



Human Resource Succession Planning and Resilience of Multinational Oil and Gas Producing Companies in Nigeria

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Abstract

The aim of this paper was to investigate the relationship between human resource succession planning and resilience of multinational oil and gas producing companies in West Africa, Nigeria. Cross sectional survey was the research design adopted and because this study was a macro level study, the five multinational oil and gas producing companies in Nigeria constituted the population, and the executives of the multinational oil and gas producing companies who are fifty-two (52) in number constituted the sample size while also adopting the census technique. Being a quantitative study, the structured questionnaire was used to gather data for analysis while the Cronbach Alpha of 0.7 was adopted as the reliability standard. This analysis was aided with the use of the Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 26.0. Spearman Rank Order Correlation Coefficient was adopted as the statistical tool used in ascertaining the degree and level of relationship in the hypothesized statements. The findings derived from this study showed a moderate significant positive relationship between human resource succession planning and resilience of multinational oil and gas producing companies in Nigeria. The results showed that indeed human resource succession planning significantly impacted on the measure of resilience (situation awareness). Relying on the findings derived from this study, the researcher recommends that to become resilient, top executives and decision makers in the multinational oil and gas producing companies in Nigeria, should formulate an effective and efficient succession planning technique that will ensure continuity of leadership, ethics and culture that will enable the corporation to gain competitive edge. In addition, the human resource manager needs to take the succession planning technique seriously, as this will aid the multinational oil and gas producing companies to depend less on external human resource supply, as this will boost employee morale and so aid in resilience and longevity

Keywords: *Human Resource Succession Planning, Resilience, Situation Awareness.*

1.0 introduction

Unquestionably, the topic of corporate resilience is a vital element of business for expansion, development and enlargement of every organization no matter the sector. The essence to strive and continue to be in business is the aspiration of every organization, and this is achieved through innovation, and endeavoring to grow their market share as well as making profit irrespective of the obstacles they face and or encounter (Bartlet, 2006). Aldrich and Pullman (2019) posited that the contemporary plight of business environment is seemingly progressively complicated, explosive and doubtful considering the past and now, lessening the conviction of organized strategy and favorable achievement that is a factor of gaining corporate canines, edge or advantage. Still for a corporation to keep-afloat, it must have an aggressive canines established through successful corporate master plan and business techniques that elucidates the business long term objectives. But, the techniques to implement or guarantee corporate canines or maneuvering the problems or threats brought on by swift and ever dynamic explosive corporate environment has lingered uninvestigated (Wright, Gardner, Moynihan & Allen, 2015), with corporations that are contented using classical approaches or techniques or methods that are convenient, appropriate and suitably established employment (Reeves, Levin & Ueda, 2016).

Organizations worldwide depend on their resources to be resilient, and as has been postulated by Mayo *et al* (1928) cited in Okeah (2020), the employee is the most vital of all resources and without the employee, the organization will find it difficult to be resilient. To be resilient, employees being the bedrock of organizational resiliency must be taken into consideration and to do this according to Armstrong and Taylor (2013) as cited in Okeah (2020), to be resilient, the organization must recruit, retain and maintain talented employees. Talented and qualified managers make decisions both internally and externally through acquisition, development and utilization of resources that will position the corporation in a vantage point to be able to withstand any environmental strain. Therefore, the necessity to meticulously establish the human resource of the corporation is by consciously, carefully and methodically done through planning the workforce. Chakraborty and Biswas (2019) posited that a proper human resource planning is a technique used for exploring and structuring dependable human resource potential, competence, skill, talent etc. that will match up to the ever-changing corporate labor force demand. Succession planning is part of human resource planning

Succession planning is a responsive approach to managing employees' talents because it entails identifying the employees with high prospects, talent and capabilities for expected or forecasted future needs and training and developing these employees in order that the corporation has a vast array of talents available to meet the corporations demand as the need arises. According to Tamunomiebi and Orianzi (2019), this training and development must take into consideration the ethical and leadership training to prepare these successors to imbibe corporate values as well as ethical codes in addition to corporate culture due to the influence the leaders have on their personnel and the inference on corporate reputation.

