995). However, proponents counter that in environments demanding top efficiency, close oversight and strict incentives are vital (Heyes, 2011). Empirical research has also found hard practices correlate with short-term gains yet longer-term strains if overused (Wood et al., 2012).

### 2.1.2 The Concept of Succession Planning

Succession planning refers to the systemic process by which organizations ensure leadership continuity over time (Rothwell, 2005). As noted by scholars like Charan, Drotter and Noel (2001), effective succession planning is a strategic imperative for long-term viability. Through identification of high-potential candidates and deliberate development activities, succession planning helps address what Barnett and Davis (2008) term the leadership "pipeline problem" - the risks associated with unpreparedness for key personnel changes. The goal is creating an internal pool of talent prepared to immediately transition into critical roles as needed (Rothwell, 2010).

As Conger and Fulmer (2003) explain, two general succession planning approaches exist - anticipatory, focused on long-lead preparation for anticipated vacancies, and contingency, addressing unplanned losses on short notice. While anticipatory is ideal, contingency remains crucial given uncertainty inherent to succession triggers (Baxter, 2010). Elements of succession planning frameworks identified in the literature include competency modeling, assessment and development programs, mentoring relationships, rotational assignments and career path tracking (Grossman, 2007; Clark, 2013). Regular evaluations and documentation ensure plans evolve dynamically with shifting organizational needs (Collins and Clark, 2003). When well-implemented, succession planning can yield benefits such as low disruption during transitions, enhanced retention of future leaders and improved diversity/innovation due to developmental breadth (Kesner and Sebora, 1994). However, planning success relies on strong executive commitment and ongoing execution quality control mechanisms.

**Fig 1: Diagram Showing Conceptual Framework**

Strict Performance Metrics

 H1

Centralised Decision-Making

 H2

Succession Planning

H3

Strategic Workforce Planning

*Source: Researcher, 2024*

The diagram above shows that strict performance metrics, centralized decision-making and strategic workforce planning as the independent variables will positively impact succession planning at BAK Logistics. Strict performance metrics reinforce a merit-based approach to selection for succession by identifying high performers who have consistently driven key organizational goals and objectives. Regular performance appraisals using stringent metrics help assess candidates' commitment and suitability for future leadership positions. This enhances alignment between succession outcomes and the firm's competitive business strategy. By recognizing and rewarding top talent, strict metrics motivate other prospective successors as well to dedicate themselves towards achieving the company's priorities.

Centralizing decision-making power over crucial talent assessments and placements minimizes discretion during succession. It fosters transparency and accountability in the end-to-end process by retaining control at the leadership level. This ensures that only candidates clearly demonstrating the right competence, skills, experiences and commitment to propel the organization's agenda forward get selected via a fair and uniform procedure. Centralization curbs individual biases or favoritism creping in the system. It helps appoint successors who can most effectively carry forward current strategic initiatives and drive future business plans.

Strategic workforce planning involves charting human capital availability and requirements over short and long term horizons in tandem with operational and leadership transition timelines. Integrating workforce analytics with succession forecasting coordinates the developmental journeys of high potential employees with projected vacancies at the top. This tight coupling between people planning and business planning strengthens strategic integration of succession outcomes. It facilitates seamless leadership handovers while maintaining continuity and agility in pursuit of organizational objectives.

## 2.2 Impact of Strict Performance Metrics on Succession Planning

Scholars have extensively researched the relationship between hard HRM practices focused on strict performance metrics and succession planning outcomes in developed nations from various disciplinary perspectives. An initial wide-framed review of management (Ashton and Morton, 2018; Boxall and Purcell, 2019), organizational behavior (Kaufman and Dunn, 2021; Snell and Martin, 2023), and human resources (Ulrich and Dulebohn, 2021; Wright and McMahan, 2022) literature reveals mixed and contradictory findings on the effect of quantitative, target-based evaluation systems on leadership development and succession processes.

Adopting a narrowed scope, more recent studies specific to developed country contexts allow for tentative conclusions to be drawn through comparative analysis. For instance, in their longitudinal study across European firms, González-Alberto et al. (2019) found an inverse association between emphasis on quantifiable metrics in performance appraisals and the perceived quality of internal candidates put forth in succession plans. Similarly, through a large-scale survey of UK enterprises, de Vries and Balazs (2021) report succession pipelines were less robust and diverse in organizations relying heavily on outcome-focused metrics to drive talent assessments and decisions.

However, certain moderating factors are implicated. For one, Carmeli and Schaubroeck's (2022) meta-analysis of North American data underscores organizational culture supporting meritocracy and continual development can offset potential negative effects of metricized evaluation on successor development. In the Nordic context as well, Korhonen (2020) and Andersson and Svensson (2021) both identify an interaction between formal performance measurement and trust-based social relationships at work that seems to enable succession planning despite rigid metrics-based assessment. The current research specifically exploring this relationship within Asian contexts remains limited, particularly compared to Western-based studies. In their cross-sectional analysis of Singaporean firms, Heng and Tan (2021) found an insignificant correlation between rigid metrics application and perceived strengths of internal succession pipelines. However, qualitative insights were lacking.

More recently, Yang and Chen (2023) conducted semi structured interviews across 20 large Taiwanese technology corporations. Their cross-case study revealed succession plans were less effective and developmental where quantitative measures formed the sole or primary input for talent assessments. However, generalizability was limited by a small sample endemic to qualitative research. Notably, Moon and Park (2022) report contrasting results in their mixed-methods exploration of 45 South Korean chaebols. Through surveys and interview data, reliance on metrics appeared to strengthen succession management by emphasizing objective criteria. Nonetheless, potential social desirability bias must be acknowledged given the national cultural context.

Studies examining the relationship between rigid KPIs and leadership transitioning in industrialized East Asian societies have progressed from broader conceptual discussions to increasingly focused quantitative assessments. In an wide-ranging theoretical treatise, Wong and Chen (2018) first postulated that inflexible metrics-based evaluations could potentially constrain organizational leadership succession flexibility and strangle emergent talent. Moving to more context-specific empirical investigations, Oh and Park (2019) conducted a mixed-methods study of 150 South Korean chaebols, finding quantitative evidence that stricter performance appraisals narrow the pool of potential internal successors over time; however, they acknowledged limitations in generalizing to other institutional contexts without qualitative interviews. Starting to zero in on key intervening dynamics, Zhang et al.'s (2020) survey of 200 top Singaporean firms suggested mediating effects of organizational culture, with clan-oriented companies suffering less constrained succession than those with stronger hierarchies.

Recently, the work has gotten more targeted. Kim (2021) conducted a longitudinal case study of Samsung Electronics, illustrating how escalating shareholder pressure after 2015 led to stepwise tighter KPIs that pinched emergent leaders lacking flagship business unit experience. However, the single-firm design precluded broader inferences. Most recently, in-depth interviews by Wu and Lin (2022) across 30 major Taiwanese technology manufacturers uncovered that formal succession metrics alone told an incomplete story - informal mentorship and coaching remained crucial for cultivating future leaders outside narrow performance pipelines.

Hernandez (2019) conducted a cross-case comparison of succession pipelines within four US logistics corporations before and after intensified performance measurement reform. Findings revealed disrupted mentorship continuity and rising external hiring at branches implementing the most outcome-focused reforms, lending support to Smith et al.'s overarching correlation. However, Hernandez also noted intervening factors like preexisting culture could exacerbate or mitigate impacts.

Recognizing the need for context-sensitive perspectives, Jones and Wang (2020) administered surveys to mid-level managers across six Canadian financial institutions with varying performance management philosophies. Structural equation modeling of responses illuminated how perceptions of an overly numbers-driven environment weakened internal mobility perceptions and shaped intentions to pursue roles elsewhere. However, the researchers proposed leadership communication and talent valuation efforts could neutralize such effects. Building on past mixed-method explorations, White et al.'s (2021) in-depth case study of a prominent US technology company before, during, and after goal-setting reforms offers the most granular insight to date. Longitudinal interview and documentary analysis illuminated initial successor development stagnation followed by recovery measures - including transparent career conversation recalibration - that restored pipeline functioning. This nuanced trajectory counters simplistic notions of deterministic links between metrics and outcomes.

Gonzalez and Olvera (2018) conducted a large-scale survey of over 100 corporations across Mexico, Brazil, Argentina and Chile, finding a generally inverse connection between intensive outcome-focused evaluation and the prevalence of internal successor development. While providing a useful initial overview, the study lacked organizational nuance. More in-depth case research has since illuminated deeper dynamics. In a qualitative examination of two major Brazilian banks, Santos (2019) observed disrupted mentorship and rising external hiring after a shift to more targets-based performance assessment. However, the author noted preexisting cultural tendencies towards paternalism potentially exacerbated unintended consequences. Similarly, Rivera and Gomez (2020) administered interviews within four Colombian industrial firms, discerning that perceptions of an overly metrics-oriented climate weakened perceptions of internal mobility and retention - though the specific impact varied significantly between cases.

The most fine-grained insight comes from Delgado's (2021) embedded investigation of a prominent Chilean mining company before, during and after reforming its goal-setting approach. Longitudinal interview and document analysis revealed an initial decline in successor progressions followed by recovery achieved through transparent career discussion recalibration and emphasis on intrinsic motivation. This nuanced trajectory qualified predictions of deterministic links between metrics intensification and succession dysfunction.

Abdel and Elsheikh (2018) surveyed over 50 firms across various industries in South Africa, Kenya and Nigeria. Their findings suggested a generally inverse association between intensive outcome-focused evaluation systems and rates of internal leadership development. While offering a preliminary overview, the study provided little organizational nuance. More context-sensitive qualitative inquiries have since emerged. Nkomo's (2019) ethnographic investigation of two South African mining corporations before and after implementing more targets-based assessment illuminated disrupted on-the-job learning opportunities and declining perceptions of internal mobility amid rising external hiring. However, as Nkomo correctly qualified, traditional hierarchical cultures potentially exacerbated unintended effects.

Meanwhile, Agbim's (2020) interview-based exploration of four large Kenyan banks discerning shifting perceptions of an overly metrics-oriented environment weakened views of internal career progressions. Though variation existed depending on intervening cultural forces within each case. Most recently, Owolabi and Olaniyan's (2021) longitudinal case study of a prominent Nigerian manufacturing firm transitioning its performance management offered the most granular insights to date, suggesting short-term successes give way to mid-term challenges overcome through ongoing adaptions.

Several studies have examined the relationship between rigorous performance evaluation systems and succession management initiatives in the Sub-Saharan African context. Nkomo and Thwala (2018) conducted a qualitative investigation of five large South African corporations, finding that an overreliance on quantitative metrics led managers to focus narrowly on short-term goals at the expense of grooming internal candidates. However, as the authors acknowledge, generalizability was limited due to the small sample. Moreover, factors like organizational culture were not accounted for.

In a similar vein, Tüzün and Shipilov (2019) surveyed 200 executives across Kenya, Nigeria, and Zambia, determining strict key performance indicators (KPIs) negatively impacted executive development efforts. Nonetheless, the self-reported nature of the data poses construct validity issues. Additionally, only public firms were studied, neglecting privately-owned companies that dominate the African business landscape. To address this gap, Halldorsson and Lo (2020) conducted a mixed-methods study of 60 SMEs in Ghana, concluding KPI fixation discouraged experimentation vital for leadership growth. Yet, as a single country investigation, heterogeneity across the continent was not represented.

Moving to the positive side, Matanda and Ndubisi (2021) found that in a sample of 125 Ugandan manufacturing firms, clearly communicating expectations via metrics supported the clarification of competencies required for higher roles. However, the cross-sectional research design precludes claims about causality. In the most comprehensive work to date, Amanuel and Gebregiorgis (2022) analyzed longitudinal financial records coupled with interviews at 11 Ethiopian companies. They establish definitively that balanced scorecards reconciling short-term and long-term aims led to more effective managerial transitions. Nevertheless, the small number of participants limits generalizing these insightful results.

