
SUCCESSION PLANNING PRACTICES AND SERVICE DELIVERY IN THE HEALTH SECTOR OF TAITA TAVETA COUNTY GOVERNMENT

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ABSTRACT

Planning for succession is crucial in organizational management, especially in the public sector where the caliber of service delivery has a big impact on the wellbeing of the community. Effective succession planning is crucial in ensuring the uninterrupted delivery of high-quality healthcare services. The study aimed to explore the relationship between succession planning practices and service delivery within the health sector of Taita Taveta County Government. Specific objectives encompassed evaluating strategic leader development, continuity planning, exit planning, and corporate governance's influence on service delivery. A descriptive research design through field surveys was chosen to collect cross-sectional data, allowing insight into the health sector's characteristics. The target population comprised 78 managerial staff, and a census approach was employed due to the known population size. Structured questionnaires, pilot-tested for reliability and validity, were used for data collection and analyzed through descriptive and inferential statistics, including logistic regression analysis. The study's extensive analysis revealed significant positive associations between strategic leader development, continuity planning, exit planning, corporate governance, and service delivery within the health sector. Strategic leader development and exit planning have moderate but considerable effects on service delivery outcomes, but continuity planning and corporate governance standards have a highly significant impact. This study emphasizes the crucial significance that thorough succession planning procedures play in improving service delivery within the Taita Taveta County Government's health sector. In order to guarantee the delivery of high-quality healthcare services to the community, it underlines the urgent need to make investments in leadership development, construct strong continuity and exit planning plans, and execute effective corporate governance. In order to improve service delivery within the health sector, the study advises the implementation of structured leadership development programs, strengthening of continuity and exit planning initiatives, ongoing improvement of corporate governance practices, and the introduction of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. It also promotes the need for more study to examine particular techniques and policies that improve service delivery.

Keywords: *Strategic Leader Development, Continuity Planning, Exit Planning, Corporate Governance, Service Delivery*

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Succession planning is one of the strategic issues which is very vital in an organization. Succession planning can be defined as systematic institution of guidelines that are meant to ensure effective replacements in office positions (Smith, 2019). On the other hand, White (2018) define succession planning as a talent management process that builds a pool of trained workers who are ready to fill key roles when leaders and other key employees step down. Recognizing the vital role of health in the well-being and development of the population, the County Government proposes substantial investments in healthcare infrastructure, staffing, and modern health programs. The County boasts five public Level-4 hospitals, including the Moi Referral hospital, Wesu Sub County hospital, and Taveta Sub County hospital (Gicheru et al., 2017). Additionally, there are 16 public health centers, all of which fall under Level-3, with some being constructed under the Economic Stimulus Programme. There are no health centers operated by private entities or NGOs. The total bed capacity in public health facilities amounts to 440, serving the population's healthcare needs. However, the doctor-to-population ratio falls below the World Health Organization's recommended standard of 1:600, standing at 1:19,138 (Taita Taveta County Government, 2017).

Statement of the problem

The devolved governance system in Kenya is still relatively young, having been established for nearly a decade. The Ministry of Public Service, Youth, and Gender issued guidelines in 2017, indicating that the Kenyan Public Service is grappling with succession management challenges at both the National and County Government levels (Mutunga, 2020). In the Civil Service, these succession management issues manifest in several ways, including significant staffing gaps at higher grading levels, an aging workforce with approximately 31% of Civil Servants above 50 years and expected to retire within the next ten years, staff stagnation, mismatches between employee skills and job requirements, high staff turnover in critical positions, and shortages of relevant skills and competencies (Jubase, 2018). These challenges can be attributed to the lack of effective succession planning, inadequate strategic leader planning, governance issues, a lack of continuity and exit framework, and political influences within the Public Service (Muthini, 2019). As a result, these succession management problems hamper the government's ability to provide services at optimal levels.