The purpose of human resource succession planning is to ensure that a corporation is effectively developing intellectual assets to occupy leadership positions when it is time for the current leadership to retire or is seriously or critically ill or dead and this is carried out to ensure continuity in leadership, culture and excellence. An effective succession planning leads to corporate performance, corporate resilience and corporate survival, because an effective leader is one that steers the corporation to excellence irrespective of the ever-existing turbulence that occurs in the

business environment, and so the main purpose of this article is investigate interrelationships betwixt human resource succession planning and resilience of multinational oil and gas producing companies in Nigeria.

The following question necessitated this paper:

- ❖ What is the interrelationship betwixt human resource succession planning and situation awareness of multinational oil and gas producing companies in West Africa, Nigeria?

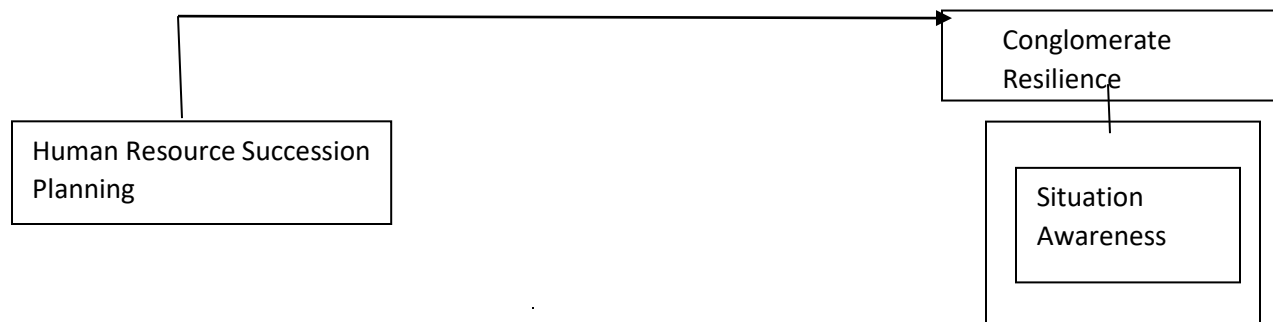


Fig 1: Conceptual Framework for the interrelationship betwixt Human Resource Succession Planning and Corporate Resilience.

Source: Okeah, M. I. N. (2022)

2.0 Literature Review

Theoretical Foundation.

Job Embeddedness Theory

Job embeddedness theory as stated by Holtom, Mithcell, Lee and Sablyn (2006) is all about how the corporation retains the employee. They opined that it has to do with a wide range of factors comprising of both on-the-job as well as off-the-job components that sways the decision of an employee to either stay or leave a corporation which comprises of fit, link and sacrifice.

The main dimensions of job embeddedness include ‘link’ which is the formal or informal relationship the employee has with other employees, the business and the society. Also, ‘fit’ this refers to how suited the employee is to their role. In addition ‘sacrifice’ which is the supposed intrinsic or intangible benefits that the employee is able to walk away from when he/she leaves the business.

Bambacas and Kulik (2013), Mitchell *et al* (2001) all concurred that researches have shown that embedded employees are comfortable in remaining in the organization. In essence, it has been discovered that the more appropriate the ‘fit’, the greater the probability or possibility the employee experiences skills, competencies, efficiency, proficiency and dexterity for the organization. Also, the greater the number of ‘links amongst the employee, business and the society, the stronger will be the bond with the business. Furthermore, the thought of how much the employee will lose when he leaves the business (sacrifice), the stronger he feels compelled to stay back in the organization, Mitchell *et al* (200). In summary, the greater the embeddedness of: fit, link, and sacrifice, the greater the zeal to remain in the corporation which boosts the

corporation's resiliency that gives rise to corporate advantage, enhances performance and then corporate survival.

The Concept of Succession Planning

Henderson (2011) opines that succession plan consists of one that is propelled by the totality of the goals of the corporation in addition to the written policies and systems of the corporation. This procedure will articulate more suitable communication career paths for the employees, more suitable plans for development as well as establishing an understandable system for the human resource profession. Irrespective that it is very pivotal for corporations to have a suitable successor to occupy major positions in the corporation, most corporate top management personnel avoid paying the needed and necessary attention to this all-important task.