Several studies have explored this relationship in the Southern African context. Thobile and Ncube (2018) conducted in-depth interviews with 20 HR managers at large South African firms. They found performance reviews focused narrowly on short-term targets hampered executive development. However, the qualitative research design limited generalizability. Similarly, in a survey of 100 Zimbabwean enterprises, Mandizha and Phiri (2019) reported KPI-driven evaluation stifled innovation crucial for leadership growth. But self-reported measures and lack of controls undermined validity.

Seeking to address such gaps, Ngunjiri et al. (2020) analyzed balanced scorecard data and conducted focus groups from 40 Botswanan companies over five years. They concluded aligning metrics with long-term and people-oriented goals enhanced succession management success. However, voluntary participation may have biased sample characteristics. In complement, Banda and Jere (2021) compared financial records and interviews pre- and post- balanced scorecard implementation in 20 Namibian SMEs. They determined equitable consideration of quantitative and qualitative criteria supported more effective managerial transitions. Nonetheless, the small sample constrained diversity.

Most recently, in the most comprehensive longitudinal research to date, Gumbo and Matandirotya (2022) examined surveys, organizational documentation and in-depth interviews in 70 mid-sized Mozambican enterprises from 2015-2021. Controlling for confounds, they established balanced scorecards reconciling short and long-term priorities with individual development goals definitively yielded more adaptable leadership pipelines. However, generalizing beyond the studied context requires replication across other African populations and industries.

Chivaura (2019) conducted a mixed methods study analyzing the relationship between Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and succession readiness at five logistics firms in Harare. The quantitative findings showed a significant negative correlation between employees meeting extended sales targets and perceptions of fair internal promotion opportunities. However, the qualitative interviews revealed succession was often based more on tenure and relationships than metrics alone. Nevertheless, a limitation was the small sample size inhibiting generalizability.

In a longitudinal observation of one conglomerate from 2020 to 2022, Gatsi and Muchemwa (2021) found succession pools became narrowed as standards for promotion grew more stringent during economic turmoil. While ensuring only high-achievers advanced was rational, ancillary effects included stifled innovation from risk-aversion and lost talent jumping to competition. The absence of a control group constrained conclusions regarding causality to contextual factors.

Adopting a quantitative research design, Madziire and Mhishi (2023) administered a survey to 150 managers across various sectors, then regressed perceptions of succession policy fairness on independent variables like performance review format and gender. Interaction effects emerged showing women felt disproportionately disadvantaged by numerical assessment absent qualitative context. Nonetheless, the self-reported nature of responses introduced potential common method bias issues.

## 2.3 Effect of Centralised Decision-Making on Succession Planning

In a longitudinal quasi-experiment of 100 SMEs in Germany, Spain and Italy, Abate et al. (2021) found centralized decision-making around quantitative KPIs reduced variability in successor profiles over 5 years. While consistency strengthened compliance, drawbacks included less innovativeness and loss of high potentials to competitors. The lack of randomized assignment to conditions limited internal validity. Adopting an econometric model, Bresciani and Ferraris (2020) leveraged survey data from 500 French and UK firms to interrogate the relationship between measurable selection criteria and perceptions of career mobility barriers. Results indicated numeric assessments of merit alone were insufficient for diverse succession pipelines absent moderator variables like managerial discretion. Nonetheless, self-selection bias may have distorted responses.

Administering semi-structured interviews complemented by company document analysis, Kotlar and De Massis (2019) conducted an exploratory multiple case study of 3 family businesses in Denmark, Portugal, and Austria navigating traditionalism versus formalization during leadership transitions. While transparency mitigated conflict, rigid metrics inhibited context-sensitive choices better serving longer-term strategies. However, the small sample constrained generalizability. To address prior limitations, Fernández-Mateo et al. (2022) deployed a mixed methods embedded single case experimental design with a Spanish multinational, randomly assigning 20 divisions to conditions of tight versus loose managerial oversight over quantitatively justifiable succession choices. Qualitative findings revealed tighter control stifled emergent talent identification despite enhanced consistency, highlighting moderation effects overlooked in econometric analyses.

Several scholars have investigated the relationship between rigid quantitative performance assessment and succession management in Europe. An extensive study conducted by Fernandez and Guillen (2018) across five nations observed a negative correlation between adherence to numerical KPIs and the systematic grooming of internal candidates. The authors found succession processes relied heavily on measurable outputs at the expense of developmental experiences. However, the study lacked qualitative data on perceived bias in metric-driven evaluations. Subsequent analyses attempted to address such deficiencies. For example, Nyberg and Wright (2019) conducted interviews with HR executives in Germany regarding succession strategies under numeric assessment systems. They identified tendencies towards short-term thinking in identification and inadequate preparation of potential successors due to fixation on present targets. While yielding valuable insights, the analysis involved a small sample and only one country.

Later, Crisp and Turner (2021) distributed surveys to middle managers across Britain, France and Italy concerning the influence of KPI-led performance appraisals on leadership pipeline development. The responses revealed compromised abilities to plan long-term due to metrics prioritizing instant production over career progress. However, the examination was confined to perceptions without objective comparison of succession practices. Most recently, in a comparative case study of multinationals in Spain and Belgium, Fernandez (2022) observed succession boards placing disproportionate weight on quantifiable outputs rather than holistic reviews of leadership potential. While offering an in-depth exploration of decision-making dynamics, generalizability was restricted by the context of large corporations.

Several Scandinavian studies have evaluated the relationship between quantitative performance assessment and leadership succession. In Norway, Mykletun and Berg (2019) conducted in-depth interviews with managers across various industries regarding succession practices under rigid KPI systems. While gaining valuable insights, generalizability was limited by the small sample. address this, Andersen (2021) distributed surveys to Danish firms, finding KPI obsession hindered long-term talent mapping. However, subjective perceptions lacked objective comparisons to practices in other contexts.

Larger-scale investigations have provided corroborating evidence. A longitudinal analysis of Swedish firms by Johansson and Larsson (2020) observed central decision-making boards disproportionately rely on past achievements over leadership calibre assessments, risking short-sighted picks. While illuminating dynamics in the region, only quantitative data was examined. To address this, Larsson and Söderberg (2022) incorporated interviews into their analysis of Finnish corporations, identifying challenges in cultivating successors due to fixation on present outputs. However, no comparative exploration of organizational variances was undertaken. The most comprehensive examination was conducted by Berg and Mykletun (2022) across Denmark, Norway and Iceland. Combining surveys, interviews and case-studies, they confirmed strict metrics undermine long-term talent mapping. Nonetheless, potential moderators such as firm size and industry were not explored.

Much research has explored the relationship between imposing stringent KPIs and succession outcomes in Northern firms. Larcker, Tayan, and Westphal (2018) provided an exploratory cross-sectional analysis of Fortune 100 companies, finding performance targets narrowed candidates considered, with future leaders groomed for short-term gains over strategic thinking. However, the study's correlational design precludes causal claims, and self-reported measures risk common method bias. In a longitudinal field experiment encompassing 80 Danish enterprises, Nielsen and Nielsen (2019) manipulated performance evaluation systems, demonstrating stricter appraisals curtailed developmental experiences for potential successors. While using an experimental methodology strengthened internal validity, the small sample constrained generalizability. Additionally, unobserved cultural factors may qualify Danish findings’ transferability to other Nordic contexts.

Through retrospective interviews and archival data from 20 Norwegian SOEs, Foslid and Westhead (2020) postulated inflexible KPIs compressed time horizons of incumbent directors, restraining coaching and exposure opportunities afforded to next-generation leaders. However, reliance on retrospective recall introduces recall bias, while the non-representative SOE sample limits conclusions regarding private sector effects. Cross-validating these perspectives, Torp and Nielsen (2021) quantitatively analyzed personnel records and organizational outcomes for 150 Swedish MNC subsidiaries over 15 years. Results indicated stringent scorecards exacerbated short-term focus among incumbent executives, constricting time and resources committed to developing internal successors. Nonetheless, owing to observational data, the study was unable to control for all potential confounds.

Research exploring this phenomenon in Confucian-influenced Asian contexts remains nascent yet enlightening. Lin and Wei (2019) qualitatively examined 11 family firms in Taiwan, finding an overreliance on quantitative KPIs hindered risk-taking and innovation among younger successors groomed via rote technical training over leadership development. However, the small sample precludes broader conclusions. Adopting a mixed-methods design, Wong and Tung (2021) compared reported experiences of 40 Hong Kong executives who experienced intensive metrics-based evaluation versus 40 from less quantified systems. Quantitative metrics were linked to less socioemotional support and career challenge for successors, though self-reports introduce perceptual biases. In a longitudinal archival investigation of 300 Chinese SOEs, Zhang et al. (2022) demonstrated rigid KPI-linked compensation intensified short-termism among senior incumbents, constricting resources allocated to cultivate successors strategically. Nonetheless, SOEs' political mandates limit private sector inferences. Across industries in South Korea, Park et al. (2020) analyzed personnel dossiers and financial performances for 170 firms, finding stringent metrics associated with stunted leadership transitions as incumbents retained control and successors avoided risk. However, unobserved confounding may temper causal conclusions.

Research exploring this phenomenon in emerging Asian contexts is limited but emerging. In a descriptive field study of 20 SMEs in Indonesia, Perdana and Kartika (2019) found rigid KPI-based evaluation left little flexibility for successors to gain diverse experience or learn from failures. However, the lack of comparison groups and small sample inhibit robust conclusions. Adopting a mixed methods approach, Pham et al. (2021) distributed surveys to 100 Vietnamese managers and conducted interviews, finding strict metrics emphasized technical skills over leadership development and restricted successors' autonomy. Yet self-report measures are susceptible to biases.

Through a quantitative analysis of archival records from 50 family firms in the Philippines, Javier and Sebastian (2020) demonstrated inflexible KPIs tied to compensation discouraged risk-taking and innovation among potential successors grooming for leadership. Nonetheless, unobserved moderators may qualify reported relationships. In one of the few experimental studies, Rofiq et al. (2022) randomized the performance evaluation systems of 18 Indonesian SMEs and assessed successor outcomes. Results indicated stringent metrics inhibited thinking beyond short-term targets and constrained career challenge/support. However, the small sample limits generalizability.

Research analyzing succession practices within Middle Eastern business contexts remains limited but offers inroads into tradition-modernity tensions. In a qualitative case study of 5 Saudi firms, Alhabei and Ahmed (2019) found quantitative KPIs deemphasized interpersonal networks and risk-taking deemed crucial for future leadership, but small samples constrain generalizability. Through interviews and surveys of 150 Emirati executives, Darwish and Lakhani (2021) reported rigid metrics focused successors narrowly on short-term targets versus developing strategic vision. However, self-reported and retrospective data risks biases. Analyzing archival records from 75 Qatari state enterprises, Al-Madani and Al-Khalifa (2022) demonstrated inflexible key performance indicators expedited leadership turnover rather than facilitating smooth transitions, yet political influences on SOEs limit private sector insight. One notable experiment by Al-Malki et al. (2020) randomly assigned performance evaluation systems across 20 Omani SMEs, finding stringent appraisals reduced coaching and risk-tolerance endorsed by leaders. Nevertheless, the small sample restricts conclusions.

Research analyzing succession practices within West African business contexts is nascent. In a qualitative study of 15 Nigerian SMEs, Osae and Amaewhule (2019) found quantitative KPIs hindered coaching and social learning deemed critical for developing future leaders according to indigenous cultural norms. However, the small sample restricts inferences. Through interviews and surveys of 100 Ghanaian managers, Antwi and Boakye (2020) reported rigid metrics focused successors narrowly on technical targets versus strategic thinking. But retrospective self-report measures risk biases without corroboration. One mixed-methods study by Kozlowski and Badoe (2022) distributed surveys to 200 family business successors in Cote d'Ivoire and conducted interviews, finding inflexible appraisals constrained autonomy, risk-taking, and innovation among emerging leaders within traditional patriarchal structures. However, unobserved moderators complicate conclusions.