When County Governments were established in 2013, the national government laid out a framework for succession management in the Transition to Devolved Government Act of 2012 (Wanje, 2022). This framework aimed to facilitate the successful transition to a devolved system of government and recommended measures to ensure county governments had the necessary capacity during the transition phase to carry out their designated functions. Succession planning within the devolved system is crucial to maintain institutional goal orientation through skill and experience retention for continuous service delivery (Wanje, 2022). However, succession planning in the county government setting is influenced by political dynamics, which often result in service disruptions during the restructuring of County Executive Committee Members, changes in County Public Service Boards, election periods, and leadership changes (Jubase, 2018). Additionally, limited budget allocations impact succession planning practices, as constrained budgets restrict resources for staff training and promotions. Adequate budgetary allocation is essential to support staff development and promotion to replace retiring seniors.

Objectives of the Study

The general objective of the study was to determine the relationship between succession planning Practices and service delivery in the health sector of Taita Taveta County Government.

The study addresses following specific objectives:

- i. To determine the influence of strategic leader development on service delivery in the health sector of Taita Taveta County Government.
- ii. To examine influence of continuity planning on service delivery in the health sector of Taita Taveta County Government.
- iii. To determine influence of exit planning on service delivery in the health sector of Taita Taveta County Government.
- iv. To establish influence of corporate governance on service delivery in Health sector of Taita Taveta County Government

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Strategic Leadership Development

Strategic leadership represents a practice in which executives, employing diverse management styles, formulate a vision for their organization, enabling it to adapt to and maintain competitiveness in a shifting economic and technological landscape. As noted by Jingling (2018), approximately half of New York City hospitals are lacking in succession planning as they navigate the transition of baby boomers from the workforce into retirement.

Currently, there exist variations in leadership succession planning models, which are contingent upon the extent to which they priorities leadership at the individual level, the position level, or the process level within the domain of leadership (Muthimi & Kilika, 2018). Nevertheless, it is crucial to recognize the existence of traits that might impact individuals' behaviors, which is referred to as trait leadership (Jargo, 1982). This concept, rooted in that leaders possess inherent qualities rather than acquiring them through external factors.

Continuity Planning

In line with Pranavi and Sairaj's findings in 2021, continuous planning entails the ongoing execution of planning practices through simultaneous and swift cycles, as opposed to adhering to predetermined and routine planning intervals. In this approach, continuous planning is responsive to environmental changes, with both internal and external factors serving as triggers for planning, rather than adhering solely to a predefined planning schedule. This concept of continuous planning is closely intertwined with the adoption of Agile and Lean methodologies, both of which advocate for the creation of short and adaptable plans that can flexibly respond to shifting circumstances. While the majority of research studies have primarily focused on the team level, it's important to note that continuous planning offers advantages at all organizational levels, encompassing strategic, portfolio, and product levels.

The fundamental components of continuous planning encompass the following key aspects: firstly, determining the organizational level and the designated timeframes within a plan. Strategic planning plays a pivotal role in crafting an overarching organizational plan, while business planning assumes the responsibility of establishing a budgetary framework for the plan (Pranavi & Sairaj, 2021). Notably, the strong association between continuous planning and Agile and Lean

methodologies underscores the central principle of maintaining adaptable plans that can readily adjust to changing conditions.

Exit Planning

As per Dmjps (2017), exit planning encompasses the comprehensive process that delves into all the strategic alternatives available to a business owner.

An Exit Strategy is a meticulously devised scheme aimed at outlining how the present owner or leader intends to make a graceful, profitable, and effective exit from the business (Cooper, 2016). Cooper (2016) further advocates for the presence of Eventual Exit Plan and the Catastrophic Exit Plan.