Succession planning according to Schmalzried and Fallon (2007) is the process whereby the corporation is foresighted and so goes ahead to make certain that there is a continuous as well as constant leadership in the corporation by recognizing how these leadership positions will be manned or occupied as departures occur either voluntarily or involuntarily. For corporations to attain resiliency, enhanced performance and ultimate survival, the succession planning put in place or developed by the corporation must be highly effective and the strategies formulated must be tailored to the corporate excellence of the corporation, because as we all know, the leadership style in corporations leads to the success or failure of the corporation (Hunte-Cox, 2004). An effective succession planning centers on three major areas, which are: 1) it tackles the needs of the corporation as senior leaders of management staff ages and retires from the corporation. 2) it aids the corporation to prepare for the unforeseen or unpredictable like the death or sudden illness of a staff occupying a major leadership position. 3) it makes certain that the corporation has the right and suitable employee established or ready to work at full throttle or highest efficiency presently and subsequently or in the future. Succession planning also serves to fill gaps in the corporation by ascertaining the present employees and the leadership positions forecasted to be filled.

The Concept of Corporate Resilience

Corporate resilience is measured in this article, adopting situation awareness.

The Concept of Situation Awareness

Gilson (1995) postulated that situational awareness and its concept was brought to the fore during World War I by Oswald Boelke who realized 'the seriousness of knowing the cognizance and perception of the adversary prior to the adversary knowing a related cognizance and perception, and prepare ways for achieving this.' According to 'Woods 1988' this notion of disconnection betwixt the personnel managers having knowledge of organizational standing and proper organizational standing is at the center of the interpretation of situation awareness. The concept situation awareness didn't gain a lot of recognition in the practical, scientific and educational and scholastic historical texts not till later in the 1980's, but of late has been a critical trending subject from then on. A critical description why this is so is because initially discerning the occurrence and growth of the idea is the level to which a serious issue was discerned. The first move for the inquiry and establishment was brought forth in the aviation sector, because of the immense pressure for aeronauts as well as red light officers to establish a better circumstantial and

environmental perception (Jenson 1997). This concept has grown in leaps and bounds as the awareness that the organizational structure can't be optimized for personnel managers and, considering some circumstances, has gone beyond human's ability to monitor.

In the simplest of terms, situation awareness is an adequate perception of an environment (Smith & Hancock 1995; Woods, 1988) talked about for individuals to sustain a proper perception of an organizational stands, it is imperative and necessary to monitor the establishment of occurrences as they slowly succession planning. According to Schmalzried and Fallon (2007) is the process whereby the corporation is foresighted and so goes ahead to make certain that there is a continuous as well as constant leadership in the corporation by recognizing how these leadership positions will be manned or occupied as departures occur either voluntarily or involuntarily. For corporations to attain resiliency, enhanced performance and ultimate survival, the succession planning put in place or developed by the corporation must be highly effective and the strategies formulated must be tailored to the corporate excellence of the corporation, because as we all know, the leadership style in corporations leads to the success or failure of the corporation (Hunte-Cox, 2004). An effective succession planning centers on three major areas which are: 1) it tackles the needs of the corporation as senior leaders of management staff ages and retires from the corporation. 2) it aids the corporation to prepare for the unforeseen or unpredictable like the death or sudden illness of a staff occupying a major leadership position. 3) it makes certain that the corporation has the right and suitable employee established or ready to work at full throttle or highest efficiency presently and subsequently or in the future. Succession planning also serves to fill gaps in the corporation by ascertaining the present employees and the leadership positions forecasted to be filled. Woods (1988) asserts that occurrences mature with time as disruptions occur. These issues increases when the personnel manager refuses to change as changes occur. This then progresses to the breakup of the organization as well as the lack of understanding on the part of the manger to comprehend organizational circumstances, as this is referred to as human situation awareness, which then translates to the disassociation of the real organizational stands. The lack of grappling the understanding of the inactions of the changing occurrences in the environment can lead to worsening of the situation.

Smith and Hancock (1998) surmises that situational awareness is pivotally the interaction between the individual and the universe, so therefore it hinges largely on the way in which the individual and the universe correlates. Situational awareness as postulated by Endsley (1988) is the perception of the elements in the environment within a volume of time and space, the understanding of their meaning and a prediction of their status in the near future. Endsley (1988) sees situational awareness as an information processing model, she emphasized importantly on perception and comprehension of the universe with some aspect of future forecasting or prediction. Endsley (1995) surmised that the information processing system has been best depicted by three level model of situational awareness. This shows an unfolding of how situational awareness as higher-order cognitive processing is carried out and these levels are summarized below:

Level 1 SA: This is known as the perception stage: in this stage corporations perceive the competition in the market or in their sector, their strengths and weaknesses, but data is just gathered at this stage without action being taken.