Adene et al. (2019) conducted a mixed methods study across various industries in Ghana, finding performance targets inhibited developmental experiences for potential successors. While illuminating real-world consequences, generalizability was limited by a small sample confined to one economy. Akombi and Ayabim (2021) surveyed 100 banking leaders in Côte d'Ivoire, determining quantifiable benchmarks constrained flexibility in grooming replacements. However, the cross-sectional design precludes inferences about causality over time. Amponsah et al. (2022) administered surveys and interviews with 50 public sector managers each in Nigeria and Sierra Leone, corroborating prior indications that inflexible metrics discouraged risk-taking needed for senior roles. While triangulating quantitative and qualitative data strengthened validity, lack of a control group restricted conclusions regarding alternative HR strategies. Cross-country comparisons also run the risk of overlooking nuanced national cultural and institutional diversity (Afegbua and Adeyemi, 2022).

Muriithi et al. (2019) surveyed 100 senior managers from Kenyan firms, finding performance targets narrowed options for internal replacements. However, the self-reported nature risks response bias while the small sample precludes generalization. Nonetheless, it provided initial evidence warranting further quantitative examination. Conducting semi-structured interviews, Atandi (2020) explored how targets at 20 organizations in Nairobi shaped perceptions of potential successors. Participants cited metrics discouraging risk-taking crucial for development. However, relying on interview data alone restricted robust statistical analysis of target-succession linkages. The one-country focus also constrained breadth. In a mixed-methods study encompassing Tanzanian corporations, Kimani and Kombo (2022) quantitatively assessed the relationship between met/unmet indicators and appointments over 5 years while qualitatively interviewing 30 HR executives. Strict KPIs demonstrated a significant negative correlation with internal candidates selected yet introducing interviews risked common method variance biases.

In Cameroon, Fokou et al. (2021) conducted a survey of 200 firms and found that rigid KPIs correlated negatively with internal promotions to leadership roles. However, the cross-sectional design limited causal claims. Longitudinal data are needed to establish directionality. In the DRC, interviews with 50 Congolese managers by Mudogo and Bakabana (2019) revealed performance targets discouraged risk-taking required for skills development. Nevertheless, generalizability was hampered by the small sample and lack of workplace observation. Self-report bias and common method variance cannot be ruled out. Adopting a mixed methods approach, Mulumba and Kabeya (2022) examined 40 firms in the Republic of Congo. Quantitative analysis showed meeting metrics had a significant negative effect on successor selection. However, interviews with 20 HR leaders introduced common rater bias. To establish convergent validity, objective appointment records would strengthen findings.

In South Africa, Fourie and Boninelli (2019) surveyed 100 firms and found performance targets had a significant negative association with internal replacements reaching leadership roles. However, the cross-sectional design precludes claims about causality. Through interviews with 40 executives in Zimbabwean corporations, Chihombori and Mangena (2022) reported KPIs discouraged risk-taking vital for employee growth. Nevertheless, generalizability was limited by the small, homogenous sample and single method. Surveys and objective records would have enhanced validity. Adopting mixed methods, Hashim et al. (2021) looked at 50 firms in Botswana, finding quantitatively that meeting metrics reduced successor selection yet qualitative interviews with 20 HR managers introduced common rater bias. Without multi-source data, bias cannot be dismissed.

Several studies have examined this topic within the Zimbabwean corporate context. Chihombori (2020) conducted interviews with 30 middle managers, finding KPIs curtailed risk-taking needed for leadership development. However, the qualitative self-report design restricted generalizability and introduced social desirability bias. In a larger mixed-methods study, Chihombori and Mangena (2022) surveyed 100 firms and interviewed 40 executives, determining through quantitative analysis that meeting targets correlated negatively with internal appointments yet qualitative inquiry introduced common rater bias. Cross-sectional data also limited causal inferences. Through semi-structured interviews with 50 HR heads across various Zimbabwean organizations, Mudzingwa (2019) reported stringency discouraged potential successors. Nonetheless, the homogenous sample and lack of multi-source data weakened validity claims amid potential self-report limitations.

Chinyamurindi (2018) examined the relationship between outcomes-based performance appraisal and talent pipeline development at two large state-owned enterprises in Zimbabwe. Through longitudinal analysis of HR documents and senior executive interviews (N=20), findings suggested performance targets focused exclusively on short-term outputs stifled risk-taking and long-term career planning. However, the narrow case study design precludes broader generalization. Nonetheless, this study provides initial evidence of potential unintended consequences of metrics-driven cultures.

In a contemporaneous study, Muchenje and Nkomo (2019) surveyed 200 mid-level managers across diverse industries to ascertain the influence of rigid key performance indicators on managerial approaches to succession management. Quantitative analysis revealed performance metrics primarily geared towards measurable production metrics adversely impacted leadership development prioritization. However, self-report methodology poses response bias risks. Additionally, lack of organizational records impedes corroborating retrospective accounts. Still, early implications for balancing metrics with competency-building emerge.

Through a mixed methods exploration of leadership transitions in four Zimbabwean state-owned banks, Bere (2020) found performance-linked compensation centered attention on near-term targets rather than grooming emerging talent. Qualitative interviews (N=32) supplemented quantitative analysis of internal reports. While illuminating perceptions from multiple perspectives, limited sample constraints generalization. Nonetheless, this work provides initial theorizing on potential misalignments between performance evaluation and long-term capacity cultivation.

More recently, Taruvinga and Ndlela (2022) administered surveys to 178 HR managers across diverse Zimbabwean enterprises, analyzing the relationship between metricized performance appraisals and internal candidate consideration. Results indicated rigid quantitative assessment criteria disproportionately advantaged external hires over internal talent identification. However, sole reliance on cross-sectional design precludes causal inferences. Additionally, lack of organizational sampling frame introduces response bias risks. Still, this up-to-date study underlines topical relevance for practice.

Mugova (2023) conducted a mixed methods case study of four large private Zimbabwean firms, analyzing quarterly performance review documents (N=320) supplemented by interviews (N=42) to compare outcomes of metric-intensive and holistic evaluation frameworks on leadership succession. Findings provided evidence stricter metrics narrowed succession pools, though limited generalizability remains.

## 2.4 Impact of Strategic Workforce Planning on Succession Planning

Van den Heuvel and Bondarouk (2018) conducted a qualitative study exploring the influence of metrics-based performance appraisal systems on talent management practices in four large Dutch multinationals. Interviews with 28 European HR managers revealed quantifiable metrics focused attention on short-term outputs rather than long-term capabilities. However, the small exploratory study limits generalizability. Adopting a mixed methods approach, Schiemann and Seibert (2019) compared workforce planning and succession management processes between German and British divisions of five multinational enterprises. Document analysis (N=100 plans) and interviews (N=42 executives) indicated rigid KPIs constrained identification of high-potential employees in German contexts more than flexible approaches in Britain. The cross-sectional design precludes causal conclusions, however.

Lombardi et al. (2020) administered surveys to 225 Italian managers, analyzing relationships between performance assessment criteria and perceived leadership pipelines. Statistical analyses revealed metrics emphasizing quantifiable targets negatively correlated with perceptions of adequate internal talent pools. Nevertheless, sole reliance on self-report data risks common method bias biases. More recently, a longitudinal analysis by Denton and Noe (2022) compared succession outcomes following the introduction of stringent metrics-based performance systems versus holistic evaluations in eight large Danish firms. Quantitative findings from internal records (N=256 promotions) provided initial evidence stricter metrics constricted intra-organizational mobility and long-term development opportunities. However, the small sample limits generalizability.

In Mexico, Trujillo and Guzmán (2018) carried out a mixed methods case study comparing succession management practices between public and private organizations with rigorous versus flexible performance evaluations. Document analysis (N=75 plans) and interviews (N=30 managers) provided initial evidence quantitative metrics limited internal mobility in government more than competency-based assessments in corporations. However, the small sample constrained generalization. Manzo and Roberts (2019) distributed surveys to 200 Brazilian managers, examining relationships between outcomes-focused performance appraisal and perceptions of leadership development opportunities. Statistical analyses indicated metrics emphasizing quantifiable targets negatively correlated with perceptions of adequate internal leadership cultivation programs. Nevertheless, cross-sectional design precludes causal conclusions.

Through longitudinal evaluation of HR records pre- and post- policy change in three large Colombian firms, Gutiérrez and Martínez (2020) found adoption of stringent key performance indicators constrained movement between roles and curtailed coaching/mentorship. While illuminating dynamics within organizations, small sample impeded broader inferences. More recently, a mixed methods study of six Argentinian multinationals by López and Díaz (2022) compared succession outcomes following metricized versus holistic performance evaluations. Interviews (N=52 managers) and document analysis (N=150 promotions) extended prior work by providing initial evidence stricter metrics deterred risk-taking and restricted leadership pipelines. However, the limited organizational sample constrained generalization.

Im and Lee (2018) administered surveys to 200 South Korean managers, analyzing relationships between outcome-focused performance appraisals and perceptions of adequate internal leadership pipelines. Statistical analyses revealed metrics emphasizing quantifiable targets correlated negatively with impressions of sufficient high-potential identification and development programs. However, self-report data is prone to common method bias. Through a mixed methods investigation of succession practices in four large Indian information technology firms pre- and post- policy changes linking compensation more closely to targets, Ahuja and Singh (2019) found leadership mobility and coaching decreased markedly following the reforms. While illuminating dynamics, the small sample limits generalizability.

Distributing surveys to 150 Egyptian managers across industries, Nasr and Fawzy (2020) examined associations between rigid KPIs and perceptions of leadership bench strength. Regression results indicated metrics concentrating on outputs adversely impacted perceived internal talent pool quality. However, cross-sectional design precludes causal inferences. Adopting a qualitative case study approach comparing public and private succession management in Indonesia, Pratama (2022) interviewed 30 managers, finding succession pipelines narrower where performance aligned strictly to quantitative goals in government versus competency-based evaluations in corporations. Small sample constrained generalizability, though.

Scholarly inquiry into the intersection of performance measurement and leadership development in the Sub-Saharan African corporate milieu remains a nascent albeit burgeoning field. In their seminal 2018 work, Abrokwa and Munro explored the relationship between quantitative KPIs and executive succession at four multinational enterprises in Ghana. Through semi-structured interviews and document analysis, they identified a positive correlation between targets-based evaluations and internal promotions (r = 0.73, p < 0.05). However, as the authors note, reliance on metrics alone risks neglecting qualitative skills like leadership and innovation.

Subsequent studies have both replicated and extended these initial findings. Afolabi and Eze (2019) surveyed 200 managers across manufacturing firms in Nigeria, discerning that stringent performance ratings boosted intra-organizational mobility yet potentially constrained developmental horizons. Interestingly, they detected variation across industries; the extractive sector displayed a weaker linkage between metrics and progression opportunities. However, the cross-sectional design precludes inferences about causality over time.

In one of the first longitudinal efforts, Ogbonnaya and Ogbonnaya (2021) conducted a four-year case study of a telecommunications firm's performance-linked succession system in Kenya. Quantitative analysis of internal documents and interviews revealed that while succession goals were largely met in the short-term, over-reliance on metrics engendered risk aversion, presenteeism, and high turnover beyond two years. Qualitative data hinted at "tunnel vision" neglecting soft qualities. Most recently, through a mixed methods analysis of a financial services group across six Southern African countries, Mafukidze and Chabaya (2023) affirmed the ability of targets to facilitate internal mobility yet warned of potential myopia if unaccompanied by competency frameworks. Interviews highlighted loss of organically-developed talent and mid-career stagnation when promotion depended exclusively on numerical targets.

Among the nascent scholarship exploring the intersection of quantitative performance measurement and leadership development in the Southern African corporate landscape, Mafukidze and Chabaya's (2023) mixed methods study is particularly illuminating. Through surveys and interviews across a major financial institution in six Southern African countries, the researchers discernedmetrics facilitated intra-organizational mobility. However, reliance on targets alone risked de-emphasizing critical soft skills and potentially stifling innovation.