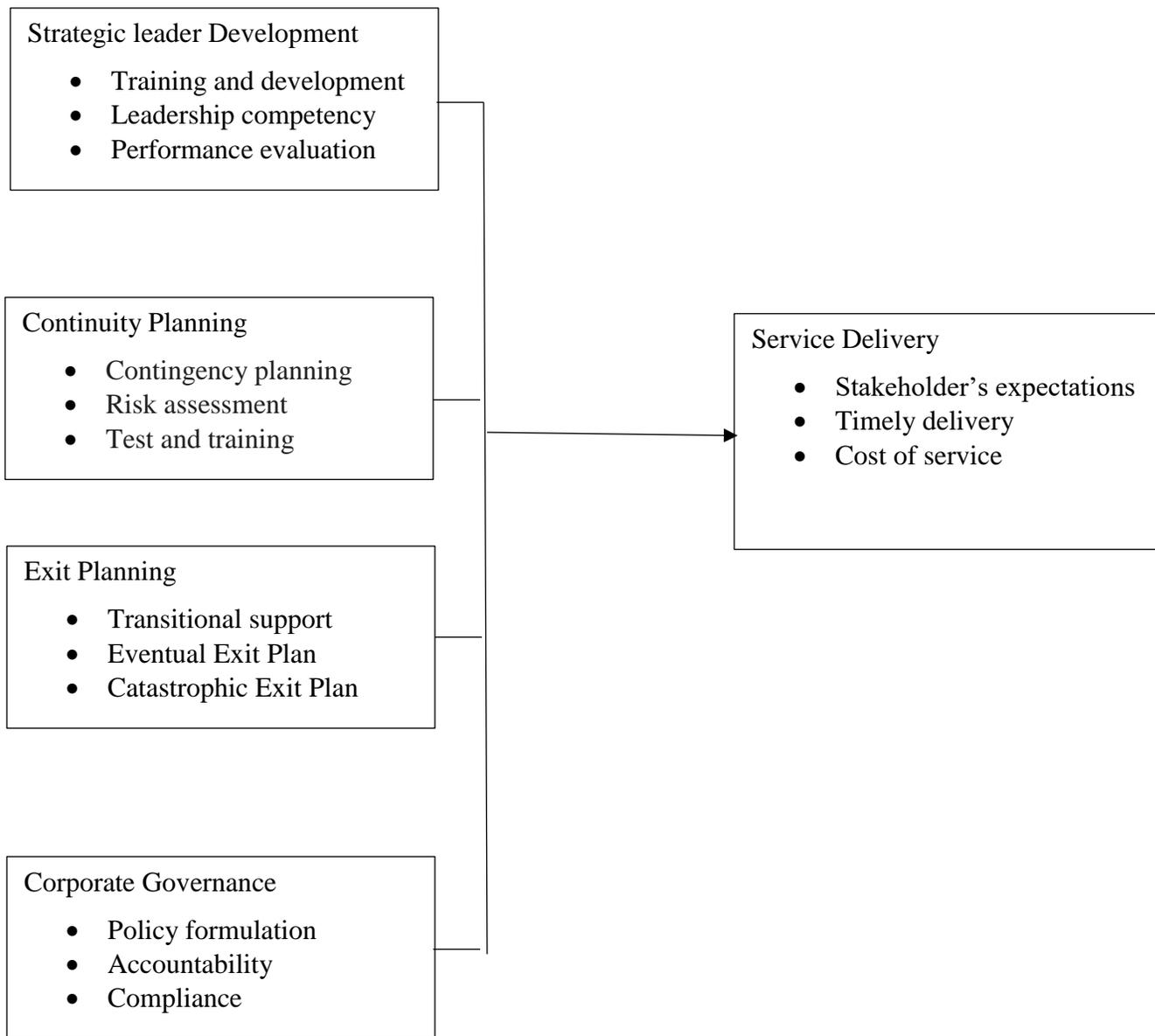
Corporate Governance

Corporate governance refers to the manner in which organizations are governed and the objectives they seek to achieve, as stated by the Chartered Governance Institute UK and Ireland. This statement pertains to the identification of individuals or entities that possess authority and responsibility, as well as those who are involved in the process of decision-making. The aforementioned toolbox serves as a means by which management and the board can enhance their ability to successfully address the various difficulties associated with corporate governance and operational management. According to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2004), Corporate Governance refers as establishing protocols and mechanisms that governs an organization. Therefore, the corporate governance structure delineates the allocation of rights and obligations among various actors, including the board of directors, management, shareholders, and other stakeholders.