Level 2 SA: This is known as the comprehension of the current situation stage: this stage is all about how the information gathered in stage 1 SA is either a threat or not. If the manager of a

corporation feels that the information gathered is a threat to the corporation, he acts on it so to position the corporation at a vantage point, but a manager with a low awareness of stage 2 SA will not act and so endangers the corporation.

Level 3 SA: The prediction or anticipation stage: at this stage the corporations rely-on SA 1 and SA 2 of the environment to be able to predict and forecast strategic future plans to adopt that will position the corporation in an advantageous position so as to outwit their rivals. These predictions or forecast of future status are made to equip the corporation strategically to be resilient.

Succession Planning and Corporate Resilience.

Corporations that want to increase their competitive advantage must always invest in its human resource (Kehinde, 2012). In his research, Kehinde (2012) surmises that neglecting talent management is detrimental and self-destruction for any corporation. In the study, the demand for quality, exceptional and outstanding talent surpasses the supply. So therefore, a corporation with the requisite human resource supply has better chances of having competitive advantage and so better chances being resilient and of surviving unlike the corporations that do not or are lacking adequate talented employees. Other scholars in their research (Manpower Talent Shortage Survey cited in Garr, 2012) also concluded that due to reforms and changes in the ratio in the number to male and female configuration in the workplace, most corporations are undergoing or encountering the effect of talent shortage as they compete in the international or world market. In the words of Iqbal, Qureshi, Khan and Hijazi (2013) it is more strenuous to find, retain and maintain talent and very easy to expend and lose talent.

The process of corporate resilience according to Kessara (2012) entails the identifying, assessing and the developing of employees with high prospects and great potentials to make certain that they are ready to accept and undertake vital managerial as well as top managerial roles when they are asked to do so. The process of replacing top management is never an easy feat, corporations must put in place a structured and effective succession plan that ensures that employees with prospects are identified and trained and these employees with great potentials that are groomed and cultivated will need an effective training and development plan that is concentrated on each of the different employees' strengths and weaknesses. This process should be taken very seriously because the type of leader/s that the corporation grooms can either lead the corporation to be resilient in times of turbulence and thereby to its long-term survival or to its eventual demise.

Based on the discussion above, the following hypotheses were drawn and to be tested:

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between succession planning and situational awareness of multinational oil and gas producing companies in Nigeria.

3.0 Methodology

This research was carried out adopting snap-shot research design, and census technique. Because it was a macro level study, all the five (5) multinational oil and gas producing companies in West Africa, Nigeria was studied as the population and the respondents being fifty-two (52) in number of top executives in the organization being the sample size were administered self-styled questionnaire (being the primary method of data collection for analysis). Only forty-five (45) of this self-styled questionnaire was deemed usable. Because this study was a quantitative study, the researcher relied on the Grade Correlation with the SPSS (Statistical Packages for Social

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Sciences) version 26.0 as the mathematical tool and these were used to test the hypotheses drawn up in the study. The Crouchback alpha of a standard of 0.7 was relied on for the reliability test. Table 1 below illustrates the population distribution of the study:

Table 1 Study Population

S/N	COMPANY	FIRST-LINE KEY MANAGERS											TOTAL		
		PDTN.	SALES	MKT.	FIN.	ACC.	PM.	R&D	LEGAL	OP.	HSE.	SEC		TECH	U.S
1	Chevron Nigeria Limited (CNL)	1	1		1		1			1	1	1	1		8
2	Mobil Producing Nigeria Limited (MPNU)	1	1		1		1			1	1	1	1		8
3	Nigerian Agip Oil Company (NAOC)	1	1	1	1		1			1	1	1	1	1	13
4	Shell Petroleum Development Company (SPDC)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	14
5	Total E&P Nigeria Limited (TEPNG)	1	1	1	1		1			1	1			1	9

52

Source: Field Research (2022).

Keys: the departments of these managers are:

PDTN=Production; Sales; MKT=Marketing; FIN=Finance; ACC=Accounting; PM=Personnel R&D=Research and Development; Legal; OP=Operations; SEC=Security; TECH=Technology; US=Up Stream; DS=Down Stream.