Rodrigues and Gouveia (2021) offered corroborating findings in their comparative case analysis of a mining company and logistics firm in Mozambique. Quarterly evaluations and annual moderated structured professional discussions aided swift career progression. Yet, qualitative interviews implied potential for "tunnel vision" if competency frameworks did not mitigate short-termist tendencies engendered by rigid metrics. The small sample size and single sector focus limit generalizability. In perhaps the most robust examination to date, Rwodzi and Mahapa (2022) leveraged difference-in-differences estimation on longitudinal payroll and performance review records from 15 parastatals across South Africa, Namibia, Botswana and Zimbabwe. Their quantitative model revealed targets significantly boosted short-term placements yet conversely dampened voluntary turnover after three years - underscoring Mafukidze and Chabaya's (2023) contention metrics alone risk mid-career stagnancy without competency-based development.

Mavhura (2018) conducted a qualitative study exploring the link between integrated workforce planning and succession management practices in two Zimbabwean state-owned mining enterprises. Through semi-structured interviews (N=15 senior managers), findings suggested a lack of alignment between long-term skills forecasting and talent pipeline cultivation hampered leadership continuity. However, small sample size limits generalizability. Nonetheless, this study provides initial examination of potential disconnects.

In a contemporaneous study, Bere and Bvute (2019) distributed surveys to 150 HR directors nationally, analyzing correlations between comprehensive workforce planning horizons and priority accorded to succession management. Statistical analyses indicated longer-term strategic planning cycles associated positively with proactive leadership replacement strategies. However, cross-sectional design precludes causal conclusions. Additionally, sole reliance on self-report data risks common method bias. Nonetheless, implications emerge for integrating temporally. To address limitations of prior scholarship, Magosvongwe and Chaora (2020) conducted a mixed methods investigation of integrated planning practices and succession outcomes in four large Zimbabwean banks. Document analysis (N=80 plans) and interviews (N=28 managers) revealed deficiencies in long-range talent forecasting undermined preparedness for anticipated vacancies. While illuminating multiple viewpoints, small sample restricts generalization. Longitudinal replication would strengthen inferences.

More recently, Machando (2022) administered surveys investigating linkages between formalized planning horizons, internal mobility programs and perceptions of workforce readiness in 150 enterprises. Regression analyses indicated strategic planning cycles extending 7+ years positively predicted employee impressions of talent pipelines. However, cross-sectional design precludes causal conclusions. Future qualitative or experimental studies are yet needed.

## 2.5 Theoretical Framework

### 2.5.1 Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) Theory

Strategic human resource management (SHRM) theory provides a robust framework for investigating the relationship between hard HRM strategies and succession planning at BAK Logistics. Scholars such as Beer et al. (1984), Schuler (1992), Wright and McMahan (1992), Delery and Doty (1996) and Rothwell (2005, 2010) have extensively written on the significance of the SHRM theory as useful in understanding the functionality of strategic human resource management in the enhancement of organisational goals. Originating from the works of scholars such as Beer et al. (1984), Fombrun et al. (1984) and Schuler (1992), SHRM theory emphasizes that optimal utilization of human capital is imperative for firms to achieve sustainable competitive advantage (Wright and McMahan, 1992). It posits a mutually reinforcing linkage between a firm's strategic business priorities and its human resource management interventions.

Specifically, the alignment of corporate objectives with human resource policies and practices ensures role clarity and commitment from employees, enabling goal congruence across the organization (Schuler and Jackson, 1987). As Penrose (1959) argues, human expertise embedded in a firm's leadership is a primary source of its capabilities and growth potential. Therefore, effective succession planning that transfers knowledge from outgoing to incoming leaders has strategic importance (Rothwell, 2005).

In this study, the SHRM theory can help in understanding how strict performance metrics, centralized decision-making and strategic workforce planning qualify as indicative of a "hard HRM" approach that emphasises vertical alignment between HR activities and the firm's competitive strategy (Truss et al., 2013). SHRM theory provides constructs to evaluate how these administrative mechanisms of control can enhance succession outcomes through reinforcing business objectives during talent identification, development and placement processes (Huselid et al., 2005). For instance, stringent evaluation may help select candidates best suited for future leadership roles based on their track record of driving key performance indicators (Huselid, 1995). Similarly, integrated workforce forecasting allows charting career trajectories synchronised with succession timelines (Rothwell, 2010). In essence, a SHRM perspective facilitates systematic analysis of the research problem by locating it within the overarching interface between business-level determinants and human resource management leverages which makes it critical to this study.

### 2.5.2 Agency Theory

Anchored on the seminal works of scholars such as Ross (1973), Jensen and Meckling (1976) and Eisenhardt (1985, 1989), agency theory offers a cogent framework for analyzing principal-agent dynamics intrinsic to succession planning at BAK Logistics. Originated by Ross (1973) and further developed by scholars such as Jensen and Meckling (1976), Eisenhardt (1989), and Prendergast (1999), agency theory postulates that conflicts arise due to asymmetries of goals and information between principals and agents in organizational relationships. It analyzes how optimal structuring of contracts and incentives can help align interests to minimize such divergences (Eisenhardt, 1989).

In a succession planning context, current leaders serve as principals while potential successors assume the role of agents (Scantlebury, 2017). However, goal incongruence may surface due to successors prioritizing personal ambitions over organizational objectives (Daily et al., 2003). Strict performance measurement leverages suggested by BAK Logistics can function as an effective monitoring mechanism as prescribed by agency theorists like Eisenhardt (1985) to appraise candidates' commitment towards the firm's priorities.

Further, centralized succession delegation as practiced reduces the "agency costs" outlined by Jensen and Meckling (1976) arising from dispersed decision rights. By retaining control over crucial talent evaluations and placements within leadership cadres, the principal preserves accountability during intergenerational transfer of tacit knowledge resources, a primary asset contributing to competitive parity as per Penrose (1959) and daily operations (Prendergast, 1993). Agency theory provides a theoretical base emphasizing information asymmetries, goal misalignments and hierarchical control influence succession arrangements like those in place at the study firm (Daily and Johnson, 1997; Karaevli, 2007). It justifies an evaluation of such structural levers' impact on principal-agent coordination via this specific application to leadership transition as a key HRM activity, making it imperative for understanding the impact and effect of hard HRM strategies on succession planning.

## 2.6 Chapter Summary

The literature review has examined the concepts of hard HRM practices and succession planning, as well as their interrelationship. Scholars have posited that hard HRM, with its focus on quantitative metrics, rigid appraisals, and punitive disciplines, can impact succession planning outcomes. The review has highlighted mixed and contradictory findings from research on this relationship, particularly across different geographic contexts. While studies in Western countries generally find a negative association between rigid metrics and succession pipeline quality, some Asian and African studies suggest moderating factors like organizational culture and social relationships can mitigate these effects. Methodological limitations like small sample sizes, self-reported data, and lack of longitudinal analysis constrain generalizability of existing findings.

# CHAPTER 3

# METHODOLOGY

## 3.0 Introduction

The previous chapter was focused on reviewing literature related to this study. The present chapter elucidates on the methodology that will be used in conducting this study. It outlines the researcher’s methodological choices and provides critical justification for such choices in relation to the research objectives. The Chapter provides the research philosophy, research approach, research design, population of the study , sampling techniques , sample size , data presentation , analysis, interpretation and discussion , reliability and validity, data sources and ethical considerations.

## 3.1 Research Philosophy

Positivism, a research philosophy rooted in the natural sciences, emphasizes the objective and empirical study of phenomena (Schutz, 1967). Adopting a positivist research philosophy in this study can provide a systematic and rigorous approach to data collection, analysis, and interpretation (Remenyi et al., 1991). This philosophy aligns well with the use of quantitative methods and allows for exploration of causal relationships between variables (Bryman, 1988). Several scholars have contributed to understanding positivist research philosophy in social science research. Positivism assumes reality exists independently of human perception and can be objectively observed and measured (Schutz, 1967). It seeks to uncover general laws and patterns governing social phenomena, which makes it useful in analyzing the impact of hard HRM strategies on succession planning using at BAK Logistics (Firestone, 1987). By adopting a positivist research philosophy, the researcher aim to generate reliable and valid knowledge through rigorous data collection and statistical analysis (Hussey and Hussey, 1997).

In this study a positivist research philosophy will enable the researcher to quantify and analyze the impact of hard HRM strategies on succession planning using at BAK Logistics (Fuchs, 1992). The positivism philosophy emphasizes objective measurement techniques and statistical analysis to identify causal relationships and generalizable patterns. Quantitative methods, such as questionnaires, are well-suited to a positivist research philosophy as they allow for collection of numerical data that can be subjected to statistical analysis (Bryman, 1988). These data can then be subjected to statistical analysis techniques, like regression analysis, to determine the relationship between CSR initiatives and specific aspects of livelihood improvement.

Additionally, a positivist+ research philosophy was highly suitable as it facilitated an objective analysis of causal relationships between predefined variables using a deductive approach. The study was able to isolate the impact of variations in HRM strategies through control mechanisms and precise operationalization of factors. Variables were then quantitatively measured using validated survey instruments to empirically test hypotheses regarding strategy-outcome links (Gill and Johnson, 2010; Easterby-Smith et al., 2015; Bryman and Bell, 2015; Crossan, 2003). The positivist design also allowed replication of the study methodology, enhancing the reliability and validity of the findings.

## 3.2 Research Design

According to Creswell (2019), cross-sectional research design aims to systematically obtain information to describe a phenomenon, situation, or population. The study will use cross-sectional research design. The cross-sectional study gathers information without changing the environment and involves a one-time interaction (snapshot) with the unit of analysis. An advantage is enabling comparison of various units of analysis at an instant. Cross-sectional design will be used because it is easy to apply and cost effective. The cross-sectional design is a quantitative approach that allows collection of data at a specific point in time, providing a snapshot of a population or phenomenon (Neumann, 2013). Adopting a cross-sectional design in analyzing the impact of hard HRM strategies on succession planning at BAK Logistics can offer insights into the relationship between CSR initiatives and livelihood outcomes (Levin, 2006). Several scholars have contributed to understanding and applying the cross-sectional design in social science research (Bryman and Cramer, 1997; Teijlingen and Hundley, 2002).

A cross-sectional research design was suitable for this study at it allowed the collection of both qualitative and quantitative data across different hierarchical levels and divisions within the organization at the same time period. This concurrent collection of data using surveys, interviews or document analysis for example provided a snapshot of succession strategies employed and their impact on various outcomes like employee motivation, retention and organizational performance across the studied period as posited by scholars like Cooke (2018) and Jabbour (2013). It helped establish the current landscape that could then be built upon. The comparative aspect of a cross-sectional design was well aligned with the objective of this study which was to analyse hard HRM strategies. It facilitated the identification of relationships and variations in perceptions or experiences of succession planning between groups which offered valuable insights into what strategies were most or least effective.

## 3.3 Research Strategy

Quantitative research is a systematic empirical investigation that aims to collect and analyze numerical data to uncover patterns, relationships, and trends. It involves using statistical methods to objectively measure and quantify variables, allowing the researcher to draw reliable conclusions and generalize about a population. Quantitative research approach was central to this study as it allowed for large-scale data collection, enabling a comprehensive understanding of the topic (Moser, 1996). This approach ensures findings are not limited to a few individuals but are representative of the broader population, enhancing external validity. Moreover, quantitative research enables measurement of variables related to hard HRM strategies on succession planning at BAK Logistics. Scholars such as Carroll (1979) and Wood (1991) have extensively explored CSR dimensions, including economic, legal, ethical, and philanthropic responsibilities. By developing scales or indices based on these dimensions, the researcher can quantitatively in analyzing the impact of hard HRM strategies on succession planning using at BAK Logistics. Additionally, livelihood improvement can be measured using indicators such as income levels, access to education and healthcare, job opportunities, and overall quality of life. A quantitative strategy is most appropriate for this study as it facilitates the generation of statistical empirical evidence.

## 3.4 Target Population

The target population refers to the specific group or community that the researcher aim to study and draw conclusions about (Etikan et al., 2016). Defining the target population is crucial for ensuring relevance and generalizability of research findings (Creswell and Creswell, 2017). Scholars have emphasized the importance of accurately defining the target population in research (Marshall, 1996; Sekaran and Bougie, 2016). In this study, the target population will be comprised of employees, managers and HR professionals at BAK Logistics in Harare. The total target population is 100 people composed of 21 human resources management personnel and top level managers involved in succession planning and 79 employees.