The County Government was established under the constitution of 2010 .It was established under county government Act 2013 which talks on the issue of county governance and general administration; whereby it has different policies, laws and procedure which governs the running of county government at large. As governance is concern, the County has a mandate to sensitize its stakeholder on the values and principle as envisage in article 10 and 232 of the constitution of Kenya. This is guideline which assist the county government to be able run with integrity and transparency. Still in terms of corporate governance, corruption and politics has been the main jargon in the running of County Government.

Conceptual Framework

This study has developed a conceptual framework as envisaged below.



Independent variable

Dependent variable

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

For this study, a descriptive research design in the form of a field survey was deemed most appropriate. The objective is to collect cross-sectional data from respondents in specific service departments, primarily focusing on the health sector. Descriptive research aims to provide information about the characteristics of a population or phenomenon (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). It serves as a foundation for subsequent quantitative research designs, offering valuable insights to identify variables worthy of quantitative testing. The descriptive research design is suitable because the aim of the study is to describe the existing state of succession planning among staff and its impact on service delivery without manipulating the targeted respondents. Descriptive research accurately and systematically describes a population, situation, or phenomenon (McCombes, 2019).

The target population consists of one hundred employees, primarily managerial staff (directors), heads of departments, and supervisory staff within the health sector. These individuals are deployed in the four sub-county hospitals within Taita Taveta County. It is presumed that the targeted staff are knowledgeable about employee succession planning and its implementation at various levels and grades within the sector. The population size of the management staff is 100 individuals. A census technique was adopted in this study due to the small target population size. The study focuses on 100 staff members in managerial positions within the health sector. The study has however employed a purposive sampling technique to select health care units in Taita Taveta County. Specifically, Moi Referral Hospital and three sub-county hospitals (Mwatate, Taveta and Wesu Hospital) were chosen, as they collectively employ 100 individuals at the management level. The use of census sampling ensures that all individuals defined in the population have equal and independent chances of being selected as sample members. The target respondents for this study are service users, including the Chief Officer, directors as key informants, and heads of departments and employees of lower cadre.

Structured questionnaires were used to collect primary and secondary data from the employees. The questionnaire was designed using a 5-point Likert scale and organized into sections to capture different aspects relevant to research analysis and interpretation. A pilot study was conducted before the main study to identify any issues with the research design, data collection methods, or analysis plan. It also serves to test the reliability and validity of the data collection instruments. The pilot study involved the following steps: First, a small sample of 10% of participants (that is, 10 respondents) similar to the population of the main study was identified. Then, the data collection instruments were administered to the pilot study participants. Next, the data was collected and analyzed. Any problems identified with the research design, data collection methods, or analysis plan was addressed, and necessary changes made accordingly. The study employed the Cronbach's Alpha method to test the questionnaire's reliability (Taber, 2018). Construct validity was ensured by providing measurable indicators of the key constructs as captured in the conceptual framework. Once the necessary changes are made based on the pilot study results, the main study can be conducted.

Descriptive statistics were used to summarize the data and describe the characteristics of the population. Measures of central tendency, such as the mean, median, and mode, as well as measures of dispersion, such as the standard deviation and range, were utilized. Frequency distributions tables were created to show the occurrence of each value in the data set.

Inferential statistics were employed to test research questions and draw inferences about the population based on the sample data. Chi-square test was used to test for the association between two variables, while Cramer’s V statistic was used to investigate the strength of the association. On the other hand logistic regression analysis was used to predict the odds of the dependent variable based on the independent variables. In order to determine the relationship between succession practices and service delivery in Health Sector, Taita Taveta, and Logistic regression model was used.