Table 2 below depicts the reliability test of the study:

Table 2: Reliability Tests of Variable Dimensions

S/N	Dimensions/Measures of the study variable	Number of items	Number of cases	Cronbach Alpha
1	Human Resource Succession Planning	5	45	0.793
2	Situation Awareness	5	45	0.854

Source: SPSS Output (2022).

4.0 Data Analysis and Results

To ascertain responses on personnel demand forecasting, it was measured on 4 items adopting a five points Likert scale and denoted by SD-Strongly Disagree; D-Disagree; N-Neutral; A-Agree; SA-Strongly Agree; and SA-Strongly Agree.

Table 3: Response Rates and Descriptive Statistics for HR Succession Planning

S/N	HR Succession Planning Items	SD (1)	D (2)	N (3)	A (4)	SA (5)	Mean	Std.
1.	My corporation has an established approach for identifying prospective management successors.	3	2	2	5	33	4.40	1.195
2.	My corporation develops succession plans so as to make certain that there are talented employees that will be needed when there is need to fill up key positions.	7	4	4	5	25	3.82	1.556
3.	My corporation ensures that there is a policy put in place to ensure commitment and continuity of the succession scheme.	3	7	4	5	26	3.98	1.390
4.	My corporation makes certain that there are specific developmental schemes or strategies that are designed to groom or train prospective successors.	5	4	2	5	29	4.09	1.443

Source: SPSS Output, 2022

Table 3 shows the descriptive statistics for HR Succession Planning as a dimension of human resources planning in which four research statements were stated in the questionnaire. It represents the accumulated sum from the respondents indicating the mean score and standard deviation. In response to item one, respondents affirmed that their corporation has an established approach for identifying prospective management successors. This is accounted for by the mean score (X) 4.40 and SD (1.195). Similarly, it was agreed that in their corporation develops succession plans so as to make certain that there are talented employees that will be needed when there is need to fill up key positions. This is also confirmed by the mean score (X) 3.82 and SD (1.556). More so, the third item got similar approval as respondents agreed that in their corporation ensures that there is a policy put in place to ensure commitment and continuity of the succession scheme. The mean score (X) 3.98 and SD (1.390) also speaks volume of this status. In addition, for the fourth item it was agreed that in their corporation makes certain that there are specific developmental schemes or strategies that are designed to groom or train prospective successors. This is also confirmed by the mean score (X) 4.09 and SD (1.443) which indicates correlation or positive relationship of the variable.

Table 4: Response Rates and Descriptive Statistics for Situational Awareness

S/N	Situational Awareness	SD (1)	D (2)	N (3)	A (4)	SA (5)	Mean	Std.
1.	Whenever my corporation suffers a danger or a disaster, we use it as an opportunity for self-evaluation	3	6	-	-	36	4.60	1.031
2.	My corporation proactively investigates or scans what is happening in the oil and gas sector to have an early warning of emerging issues.	6	2	-	6	31	4.20	1.440
3.	My corporation is successful at learning lessons from past projects and making sure these lessons are carried through to future projects	7	2	-	8	28	4.14	1.449
4.	My corporation is aware of the range or diverse hazards it is exposed to and their consequences.	4	1	-	5	35	4.47	1.217

Source: SPSS Output, 2022

Table 4 shows the descriptive statistics for Situational Awareness as a measure of corporate resilience in which four research statements were stated in the questionnaire. It represents the accumulated sum from the respondents indicating the mean score and standard deviation. In response to item one, respondents affirmed that whenever my corporation suffers a danger or a disaster, we use it as an opportunity for self-evaluation. This is accounted for by the mean score (X) 4.60 and SD (1.031). Similarly, it was agreed that their corporation proactively investigates or scans what is happening in the oil and gas sector so as to have an early warning of emerging issues. This is also confirmed by the mean score (X) 4.20 and SD (1.440). More so, the third item got similar approval as respondents agreed that their corporation is successful at learning lessons from past projects and making sure these lessons are carried through to future projects. The mean score (X) 4.14 and SD (1.449) also speaks volume of this status. For the fourth item, with a mean score (X) 4.47 and SD (1.217), it was agreed that their corporation is aware of the range or diverse hazards it is exposed to and their consequences.