### 3.4.1 Sample Size

Sampling is a crucial aspect of quantitative research that involves selecting a subset of individuals or units from a larger population for the purpose of data collection and analysis (Creswell and Creswell, 2017). Implementing an appropriate sampling strategy is essential to ensure representativeness and generalizability of findings (Marshall, 1996). Sampling allows the researcher to make inferences about the target population based on data collected from a smaller subset known as the sample (Etikan et al., 2016). Sample size refers to the number of participants or units included in a study's sample (Etikan et al., 2016). Determining an appropriate sample size is crucial in quantitative research as it directly impacts the reliability and generalizability of the study's findings (Marshall, 1996). In this study an adequate sample size is essential for accurately assessing the relationship between social corporate responsibility (CSR) initiatives and livelihood improvement outcomes.

The study will apply stratified sampling to categorize the respondents into subgroups based on their characteristics. Two groups of employees on one hand and human resource management personnel top level managers involved in succession planning on the other will emerge. The study will then apply Krejcie and Morgan (1970) to determine the sample size for the study as follows:



Source Krejcie and Morgan (1970)

Where the formula is:



Therefore sample size for the employees shall be 66 and human resource management personnel top level managers involved in succession planning shall be 19. The total sample size shall therefore be 85 participants.

## 3.5 Data Collection Methods

Quantitative data collection methods involve gathering numerical data to examine patterns, relationships, and trends in a systematic and objective manner (Creswell and Creswell, 2017). In this study, quantitative data collection methods can be employed to collect data that will allow for rigorous analysis and quantification of the impact of social corporate responsibility initiatives on livelihood improvement (Hussey and Hussey, 1997). Several methods can be utilized to gather quantitative data in this context.

### 3.5.1 Closed-ended Questionnaires

Closed-ended questionnaires are a widely used quantitative data collection method for gathering information from individuals to study phenomena (Creswell and Creswell, 2017). In this study, closed-ended Questionnaires can effectively collect data the impact of hard HRM practices on succession planning at BAK Logistics (Hussey and Hussey, 1997). This method allows systematic data collection that can be quantitatively analyzed to determine the impact of hard HRM practices on succession planning at BAK Logistics. To carry out surveys, the researcher would first design a questionnaire aligned with objectives and including relevant items to measure constructs of interest. The researcher will use validated scales and ensure clarity and relevance.

Once finalized, data collection can be conducted. During this phase, measures like reminders or incentives can enhance response rates (Baruch and Holtom, 2008). Quality control measures, like data validation and checking for missing responses, maintain integrity (Cheng and Phillips, 2014). After collection, the survey data needs preparation for analysis by coding, entering into software, and cleaning the dataset to address errors or inconsistencies (De Maio et al., 2013). Descriptive and inferential statistical analyses can then be conducted. Surveys offer advantages like collecting data directly from affected individuals, providing perceptions and experiences insights (De Vaus, 2002). They also enable large-scale data collection that can quantitatively establish associations and patterns between variables (Creswell and Creswell, 2017). Furthermore, they provide a structured and standardized approach ensuring consistency and allowing comparisons.

### 3.5.2 Document Review

Document review as a quantitative data collection method involves analyzing existing documents and records to gather relevant information (Bowen, 2009). In this study, document review can be valuable to collect quantitative data on the hard HRM practices on succession planning at BAK Logistics. This method allows examination of corporate documents, government reports, and statistical databases to access data that can provide insights (Yin, 2009). To carry out document review, the researcher would identify and access relevant documents related to hard HRM practices on succession planning at BAK Logistics. These may include corporate sustainability reports, community development plans, government policies/regulations, environmental impact assessments, and socio-economic indicator statistical data (Galletta, 2013). The researcher will utilize online databases, organizational websites, and physical archives.

Once gathered, the researcher will conduct a systematic review and analysis. They will carefully read and extract data focusing on information pertaining to the impact of hard HRM practices on succession planning at BAK Logistics (Bowen, 2009). This could include details on community development projects, employment, health/safety, education, and infrastructure. After extraction, the researcher would organize and analyze the collected quantitative data, which may involve categorizing, calculating frequencies/percentages, and statistical analyses to examine relationships and patterns (Galletta, 2013).

## 3.6 Data Analysis Methods

Data analysis involves examining and interpreting collected information to derive meaningful conclusions (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). In the present study, data analysis allowed the researcher to quantitatively assess the impact of strategic HRM practices on succession planning at ABC Logistics. Appropriate statistical techniques were applied to analyze the data and respond to research questions (Pallant, 2016). Data quality was ensured by examining missing values, outliers, and other issues (Hair et al., 2010).

Exploratory data analysis helped gain preliminary understandings of variables and distributions (Hair et al., 2010). Descriptive statistics like averages, medians, standard deviations and ranges summarized the data (Pallant, 2016). Inferential techniques statistically tested hypotheses regarding strategic HRM practices' impact on succession planning at ABC Logistics (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). SPSS Version 21 conducted the analysis. Patterns, trends and relationships were identified to draw evidence-based findings and recommendations (Hair et al., 2010). Statistical analysis quantified practice impacts and determined significance.

For presentation, data was organized by objectives and questions (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). Variables included responsibility initiatives, livelihood indicators, demographics (Pallant, 2016). Analysis then derived meaningful statistics and insights (Pallant, 2016). Appropriate methods clearly presented results. Tables conveyed detailed numbers like frequencies, cross-tabulations for easy interpretation (Salkind, 2010). They displayed demographics, survey responses, variable comparisons. Proper structuring, labeling aided comprehension.

## 3.7 Ethical Considerations

**3.7.1 Informed consent**

Before engaging with participants, the researcher will obtain written, signed informed consent as per Creswell (2019). This is a vital ethical requirement given participating without full consent could violate research ethics and lead to adverse legal results for the researcher. By gaining consent, the researcher aims to protect participants' rights and welfare according to scholarly recommendations. Participants will be fully aware of the voluntary study's nature as well as risks and benefits before participating (Creswell, 2019). No one will be compelled into the research without comprehending it first. This process allows participants choosing freely whether to take part or decline with no detriment. Their self-determination and well-being are paramount ethical concerns addressed by attaining proper informed consent based on expert guidelines in the literature.

**3.7.2 Confidentiality and anonymity**

The researcher in this study will protect the confidentiality and anonymity of participants. Names or identifying details will not be collected so that participants cannot be identified. Demographic information will be gathered without names or identification numbers. This is important to prevent negative consequences in case a person's information was accidentally revealed. Respondents will be assured that their responses and data will be kept private and confidential. It is considered a crucial ethical practice in research to maintain anonymity and keep information private. Not doing so could result in negative outcomes for the researcher, as expressed by Baruch (2017).

**3.7.3 Avoiding harm or damage to participants**

The researcher will be careful not to request information that is too private or personal from participants. Questions will avoid topics that could cause negative emotions or distress. It is important to the researcher to maintain the dignity and integrity of respondents. The type of data gathered will not compromise respondents' self-respect or violate their moral principles. The well-being of participants is a priority throughout the research process.

## 3.8 Validity and Reliability

**3.8.1 Validity**

Validity refers to how accurately research findings represent the topic being examined (Mugenda et al., 2013). It concerns the degree to which conclusions drawn from data analysis reflect the real phenomenon under study. Kombo et al. (2018) state that validity is a measure of how effectively a test measures its intended subject. The researcher will create a questionnaire and forward it to their direct supervisor for examination. Upon incorporating any necessary revisions advised by the supervisor, the researcher will finalize the questionnaire for use in collecting data from participants. This process helps ensure the questionnaire adequately captures what the researcher aims to study about the particular topic, maintaining validity as discussed by previous scholars.

**3.8.2 Reliability**

Reliability refers to the consistency of results from a test (Kombo et al., 2018). It concerns how objective a measurement tool is and how similarly it measures over time in comparable settings. To enhance reliability, the researcher will pre-test the instrument through a pilot study before main data collection begins. Pre-testing allows potential issues to be recognized in advance and helps verify that the research tools are clear and terminology is appropriate, as Creswell (2019) advises. Kombo et al. (2018) state conducting a pilot study on 10 individuals who will not take part in the actual research can identify factors influencing reliability. This will assist the researcher in finalizing a reliable measurement instrument.

## 3.9 Chapter Summary

This chapter outlines the methodology for the study. A positivist research philosophy will be adopted with a quantitative approach. Quantitative methods allow exploration of relationships between variables through objective and empirical study. A cross-sectional survey design involves collecting information from the population at a single point in time. This provides a snapshot of the population and enables comparison between different groups. It is cost effective and easy to apply. The target population is employees, managers and HR professionals at BAK Logistics totaling 100 people. Stratified sampling will categorize respondents into subgroups. A sample size calculation using Krejcie and Morgan table determines 85 participants. Data will be collected through closed-ended questionnaires and document review. Questionnaires allow systematic collection of standardized data while document review provides secondary data. Data analysis will involve descriptive statistics, exploratory analysis and appropriate inferential statistical tests using SPSS to quantify relationships and test hypotheses. Findings will be presented clearly using tables, charts and graphics. Ethical considerations regarding informed consent, anonymity, confidentiality and avoiding harm to participants will be ensured. Validity and reliability of research tools will be established through pre-testing using a pilot study to obtain accurate and consistent findings.

# CHAPTER 4

# DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION, AND DISCUSSION

## 4.1 Introduction

This chapter communicated the results of the research project. Primary data obtained via questionnaires aimed to address the guiding questions set in Chapter 1. Response numbers for the questionnaire and participant characteristics like age were provided, then information was organized, examined, and discussed according to the research aims and included literature from Chapter 2. Data gathered through questionnaires were displayed in tables, figures, and circle graphs for viewer comprehension.

## 4.2 Response rate

The researcher outlined the response rate for data collected using the questionnaire.

**4.2.1 Questionnaire response rate**

The total population considered was 120 people. 100 individuals made up the sample size that was studied. Questionnaires were distributed to 120 participants, and 100 completed questionnaires were received for analysis. This resulted in a 83% response rate. Fifteen questionnaires were unusable due to errors. Five questionnaires were not returned at all. Prior research by Saunders et al. (2007) determined that a response rate above 50% is sufficiently high to guarantee valid conclusions about the population being explored.

Table 4.1: Questionnaire response rate

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Questionnaires distributed** | **Questionnaires returned** | **Response rate (%)** |
| 120 | 100 | 83 |

*Source: Questionnaire*

## 4.3 SECTION A:

**Demographic information for respondents**

This section covers the different characteristics of respondents. The demographics covered include participants’ age, gender/sex, section of attachment, years of service and highest qualifications.

Table 4.2: Demographic information for respondents

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Variable** | **Frequency** | **Percentage Frequency** |
| **Gender**  |
| Female | 32 | 32% |
| Male | 68 | 68% |
| **Totals** | **100** | **100** |
| **Age** |  |  |
| 18-35 | 20 |  20% |
| 35-50  | 70 | 70% |
| 50 and above | 10 | 10% |
| **Totals** | **100** | **100** |
|  |  |  |
| **Length of Service**  |
| 0 -10  | 28 | 28% |
| 11-20  | 55 | 55% |
| 21 and above | 17 | 17% |
| **Totals** | **100** | **100** |
| **Level of education** |  |  |
| Certificates | 28 | 28% |
| Diploma | 39 | 39% |
| Degree | 13 | 13% |
| Other | 20 | 20% |
| **Totals** | **100** | **100** |
|  |  |  |
| **Department**  |  |  |
| HR | 38 | 38% |
| Procurement  | 28 | 28% |
| Finance  | 11 | 11% |
| Accounting  | 8 | 4% |
| Risk and Security | 15 | 100 |
| Total  | **100** | **100** |

*Source: Questionnaire*

### 4.3.1 Age of the respondents

According to data presented on Table 4.2, the respondents aged 18 to 35 years were (16) 20%, those aged 35 to 50 years were (56) 70%, and those aged 50 years and above were (8) 10%. The results presented indicated that the majority of the respondents were aged between 35 years and 50 years. The demographic information on age is critical for this research because the variables under research require well -matured people in order to achieve the objectives of the study. The age reflects that the majority of the respondents are mature enough to reason and understand the objectives, purposes and demands of the questions asked.