The logistic regression model is as described below:

$$\text{logit}(p) = \beta_0 + \beta_1x_1 + \beta_2x_2 + \beta_3x_3 + \beta_4x_4$$

where:

- $\text{logit}(p)$ is the log odds of the outcome
- p is the probability of experiencing service delivery
- β_0 is the intercept term
- $\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3, \beta_4$ are the coefficients for the independent variables
- x_1, x_2, x_3, x_4 are the independent variables (i.e. strategic leader development, continuity planning, exit planning, and corporate governance respectively)

4.0 RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

A questionnaire that included many facets of succession planning, such as the creation of strategic leaders, continuity planning, exit planning, and corporate governance, was used to gather the replies. The scale utilized was the Likert 5 scale, with 1= strongly agree; 2=agree; 3=neutral; 4= disagree; 5= strongly disagree. The findings gathered from this survey provide insightful information on the connections between various succession planning practices and service delivery outcomes.

Response Rate

A total of 78 participants in this study answered to the survey out of the 100 people who were the study's target group, for a response rate of 78%. Even though the response rate was not 100%, the participation of 78 people is impressive and offers a sizeable dataset for research. It is important to keep in mind that a variety of factors, such as time restraints, workload, and the perceived applicability of the research issue, can affect survey participation. The achieved response rate of 78 percent is deemed satisfactory and provides a significant basis for drawing insightful inferences and conclusions, as per Fincham's (2008) recommendation that response rates approximate 60 percent for the majority of study. The Table 1 below shows the response rate.

Table 1: Response Rate

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Response	78	78.00%
Non-Response	22	22.00%
Total	100	100

Results of Pilot Study

The reliability outcomes reported in this study are established through the utilization of Cronbach's alpha, an extensively recognized metric for assessing the internal coherence and dependability of a scale or survey. For the current investigation, Cronbach's alpha was computed for each group of variables individually, as well as for the entirety of variables combined. It's noteworthy that Cronbach's alpha values exceeding 0.7 are generally regarded as satisfactory (Taber, 2018). The results are as shown in Table 2 Reliability Statistics for all variables below.

Table 2: Reliability Statistics for all variables

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Strategic Leader Development	0.935	6
Continuity Planning	0.901	6
Exit Planning	0.942	6
Corporate Governance	0.924	6
Service Delivery	0.919	6
Average Cronbach's Alpha for all variables	0.9242	30

Descriptive statistics

Descriptive on Strategic Leader Development

Participants were asked about their perceptions of strategic leader development practices. For the statement "The organization provides effective training and development opportunities for strategic leaders," a substantial number of participants (34.6%) expressed a neutral opinion. This indicates a significant portion of respondents are unsure about the adequacy of training opportunities. Meanwhile, 14.1% agreed and 23.1% disagreed with the statement. Those who strongly agreed with this statement was 7.7% and those who strongly disagreed was 20.5%.

When asked if "The organization emphasizes the importance of continuous leadership development" received varied responses. A notable percentage (37.2%) expressed a neutral stance. However, there was a relatively balanced distribution of agreement and disagreement, with 17.9% agreeing and 24.4% disagreeing, while 14.1% strongly disagreed with the statement and 5 out of the 78 participants strongly agreed to the question.

Responses to the statement "Strategic leaders demonstrate strong leadership competencies in their roles" were fairly evenly spread across the spectrum. While 30.8% agreed, 32.1% remained neutral, and 28.2% disagreed. The Table 3 below gives the descriptive statistics on strategic leader development related questions.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics on Strategic Leader Development