Table 5: Descriptive Statistics for Corporate Resilience

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Adaptability	45	1.00	5.00	3.9556	1.11586
Dynamic Capability	45	1.00	5.00	3.3222	1.41684
Situational Awareness	45	1.00	5.00	4.3444	1.84155
Valid N (listwise)	45				

Source: Research Data 2022 and SPSS output version 26.0

Table 5 illustrates the descriptive statistics for corporate resilience which are adaptability, with mean scores (X) 3.9556 and SD (1.11586), dynamic capability with mean scores (X) 3.3222 and SD (1.41684) and situation awareness with mean scores (X) 4.3444 and SD (1.84155) respectively. This implies that the respondents all confirmed that there is a correlation or positive relationship of medium to high extent rate of corporate resilience in the multinational oil and gas producing companies in Nigeria.

Relationship between human resource succession planning and situation awareness

Table 6 shows the result of correlation matrix obtained for human resource succession planning and corporate resilience. Also displayed in the table is the statistical test of significance (p - value), which makes us able to answer our research question and generalize our findings to the study population. The table is shown below

		Human Resource Succession Planning	Situational Awareness
Spearman's rho	Human Resource Succession Planning	Correlation Coefficient	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.502*
		N	45
	Situational Awareness	Correlation Coefficient	.502*
		Sig. (2-tailed)	1.000
		N	45

Source: Research Data 2022 and SPSS output version 26.0

HR Succession Planning and Corporate Resilience: The third cluster of bivariate hypothetical statements assessed the significance of the relationship between Human Resource Succession Planning and Corporate Resilience and the measure of Corporate Resilience –Situational Awareness. The relationship is assessed based on the tests on their accompanying hypothetical statements.

Research Question 1

What is the relationship between human resource succession planning and situational awareness of multinational oil and gas producing corporations in Nigeria?

The correlation coefficient (rho) result in Table 6 is used to answer research question 9. The correlation coefficients (rho) indicate that there is a moderate positive rank correlation between human resource succession planning and situational awareness. The direction and strength of this relationship is depicted by the rho-value of 0.502. Therefore, the relationship between human resource succession planning and situational awareness of multinational oil and gas producing corporations in Nigeria is moderately positive correlation indicative of a substantial relationship.

Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between human resource succession planning and situational awareness of multinational oil and gas producing corporations in Nigeria.

The correlation coefficient (rho) results in Table 6 indicate that there is a moderate positive rank correlation between human resource succession planning and situation awareness (0.502) which is significant at 5% level of confidence. Furthermore, the p-value (0.000) is less than the level of significance (0.05), hence we posit that the null hypothesis is rejected, which entail that there is a significant relationship between human resource succession planning and situational awareness of multinational oil and gas producing corporations in Nigeria.

5.0 Discussion of Findings

Baba and Ameh (2018) studied the impact of succession planning and organizational survival. The purpose of the study was to ascertain the relationship between management development and mentoring on organization survival. The data analysis was 62 participants from fast food businesses in Port Harcourt. Multiple regression was used to test the hypotheses. The result showed that there was a strong correlation between succession planning and organizational survival.

Akpan and Ukpai (2017) examined the effect of succession planning on the survival of Small-Scale Businesses in Makurdi metropolis, Nigeria. The descriptive survey design was embraced for their study. A sample size of 120 respondents was drawn from a population of 560 small scale business owners. Structured questionnaire was used for data collection. The data collected were tested using mean and standard deviation and Analysis of Variance. The study showed that manpower training influences continuity of small-scale businesses. The interpretation of this study was that business owners should put in place a succession plan to ensure organizational continuity and sustainability.

Conclusion and Recommendation

There is a moderate significant positive relationship between human resource succession planning and situational awareness of multinational oil and gas producing corporations in Nigeria.

The researcher recommends that to become resilient, top executives and decision makers in the multinational oil and gas producing companies in Nigeria, should formulate an effective and efficient succession planning technique that will ensure continuity of leadership, ethics, culture etc. that will enable the corporation to gain competitive edge. In addition, the human resource manager needs to take the succession planning technique seriously, as this will aid the multinational oil and gas producing companies to depend less on external human resource supply, as this will boost employee morale and so aid in resilience and longevity.

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