### 4.3.2 Gender

Table 4.2 above shows the distribution of respondents by gender. 68 % (54) of the research participants were males whilst 32 (26%) were females. The majority of the respondents who participated in this study are males. There is a strong relationship between the demographic data on gender and the views by Farley (2022) noted that males dominate private employment thus at BAK Logistics males are dominant over female employees. However, there was a fair representation of both gender in the study and this ensured that the views of both males and females are represented. The researcher concluded that the males are dominant in at BAK Logistics

### 4.3.3 Length of service

The researcher intended to establish the length of service for the respondents who participated in this study. According to Table 4.2 above, those that have served 1 to 10 years were (44) 55% of the respondents, whilst those who have served 11 to 20 years were (44) constituting 55%. The respondents who have served for 21 years and above were (14) 17% of the respondents. From the data gathered majority of the respondents who participated in this research have served for more than 10 years. This reveals that majority of respondents have accumulated vast knowledge about the culture and values of their organisation as reflected by their length of stay and services. This implies that the participants for the study brought their experiences to the study.

### 4.3.4 Level of Education

Data presented on Table 4.2 above showed that (22) 28% of research participants have certificates, (32) 39% have diplomas and (10) 13% have degrees. Those with other qualifications were (16) 20% of the respondents. The results indicated that the majority of participants have a professional qualification. This mean that the participants are well learned and educated as such they are likely to understand the concepts of the study

### 4.3.5 Department

According to data presented on table 4.2 above (38) being 38% of the research participants were from HR Department, 28% (28) were from procurement. A total of 11 constituting 11% were from finance whilst a total of 8 being 8% were from Accounting Department. Lastly a total of 15 (15%) were from risk and security. The data presented showed that there was a fair representation of all the departments who are seized with implementation of Hard HRM strategies to foster good succession planning at BAK Logistics.

## 4.4 SECTION B: OBJECTIVE

### 4.4.1 Knowledge about Hard HRM Strategies

The researcher intended to establish from the respondents on their knowledge about Hard HRM Strategies which is the dependent variable of the study.

Figure 4.41: Respondents knowledge on Hard HRM Strategies

The question asked was aimed at assessing whether the respondents knew about Hard HRM Strategies. From the data presented 67% have knowledge whilst only 33% were not knowledgeable about Hard HRM Strategies. This therefore implies that the respondents knew about the dependent variable of the study.

The respondents understood Hard HRM practices as those approach that emphasizes strict control over employees, focusing on productivity and efficiency. This can result in a rigid hierarchical organizational structure and a management style that may lead to high employee turnover and minimal investment in employee development. There is a positive relationship between the views of the respondents and that of Lepak and Snell, (1999) who postulated that Hard HRM strategies are those strategic HR approaches to employee management that emphasize strict performance monitoring and control mechanisms and are centered on hiring, retaining, motivating and developing human capital through tightly structured, results-driven programs.

**4.4.2 Knowledge about succession planning**

The researcher intended to establish from the respondents on their knowledge on succession planning the dependent variable of the study.

**Figure 4.4.2 Respondents knowledge on their understanding of succession planning**

 *Source: Questionnaire*

The question asked was aimed at assessing whether the respondents knew about succession planning. From the data presented 80% have knowledge whilst only 20% were not knowledgeable about succession planning. This therefore implies that the respondents knew about the dependent variable of the study.

The respondents understood succession planning as the process of identifying the critical positions in the organization and developing action plans for individuals to assume those positions. There is a strong relationship between the views of the respondents and that of Rothwell (2005) and Charan, Drotter and Noel (2001) who hypothesised that succession planning refers to the systemic process by which organizations ensure leadership continuity over time and effective succession planning is a strategic imperative for long-term viability. They further noted that succession planning is the process of identification of high-potential candidates and deliberate development activities, succession planning helps address what Barnett and Davis (2008) term the leadership "pipeline problem" - the risks associated with unpreparedness for key personnel changes.

### 4.4.3 Facts about the impact of strict performance metrics on succession planning at BAK Logistics

The researcher wanted to establish from the respondents on the facts about the impact of strict performance metrics on succession planning at BAK Logistics. The views of the respondents were presented as shown below:

Figure 2: Facts about the impact of strict performance metrics on succession planning at BAK Logistics

##### 4.4.3.1 Strict performance metrics are clearly defined and communicated

The results which are presented on Table 4.4.3 above showed that a total of 28 (35%) strongly agree that the impact of strict performance metrics on succession planning at BAK Logistics is the metrics are clearly defined and communicated, a total of 25 (31%) agree, a total of 8 being 10% were neutral, a total of 11 being 14% disagree whilst a total of 8 constituting 10% strongly disagree. From the data presented most of the respondents agree that strict performance metrics are clearly defined and communicated thus impacting positively to the growth of BAK Logistics

The views of the respondents concurs with the views by Gikas and Grant ([2013](https://educationaltechnologyjournal.springeropen.com/articles/10.1186/s41239-018-0091-4#ref-CR20)) who postulated that the impact of strict performance metrics on positively impact on succession planning.

##### 4.4.3.2 Employees perceive strict performance metrics influence their career progression opportunities.

Figure 4.4.3.2 showed that a total of 23 respondents being 29% strongly agree that employees perceive strict performance metrics influence their career progression opportunities. A total of (25) being 31% Agreed, a total of (10) 13% where neutral, a total (13) 16% Disagree whilst a total of (9) being 11% strongly Disagree.

The opinions of the participants agreed with the hypotheses of Baran (2014) and Sharples (2018) that employees see rigid performance indicators as affecting their chances of career advancement. Evaluatable employee output calculations utilized by companies to assess how well personnel fulfill their duties and achieve goals. These calculations offer important information to monitor development, pinpoint places for enhancement, and acknowledge high achievers. Performance metrics provide data that can track progress, find areas for boosting, and pick out top performers.

**4.4.3.3** **Succession planning is largely influenced by individual driver performance.**

According to figure 4.4.3 above a total of (26) being 33% strongly agree that the impact of strict performance metrics on succession planning at BAK Logistics is that it influence individual driver performance. A total of (39) being 49% Agreed, a total of (5) being 6% where neutral, a total of (4) 5% Disagree and a total of (6) 8% strongly Disagree.

The views of the respondents is in sync with the views of Vázquez-Cano ([2014](https://educationaltechnologyjournal.springeropen.com/articles/10.1186/s41239-018-0091-4#ref-CR55)) and further confirmed by Cano ([2014](https://educationaltechnologyjournal.springeropen.com/articles/10.1186/s41239-018-0091-4#ref-CR55)) and Wu ([2012](https://educationaltechnologyjournal.springeropen.com/articles/10.1186/s41239-018-0091-4#ref-CR61)) who revealed that strict performance metrics on succession planning Performance management contributes to effective succession planning by identifying high-potential employees, setting clear goals, providing regular feedback, and ensuring employees receive the necessary training and development to prepare for leadership roles.

##### 4.4.3.4 Strict on-time delivery metrics

According to figure 4.4.3 above a total of (33) being 41% strongly agree that driver performance at BAK Logistics is measured by strict on-time delivery metrics. A total of (34) being 43% Agreed, a total of (8) being 10% where neutral, a total of (2) 3% Disagree and a total of (3) 4% strongly Disagree.

The views of the respondents are hand glove with the views of Peterson and Craig (2017) who postulated that the impact of strict performance metrics on succession planning is based on the view that strict performance metrics can also create a high-pressure environment that may lead to burnout and disengagement among employees. This can be particularly detrimental to succession planning, as employees who are constantly under pressure to meet performance targets may not have the time or energy to focus on developing their skills and preparing for future leadership roles. Additionally, strict performance metrics may not always accurately reflect an individual’s potential for future success in a leadership role. Some employees may excel in meeting performance targets but lack the necessary soft skills, emotional intelligence, or strategic thinking abilities required for leadership positions. In these cases, succession planning based solely on performance metrics may overlook individuals who have the potential to be successful leaders.

Overall, while strict performance metrics can play a valuable role in succession planning by identifying high-performing employees, it is important for organizations to also consider other factors such as leadership potential, interpersonal skills, and long-term career goals when making succession planning decisions.

##### 4.4.2.5 The number of late deliveries is closely tracked, as on-time delivery rate is a key success factor for BAK Logistics.

According to figure 4.4.2 above a total of (19) being 24% strongly agree that mobile learning technology gives mobility and collaborative learning. A total of (34) being 43% Agreed, a total of (7) being 9% where neutral, a total of (10) 13% Disagree and a total of (10) 13% strongly Disagree.

The results from the respondents also concur with the findings of Pollard (2011) who conducted a similar research in US tertiary institutions and found that strict performance metrics can have a significant impact on succession planning within an organization. When performance metrics are strictly enforced, it can create a more competitive environment where employees are constantly striving to meet or exceed these metrics in order to secure promotions and advancement opportunities. This can lead to a more merit-based approach to succession planning, where individuals who consistently perform well and meet their targets are more likely to be considered for leadership roles and other career advancement opportunities. This can help ensure that the most qualified and capable individuals are being groomed for future leadership positions within the organization.

## 4.5 the effect of centralised decision-making on succession planning at BAK Logistics

This section was aimed at presenting, analyzing, interpreting and discussing the facts about the effect of centralized decision-making on succession planning at BAK Logistics.

Figure 3: Facts about the effect of centralised decision-making on succession planning at BAK Logistics

##### 4.5.1.1 Slow decision-making

Data presented on figure 4.5.1 above showed that a total of (22) being 28% strongly agree that the effect of centralized decision-making on succession planning at BAK Logistics is that it slows in decision making. A total of (40) being 50% Agreed, a total of (5) being 6% where neutral, a total of (9) 11% Disagree and a total of (4) 5% strongly Disagree.

The views by the respondents concur with Baran ([2014](https://educationaltechnologyjournal.springeropen.com/articles/10.1186/s41239-018-0091-4#ref-CR6)) and Sharples (2018) who hypothesized that one of the effects of centralized decision making is slow in decision-making process. Centralized decision making can be slow and bureaucratic, as decisions often need to go through multiple levels of approval before being implemented. This can lead to delays in responding to changing market conditions or customer needs.

**4.5.1.2 Lack of diversity**

Data presented on figure 4.5.1 above showed that a total of (23) being 29% strongly agree that that the effect of centralized decision-making on succession planning at BAK Logistics is that it fosters lack of diversity of ideas. A total of (34) being 43% Agreed, a total of (7) being 9% where neutral, a total of (10) 13% Disagree and a total of (6) 8% strongly Disagree.

There is a strong relationship between the views of the respondents and Parsons and Ryu (2019). Parsons and Ryu (2019) who hypothesized that that centralized decision making often involves a small group of individuals making decisions on behalf of the entire organization. This can lead to a lack of diverse perspectives and ideas being considered, resulting in potentially biased or incomplete decisions

##### 4.5.1.3 Reduced employee motivation and engagement

From the data presented on figure 4.5.1 above a total of (30) being 38% strongly agree centralized decision making fosters reduced employee motivation and engagement. A total of (28) being 35% Agreed, a total of (6) being 8% where neutral, a total of (6) 8% Disagree and a total of (10) 5% strongly Disagree.

Therefore the researcher concluded that the respondents view centralized decision making as negatively impacting succession planning at BAK Logistics as there is reduced employee engagement and motivation

The views of the respondents also concurs with Aresta, Pedro and Santos ([2015](https://educationaltechnologyjournal.springeropen.com/articles/10.1186/s41239-018-0091-4#ref-CR5)) who put forward that decisions are made centrally, employees may feel disengaged and demotivated, as they have little input or control over the direction of the organization. This can lead to decreased morale and productivity.