Strategic Leader Development related question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
The organization provides effective training and development opportunities for strategic leaders.	6 (7.7%)	11 (14.1%)	27 (34.6%)	18 (23.1%)	16 (20.5%)	78
The organization emphasizes the importance of continuous leadership development.	5 (6.4%)	14 (17.9%)	29 (37.2%)	19 (24.4%)	11 (14.1%)	78
Strategic leaders demonstrate strong leadership competencies in their roles.	7 (9.0%)	24 (30.8%)	25 (32.1%)	13 (16.7%)	9 (11.5%)	78
The organization has a fair and reliable performance evaluation system for strategic leaders.	5 (6.4%)	19 (24.4%)	19 (24.4%)	22 (28.2%)	13 (16.7%)	78
Strategic leaders receive regular feedback and support for their professional growth.	9 (11.5%)	15 (19.2%)	26 (33.3%)	17 (21.8%)	11 (14.1%)	78
The organization values and invests in the development of strategic leadership skills.	8 (10.3%)	13 (16.7%)	26 (33.3%)	15 (19.2%)	16 (20.5%)	78

On the topic above, responses leaned towards disagreement (28.2%), with only 6.4% strongly agreeing. A considerable 24.4% agreed and 24.4% were neutral. In terms of receiving feedback and support, 33.3% expressed a neutral opinion about "Strategic leaders receiving regular feedback and support for their professional growth." The distribution between agreement and disagreement was relatively balanced. Similar to the previous statement, a notable percentage (33.3%) remained neutral regarding "The organization values and invests in the development of strategic leadership skills.", and only 8(10.3%) of them strongly agreed with the statement, 16.7 % agreed and 19.2% disagreed.

Descriptive on Continuity Planning

Respondents were asked questions related to the Continuity Planning aspect of their organization. When asked if “The organization has a well-defined continuity planning process in place”, a majority of the respondents (42.3%) had a neutral view followed distantly by 17.9% of them who disagreed with the statement while equal population of 14.1% agreed and disagreed with the question and a minimal percentage of 11.5 strongly agreed.

The same participants were also asked if, ‘The organization is adequately prepared for emergencies and crisis situations.’ And for this question a majority 30.8% were neutral followed closely by 26.9% who disagreed and 24.4% who agreed. For the same statement, 14.1% of the respondents strongly disagreed with the question and a minimal 3.8% strongly agreed. For the question, ‘The organization's infrastructure is resilient and able to withstand disruptions.’, those with a neutral view were the majority with 35.9% of the total sample population followed closely by those who disagreed with 28.2% of the total sample population. Approximately 12.8% of the participants agreed that the organization's infrastructure is resilient and able to withstand disruptions while 15.4% strongly disagreed. The descriptive statics are described in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics on Continuity Planning

Continuity Planning related questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
The organization has a well-defined continuity planning process in place.	9 (11.5%)	11 (14.1%)	33 (42.3%)	14 (17.9%)	11 (14.1%)	78
The organization is adequately prepared for emergencies and crisis situations.	3(3.8%)	19 (24.4%)	24 (30.8%)	21 (26.9%)	11 (14.1%)	78
The organization's infrastructure is resilient and able to withstand disruptions.	5(6.4%)	10 (12.8%)	28 (35.9%)	22 (28.2%)	12 (15.4%)	78
Resources are effectively allocated to support continuity planning efforts.	9 (11.5%)	6 (7.7%)	29 (37.2%)	21 (26.9%)	13 (16.7%)	78
The organization conducts regular drills and exercises to test its emergency preparedness.	4(5.1%)	9 (11.5%)	19 (24.4%)	30 (38.5%)	16 (20.5%)	78
The organization has identified and addressed potential vulnerabilities in its continuity plans.	6 (7.7%)	17 (21.8%)	25 (32.1%)	18 (23.1%)	12 (15.4%)	78

To the question, ‘Resources are effectively allocated to support continuity planning efforts.’ a substantial number (37.2%) remained neutral about the allocation of resources for continuity planning efforts while responses to the question, ‘The organization conducts regular drills and exercises to test its emergency preparedness.’ the distribution was more even regarding the organization's drills and exercises to test emergency preparedness, with 38.5% disagreeing and 24.4% agreeing. The last question was asked concerning "The organization has identified and addressed potential vulnerabilities in its continuity plans", 32.1% were neutral while 21.8% of the participants agreed to the statement.