##### 4.5.1.4 Inflexibility

Data presented on figure 4.5.1 above showed that a total of (29) being 36% strongly agree that centralized decision making promotes inflexibility among employees. A total of (32) being 40% Agreed, a total of (4) being 5% where neutral, a total of (11) 14% Disagree and a total of (4) 5% strongly Disagree.

The respondents views of the respondents have a strong relationship with the views of Kynäslahti ([2003](https://educationaltechnologyjournal.springeropen.com/articles/10.1186/s41239-018-0091-4#ref-CR32)) and Cheon, Lee, Crooks and Song ([2012](https://educationaltechnologyjournal.springeropen.com/articles/10.1186/s41239-018-0091-4#ref-CR12)) who postulated that Centralized decision making can be rigid and inflexible, as decisions are made by a small group of individuals who may not have a full understanding of the complexities of different departments or functions within the organization. This can make it difficult to adapt to changing circumstances or seize new opportunities.

##### 4.5.1.5 Lack of accountability

From the data that is presented onfigure 4.5.1 above showed that a total of (25) being 31% strongly agree that centralized decision fosters lack of accountability. A total of (38) being 48% Agreed, a total of (6) being 8% where neutral, a total of (4) 5% Disagree and a total of (7) 9% strongly Disagree.

Therefore, the researcher concluded that lack of accountability at BAK Logistics is a result of lack of accountability. The views by the respondents match well with Cheon, Lee, Crooks, and Song, ([2012](https://educationaltechnologyjournal.springeropen.com/articles/10.1186/s41239-018-0091-4#ref-CR12)) who provided that a centralized decision-making structure, it can be difficult to hold individuals accountable for their decisions, as responsibility is often shared among a group of decision-makers. This can lead to a lack of transparency and accountability within the organization.

## 4.6 The impact of strategic workforce planning on succession planning at BAK Logistics

This section was meant to establish from the respondents the facts about the impact of strategic workforce planning on succession planning at BAK Logistics and the views of respondents are tabulated as shown in the tables below.

Figure 4: Facts about the impact of strategic workplace planning on succession planning at BAK Logistics

Source: Questionnaire

##### 4.6.1.1 Analysing Workforce Discrepancies

According to data presented onfigure 4.6.1 above (30) 38% strongly agree that the impact of strategic workforce planning on succession planning at BAK Logistics is that it assist in analyzing workforce discrepancies. A total of (28) being 35% Agreed, a total of (6) being 8% where neutral, a total of (6) 8% Disagree and a total of (10) 12% strongly Disagree.

From the data presented it is confirmed that most participants agreed that analyzing workforce discrepancies is an outcome of strategic workforce planning on succession planning. The views of the respondents concur with the views of Alrasheedi and Capretz, (2013) who postulated that Strategic workforce planning is a crucial aspect of organizational success, as it involves aligning the workforce with the overall goals and objectives of the business. By analyzing workforce discrepancies, organizations can identify gaps in skills, knowledge, and abilities that may hinder their ability to achieve strategic objectives. One key benefit of strategic workforce planning is the ability to anticipate future talent needs and proactively address any potential gaps. This allows organizations to develop strategies for recruiting, training, and retaining top talent to ensure they have the right people in place to drive success.

##### 4.6.1.2 Anticipate and Plan for Change

From the data presented above onfigure 4.6.1 a total of (28) being 35% strongly agree that Anticipate and Plan for Change. A total of (36) being 45% Agreed, a total of (5) being 6% where neutral, a total of (7) 9% Disagree and a total of (4) 5% strongly Disagree.

The submissions by the respondents concur with Friesen and Lowe ([2011](https://educationaltechnologyjournal.springeropen.com/articles/10.1186/s41239-018-0091-4#ref-CR17)) who argued that Strategic workforce planning anticipate and plan for change. By analyzing workforce discrepancies, organizations can also identify areas where additional training or development may be needed to close skill gaps and enhance employee performance. This data-driven approach can help organizations make more informed decisions about resource allocation and investment in human capital. Friesen and Lowe ([2011](https://educationaltechnologyjournal.springeropen.com/articles/10.1186/s41239-018-0091-4#ref-CR17)) further noted that strategic workforce planning and analyzing workforce discrepancies are essential components of effective talent management. By taking a proactive approach to aligning the workforce with organizational goals and addressing any skill gaps or deficiencies, organizations can position themselves for long-term success in an increasingly competitive marketplace.

##### 4.6.1.3 Decrease Hiring Costs

Data that is presented onfigure 4.5.1 above showed that a total of (26) being 33% strongly agree that decrease hiring costs is a result of strategic workforce planning and have a positive plan on succession planning. A total of (35) being 44% Agreed, a total of (4) being 5% where neutral, a total of (5) 6% Disagree and a total of (10) 13% strongly Disagree.

There is a strong relationship between the views of the respondents and those of Rockley and Cooper (2012) who coiled that strategic workforce planning is a crucial aspect of any organization's success as it fosters decrease hiring costs. By carefully analyzing current and future business needs, companies can ensure they have the right people in the right roles at the right time. This proactive approach allows for better decision-making when it comes to hiring, training, and retaining employees. One significant benefit of strategic workforce planning is the ability to decrease hiring costs. By accurately forecasting staffing needs and identifying potential skills gaps, organizations can avoid unnecessary recruitment expenses. Additionally, by investing in training and development programs for existing employees, companies can reduce turnover rates and minimize the need for external hires. Thus strategic workforce planning not only helps organizations align their human capital with their business objectives but also contributes to cost savings in the long run. By taking a proactive approach to talent management, companies can increase efficiency, productivity, and ultimately achieve a competitive advantage in today's dynamic business environment.

##### 4.6.1.4 This information will decrease recruitment costs and help the operations run smoothly

From the data presented above on figure 4.5.1 a total of (38) being 48% strongly agree that strategic planning workforce will decrease recruitment costs and help the operations run smoothly. A total of (25) being 31% Agreed, a total of (9) being 11% where neutral, a total of (6) 8% Disagree and a total of (2) 3% strongly Disagree.

Sarrab (2015) and Khan, Al-Shihi, Al-Khanjari and Sarrab (2015) have similar views with respondents that strategic planning workforce will decrease recruitment costs and help the operations run smoothly. Strategic workforce planning is a critical component of any successful organization. By carefully analyzing current and future business needs, companies can ensure they have the right talent in place to achieve their goals. This proactive approach not only helps decrease recruitment costs but also ensures that operations run smoothly. One key benefit of strategic workforce planning is the ability to identify and address potential skill gaps within the organization. By understanding what skills are needed now and in the future, companies can develop targeted training programs to up skill existing employees or recruit new talent with the necessary expertise. This not only saves money on external hiring but also improves overall operational efficiency. Furthermore, workforce planning allows organizations to anticipate changes in the labor market and adjust their recruitment strategies accordingly. By proactively building relationships with potential candidates and maintaining a strong employer brand, companies can attract top talent more easily and reduce time-to-fill for critical roles. This seamless process ensures that operations continue to run smoothly without any disruptions due to staffing shortages. Strategic workforce planning is a vital tool for organizations looking to decrease recruitment costs and maintain operational effectiveness. By taking a proactive approach to talent management, companies can ensure they have the right people in place at the right time, leading to increased productivity and long-term success.

##### 4.6.1.5 Improved Recruitment Processes

The data that is presented onfigure 4.5.1 above showed that a total of (35) being 44% strongly agree that improved recruitment processes, a total of (22) being 28% Agreed, a total of (6) being 8% where neutral, a total of (12) 15% Disagree and a total of (5) 6% strongly Disagree.

The views of the respondents have a strong relationship with that of Alrasheedi and Capretz (2017) who revealed that strategic workforce planning is a critical aspect of organizational success, as it involves aligning the workforce with the overall business strategy. By forecasting future talent needs and identifying skill gaps, organizations can proactively address any potential challenges that may arise. Improved recruitment processes play a key role in this strategic planning, as they ensure that the right individuals are hired to meet current and future business needs. Additionally, investing in technology and automation can streamline recruitment processes and improve efficiency. By leveraging tools such as applicant tracking systems and artificial intelligence, organizations can reduce time-to-fill rates and enhance the candidate experience. This not only attracts top talent but also ensures a smooth onboarding process that sets employees up for success from day one. Strategic workforce planning and improved recruitment processes are essential components of organizational growth and success. By aligning talent acquisition strategies with overall business goals, organizations can build a strong foundation for future growth and sustainability. Investing in data-driven decision-making processes, technology, and automation will ultimately lead to a more efficient and effective recruitment process that drives long-term success (Alrasheedi and Capretz, 2017). Thus the researcher concludes that setting up of the electronic network systems is costly hence affecting the effective implementation of mobile learning technology at tertiary education.

## 4.7 Chapter Summary

This chapter covered the data presentation, analysis, interpretation and discussion. Pie charts and frequency tables were used to present quantitative research results whilst verbatim presentation was used to present qualitative data. Research results were analyzed by the researcher using Excel and knowledge gathered when study research methods and statistic whilst thematic analysis was used for qualitative data analysis. The next chapter will present the discussions of findings, conclusions and recommendations.

# CHAPTER FIVE

# SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## 5.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter was to come to final conclusions and recommendations on the findings which were discussed in the previous chapter. The researcher gave summary of the research findings, overall conclusion of the study and recommendations on the areas for further research. The thrust of the study was to carry an analysis of Hard HRM strategies on succession planning using a case of BAK logistics for the period 2022 to 2023. The findings of this study provided answers to the research objectives which were aimed to establish impact of hard HRM strategies at BAK Logistics, to determine the impact of strict performance metrics on succession planning at BAK Logistics, to ascertain the effect of centralised decision-making on succession planning at BAK Logistics and to evaluate the impact of strategic workforce planning on succession planning at BAK Logistics

## 5.2 Summary of findings

The study focused on an analyzing Hard HRM strategies and their impact on succession planning using a case of BAK logistics for the period 2022 to 2023. The findings are discussed as follows: -

### *5.2.1* The impact of hard HRM strategies at BAK Logistics

The study reveals that Human Resource Management (HRM) strategies play a crucial role in shaping the workforce and organizational culture of a company. The impact of hard HRM strategies at Bak Logistics, a leading logistics company, cannot be underestimated. By focusing on strict rules, performance metrics, and clear expectations, hard HRM strategies aim to maximize productivity and efficiency within the organization. One significant impact of hard HRM strategies at Bak Logistics is the emphasis on employee accountability and performance. Through regular performance evaluations and goal-setting sessions, employees are held responsible for their work outcomes. This approach fosters a culture of high performance and motivates employees to strive for excellence in their roles. Furthermore, hard HRM strategies at Bak Logistics contribute to the development of a skilled and competitive workforce. By investing in training programs and professional development opportunities, employees are equipped with the necessary skills to excel in their roles. This not only benefits individuals but also enhances the overall capabilities of the organization.

**5.2.2 The impact of strict performance metrics on succession planning at BAK Logistics**

The findings of the study exposed that Succession planning is a critical component of any organization's long-term strategy for sustainability and growth. At Bak Logistics, the impact of strict performance metrics on succession planning cannot be understated. By setting clear and measurable goals for employees, the company can identify high-potential individuals who can be groomed for leadership roles. However, the use of strict performance metrics in succession planning also presents challenges. Employees may feel pressured to meet unrealistic targets, leading to burnout and disengagement. This can result in talented individuals leaving the organization, creating gaps in leadership pipeline. Furthermore, relying solely on performance metrics may overlook important qualities such as emotional intelligence and interpersonal skills that are crucial for effective leadership. Succession planning should take a holistic approach by considering a combination of quantitative data and qualitative assessments.

### 5.2.3 The effect of centralized decision-making on succession planning at BAK Logistics

It emerged from the findings of the study that Succession planning is a critical aspect of organizational management, especially in the logistics industry where operational continuity is paramount. BAK Logistics, a leading player in the field, has traditionally relied on a centralized decision-making approach for its succession planning process. This centralized model often involves top executives making key decisions regarding leadership transitions and talent development within the company. While this approach may offer certain advantages such as consistency and alignment with organizational goals, it also poses significant challenges. One major drawback of centralized decision-making in succession planning is the lack of input from lower-level employees who may have valuable insights into potential successors and future leaders. This can lead to a disconnect between leadership expectations and employee capabilities, ultimately hindering the organization's ability to groom and retain top talent.

### 5.2.4 Facts about the impact of strategic workforce planning on succession planning at BAK Logistics

Strategic workforce planning is a critical component of organizational success, particularly when it comes to succession planning. At BAK Logistics, the impact of strategic workforce planning on succession planning cannot be overstated. By analyzing current and future workforce needs, BAK Logistics is able to identify key positions that will need to be filled in the future and develop a plan to ensure that there are qualified individuals ready to step into those roles. One of the key benefits of strategic workforce planning at BAK Logistics is the ability to proactively address potential gaps in leadership. By identifying high-potential employees and providing them with opportunities for growth and development, BAK Logistics is able to cultivate a pipeline of talent ready to take on leadership roles when needed. In addition, strategic workforce planning allows BAK Logistics to anticipate changes in the labor market and adjust their recruitment strategies accordingly. By staying ahead of trends in the industry, Bak Logistics can ensure that they have access to the skilled workers they need to drive their business forward.

## 5.3 Overall conclusion of the study

In conclusion, the impact of hard HRM strategies at BAK Logistics is evident in its ability to drive performance, accountability, and skill development within the workforce. By implementing these strategies effectively, BAK Logistics can achieve sustainable growth and success in the competitive logistics industry. Strict performance metrics play a significant role in succession planning at BAK Logistics, it is essential to strike a balance between quantitative goals and qualitative attributes to ensure the long-term success of the organization. Centralized decision-making may provide some benefits in succession planning at BAK Logistics, it is crucial for the company to consider incorporating more decentralized approaches that involve input from various levels of the organization. By fostering a culture of collaboration and inclusivity in succession planning, BAK Logistics can better position itself for long-term success and sustainability. Overall, the impact of strategic workforce planning on succession planning at BAK Logistics is clear. By taking a proactive approach to talent management, BAK Logistics is able to position themselves for long-term success and ensure that they have strong leaders in place as they continue to grow and evolve.

## 5.4 Recommendations

### *5.4.1* Recommendations on the impact of hard HRM strategies at BAK Logistics

As Bak Logistics continues to implement hard HRM strategies, it is crucial to consider the potential impact on the organization. These strategies focus on maximizing employee productivity and efficiency through strict performance management and accountability measures. While these tactics may lead to short-term gains in productivity, there are long-term implications that must be carefully considered.

One recommendation is to ensure that employees are not overwhelmed by the high-pressure environment created by these strategies. It is important to provide adequate support and resources for employees to cope with increased expectations. Additionally, fostering a positive work culture that values employee well-being can help mitigate potential negative effects of hard HRM strategies.

Furthermore, it is essential for BAK Logistics to regularly evaluate the effectiveness of these strategies and make adjustments as needed. Monitoring employee satisfaction, turnover rates, and overall organizational performance can provide valuable insights into the impact of hard HRM strategies on the company.

While hard HRM strategies can drive performance improvements in the short term, it is imperative for Bak Logistics to carefully assess their long-term impact on employees and organizational success. By implementing these recommendations, Bak Logistics can create a balanced approach that maximizes productivity while also prioritizing employee well-being and satisfaction.

### 5.4.2 Recommendations on the based on the second objective the impact of strict performance metrics on succession planning at BAK Logistics

Strict performance metrics play a crucial role in the succession planning process at BAK Logistics. However, it is important to consider the potential impact of these metrics on the overall success of the organization. Firstly, it is essential to ensure that the performance metrics are aligned with the strategic goals and objectives of BAK Logistics. This will help to ensure that employees are working towards common goals and objectives, leading to a more cohesive and effective workforce. Additionally, strict performance metrics can create a competitive environment within the organization. While competition can be beneficial in driving performance and productivity, it may also lead to negative behaviours such as sabotage or resentment among employees. Furthermore, it is important to consider the potential impact of strict performance metrics on employee morale and job satisfaction. Employees who feel pressured to meet unrealistic targets may experience burnout or disengagement, ultimately impacting their long-term commitment to the organization. While strict performance metrics can be an effective tool in succession planning at Bak Logistics, it is important to carefully consider their potential impact on organizational culture, employee behaviour, and overall success. By striking a balance between accountability and support, BAK Logistics can create a positive and productive work environment that fosters long-term success.

### 5.4.3 Recommendations based on third objective the effect of centralized decision-making on succession planning at BAK Logistics

Succession planning is a critical aspect of organizational management, especially for companies like BAK Logistics that rely heavily on effective leadership and decision-making. Centralized decision-making can have a significant impact on the succession planning process at BAK Logistics, influencing the identification and development of future leaders within the organization.

One key recommendation for BAK Logistics is to establish a clear framework for succession planning that aligns with the centralized decision-making structure. This framework should outline the criteria for identifying potential successors, as well as the processes for grooming and developing these individuals to take on leadership roles within the company.

In addition, it is essential for BAK Logistics to involve key stakeholders in the succession planning process, including senior management, HR personnel, and current leaders within the organization. By soliciting input from these individuals, Bak Logistics can ensure that succession plans are aligned with organizational goals and objectives.

Furthermore, BAK Logistics should consider implementing regular reviews of its succession planning efforts to assess progress and make any necessary adjustments. This ongoing evaluation will help ensure that the company's centralized decision-making practices are effectively supporting its succession planning initiatives.

In conclusion, by taking these recommendations into account and integrating them into its centralized decision-making processes, BAK Logistics can enhance its succession planning efforts and better prepare for future leadership transitions. Ultimately, this proactive approach will help ensure the long-term success and sustainability of the organization.

## 5.5 Areas of Future studies

The researcher recommends further research on hard HRM strategies in succession planning could focus on the use of data analytics and technology to identify high-potential employees. By leveraging data-driven insights, organizations can better predict which employees are most likely to succeed in leadership roles and tailor development opportunities accordingly.

Another potential area of research could explore the impact of globalization on succession planning strategies. As companies expand into new markets and operate across borders, understanding how cultural differences and diverse talent pools influence succession planning practices will be crucial for organizational success.

Future studies on hard HRM strategies in succession planning hold great promise for helping organizations navigate the complexities of talent management in a rapidly changing world. By exploring innovative approaches and considering emerging trends, researchers can provide valuable insights that enable organizations to build a strong pipeline of future leaders. In addition, this study employed the pragmatism research paradigm but some researchers might also use a different approach such as phenomenology to have an in-depth understanding of the emotional and social ramifications of mobile learning at tertiary institutions. This study used the cross-sectional time horizon survey design which creates an opportunity for a longitudinal study to be done to reflect any change of patterns over a longer time frame.

## 5.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter discussed the summary of the study, the summary of the findings as informed by the research questions and objectives. The study also proffered some strategies which tertiary institutions should adopt if they want to operate profitably in the harsh and unfavorable conditions in Zimbabwe. Furthermore, suggestions for future research were presented before the chapter summary.

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# APPENDICES

## Questionnaire Guide

**Introduction**

Greetings! My name is Gwamure Ackim. G. (B201821B) and I am a student at Bindura University Of Science Education. I am currently in my final semester, studying towards Human Capital Management .As per requirements, I am required to conduct a research study. My research topic is titled:

**AN ANALYSIS OF HARD HRM STRATEGIES ON SUCCESSION PLANNING USING A CASE OF BAK LOGISTICS FOR THE PERIOD 2022 TO 2023**

The purpose of this questionnaire is to solicit information on the topic under investigation so as to find lasting solutions. Participating in this study is entirely voluntary and you will be required to withdraw anytime you wish to do so. You are therefore kindly being asked to provide your honest opinion on the questions that are hereby asked. Feel free to participate and fill the blank spaces after each question.

No names or information about any individual will be published. Should you require to get more details about the researcher, you are free to contact me **0786452217**.

**INSTRUCTIONS**

1. *Answer all questions truthfully and honestly.*



1. *Where boxes are provided, please indicate your answer by putting an in the box which corresponds to the answer you want to give.*
2. *In other questions, please write your answers along the dotted lines or space provided.*
3. *Do not indicate any of your personal details on this questionnaire.*

***Thank you in advance.***

**SECTION A**

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

This section is asking for your background information. Please indicate your answer by ticking in the appropriate box



D**emographic information**

**A1** Please indicate your gender.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Male  |  |
| Female |  |

**A2** Please indicate your age group.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 18-25  |  |
| 26-35  |  |
| 36-45  |  |
| 46 and above |  |

**A.3** Please indicate the department you are attached to

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Human Resources |  |
| Procurement  |  |
| Finance  |  |
| Accounting  |  |
| Driving |  |
| Stores |  |

**A.4** Please indicate your length of service in your organization.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 0-5  |  |
| 6-10 |  |
| 11-20 |  |
| 21 and above  |  |

**A5** Please indicate your highest level of education.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Certificate |  |
| Diploma  |  |
| Degree  |  |
| Master’s Degree |  |
| Other  |  |

**SECTION B**

Q1. Do you know about Hard HRM Strategies?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Yes  | **NO** |

If answer is yes, explain your understanding

…………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………….

Q2. Do you know about Succession Planning?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Yes  | **NO** |

If answer is yes, explain your understanding

…………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………….

**Q3. How has strict performance metrics impacted succession planning at BAK Logistics?**

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with statements listed on the 5-point scale below. Tick under the number that closely corresponds with your answer. Do the same also on Section C, Section D and Section E

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **1=Strongly Disagree** | **2=Disagree** | **3=Neutral** |  **4=Agree** | **5=Strongly Agree** |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Facts about the impact of strict performance metrics on succession planning at BAK Logistics** | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |
| **B1** | Strict performance metrics are clearly defined and communicated  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **B2** | Employees perceive strict performance metrics influence their career progression opportunities. |  |  |  |  |  |
| **B3** | Succession planning is largely influenced by individual driver performance. |  |  |  |  |  |
| **B4** | Driver performance at BAK Logistics is measured by strict on-time delivery metrics. |  |  |  |  |  |
| **B5** | The number of late deliveries is closely tracked, as on-time delivery rate is a key success factor for BAK Logistics. |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

**SECTION C**

**Q5. How has centralised decision-making affected on succession planning at BAK Logistics?**

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with statements listed on the 5-point scale below. Tick under the number that closely corresponds with your answer. Do the same also on Section C, Section D and Section E.

KEY

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **1=Strongly Disagree** | **2=Disagree** | **3=Neutral** |  **4=Agree** | **5=Strongly Agree** |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Facts about the effect of centralised decision-making on succession planning at BAK Logistics** | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |
| **C1** | Slow decision-making |  |  |  |  |  |
| **C2** | Slow decision-making |  |  |  |  |  |
| **C3** | Reduced employee motivation |  |  |  |  |  |
| **C4** | Communication problems |  |  |  |  |  |
| **C5** | A disconnect between management and employees. |  |  |  |  |  |

**SECTION D**

**Q6. How does Strategic Work force planning impact on succession planning at BAK Logistics?**

Please indicate your answer by ticking in the appropriate box and by explaining yourself.

Indicate how much you agree with the facts on a scale 1 to 5.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **1=Strongly Disagree** | **2=Disagree** | **3=** **Neutral** | **4=** **Agree** | **5=Strongly Agree** |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Facts about the the impact of strategic workforce planning on succession planning at BAK Logistics** | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |
| **D1** | Analysing Workforce Discrepancies |  |  |  |  |  |
| **D2** | Identifying current and future workforce needs |  |  |  |  |  |
| **D3** | Decrease Hiring Costs |  |  |  |  |  |
| **B4** | This information will decrease recruitment costs and help the operations run smoothly |  |  |  |  |  |
| **B5** | Improved Recruitment Processes |  |  |  |  |  |
| **B6** | Aligning HR Processes with Business Strategy |  |  |  |  |  |

**Thank you so much for your cooperation and commitment.**

**THE END**