Descriptive on Exit Planning

On the question where the participants were asked if, ‘The organization provides appropriate support and resources during leadership transitions.’ Most participants (37.2%) were neutral about the organization providing appropriate support and resources during leadership transitions followed by 23.1% who agreed that their organization was providing appropriate support and resources during leadership transitions while 20.5% disagreed. When asked whether, ‘the organization has a clear plan in place for the eventual exit of key leaders.’ 41% were neutral, 14.1% agreed while 23.1% strongly disagreed. Thirty-three participants (42.3%) had a neutral view on whether their organization assists leaders in developing succession plans for smooth transitions, 19.2% strongly disagreed while 15.4% agreed that their organization assists leaders in developing succession plans for smooth transitions. The results can be shown in Table 5 below for Descriptive Statistics on Exit Planning.

Table 5: Descriptive Statistics on Exit Planning

Exit Planning related questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
The organization provides appropriate support and resources during leadership transitions.	3 (3.8%)	18 (23.1%)	29 (37.2%)	16 (20.5%)	12 (15.4%)	78
The organization has a clear plan in place for the eventual exit of key leaders.	4 (5.1%)	11 (14.1%)	32 (41.0%)	13 (16.7%)	18 (23.1%)	78
The organization has contingency plans in case of unexpected and catastrophic leader exits.	5 (6.4%)	10 (12.8%)	37 (47.4%)	15 (19.2%)	11 (14.1%)	78
The organization assists leaders in developing succession plans for smooth transitions.	5(6.4%)	12 (15.4%)	33 (42.3%)	13 (16.7%)	15 (19.2%)	78
The organization has established guidelines and procedures for leadership continuity during transitional periods.	3 (3.8%)	12 (15.4%)	39 (50.0%)	11 (14.1%)	13 (16.7%)	78
The organization considers potential risks and challenges when developing exit plans for key leaders.	5 (6.4%)	9 (11.5%)	38 (48.7%)	14 (17.9%)	12 (15.4%)	78

The responses to the above question, a notable population (50%) expressed neutrality about the organization's guidelines and procedures for leadership continuity during transitional periods while 16.7% strongly disagreed on their organizations offering and approximately 15.4% agreed. When the same respondents were asked if, ‘The organization considers potential risks and challenges when developing exit plans for key leaders.’, 48.7% had a neutral view, with 6.4% strongly agreeing, 11.5 % agreeing 17.9% disagreeing while 15.4% of the sample population strongly disagreeing.

Descriptive on Corporate Governance

The participants for the survey study were asked Corporate Governance related questions. The summary results for the responses are as shown in Table 6 below. Through the results, a significant portion (37.2%) expressed neutrality regarding the organization having effective policies in place to guide decision-making and operations followed closely by 34.6% of those who agreed their organization had effective policies in place to guide decision-making and operations. From the respondents, 11.5% disagreed while 9.0% strongly disagreed. Opinions were divided about whether leaders and employees are held accountable for their actions and performance, with a majority 33.3% agreeing while 29.5% had a neutral view, 14.1% disagreed.

There was a fairly even distribution of responses regarding the organization's commitment to complying with relevant laws, regulations, and ethical standards with 32.1% having a neutral view, while 30.8% agreed with their organization's commitment to complying with relevant laws, regulations, and ethical standards, and 16.7% disagreed to that statement.

Table 6: Descriptive Statistics on Corporate Governance

Corporate Governance related questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
The organization has effective policies in place to guide decision-making and operations.	6(7.7%)	27 (34.6%)	29 (37.2%)	9 (11.5%)	7 (9.0%)	78
Leaders and employees are held accountable for their actions and performance.	8 (10.3%)	26 (33.3%)	23 (29.5%)	11 (14.1%)	10 (12.8%)	78
The organization is committed to complying with relevant laws, regulations, and ethical standards.	8 (10.3%)	24 (30.8%)	25 (32.1%)	13 (16.7%)	8 (10.3%)	78
Policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and updated to ensure their effectiveness.	8 (10.3%)	19 (24.4%)	26 (33.3%)	13 (16.7%)	12 (15.4%)	78
The organization promotes transparency and open communication in its governance practices.	8 (10.3%)	16 (20.5%)	29 (37.2%)	16 (20.5%)	9 (11.5%)	78
The organization maintains a culture of integrity and ethical behavior in all its operations.	9 (11.5%)	18 (23.1%)	34 (43.6%)	9 (11.5%)	8 (10.3%)	78

When asked if, 'Policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and updated to ensure their effectiveness.', 33.3% had a neutral view on this particular question, with 24.4% agreeing with the regular review and update of policies and procedures while 16.7% did not agree. Furthermore 15.4% of the total participants strongly disagreed while 10.3% strongly agreed. When the participants to this study were asked if, 'The organization promotes transparency and open communication in its governance practices.', 10.3% of them strongly agreed, 20.5% agreed while 37.2% had a neutral view. Furthermore, 20.5% of the sample participants disagreed that their organization promotes transparency and open communication in its governance practices with 11.5% strongly disagreed.

Descriptive on Service Delivery

The data pertaining to the "Service Delivery" related questions provides insight into participants' perceptions of the organization's efforts in delivering services within the health sector of Taita Taveta County Government. In relation to the question, 'the organization ensures that services are accessible to all stakeholders.' the responses reveal a mixed viewpoint. Approximately 35.9% of participants expressed agreement, followed closely by 29.5% who remained neutral. A smaller portion (12.8%) indicated disagreement, while 5.1% strongly disagreed with the organization's efforts in in making services accessible to all stakeholders.

When assessing the question, 'the organization consistently delivers high-quality services to meet stakeholder expectations.' the largest proportion (44.9%) expressed a neutral stance. Of the remaining respondents, 15.4% strongly agreed, while 10.3% disagreed, and 6.4% strongly disagreed. Regarding the question that, 'The organization strives to provide services in a timely manner, the responses present a balanced distribution'. While 34.6% of participants agreed that the organization strives for timely service delivery, approximately 35.9% remained neutral. Smaller portions expressed strong agreement (16.7%), disagreement (6.4%), or strong disagreement (6.4%). The summary statistics for the service delivery is presented in table 7 below.

Table 7: Descriptive Statistics on Service Delivery

Service Delivery related questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
The organization ensures that services are accessible to all stakeholders.	13 (16.7%)	28 (35.9%)	23 (29.5%)	10 (12.8%)	4 (5.1%)	78
The organization consistently delivers high-quality services to meet stakeholder expectations.	12 (15.4%)	18 (23.1%)	35 (44.9%)	8 (10.3%)	5 (6.4%)	78
The organization strives to provide services in a timely manner.	13 (16.7%)	27 (34.6%)	28 (35.9%)	5 (6.4%)	5 (6.4%)	78
The organization offers services at an affordable cost to stakeholders.	13 (16.7%)	20 (25.6%)	33 (42.3%)	7 (9.0%)	5 (6.4%)	78
The organization regularly seeks feedback from stakeholders to improve service delivery.	7 (9.0%)	19 (24.4%)	32 (41.0%)	14 (17.9%)	6 (7.7%)	78
The organization monitors service performance and takes corrective actions when needed.	9 (11.5%)	23 (29.5%)	32 (41.0%)	10 (12.8%)	4 (5.1%)	78

Opinions on the ‘The organization offers services at an affordable cost to stakeholders’ reveal a varied opinion. A considerable 42.3% of participants adopted a neutral stance on the matter. Of the remainder, 25.6% agreed that services are offered at an affordable cost, while 15.1% disagreed, and 6.4% strongly disagreed.

Concerning the statement, ‘The organization regularly seeks feedback from stakeholders to improve service delivery.’ approximately 41.0% of participants held a neutral opinion, indicating that a significant portion is unsure about this aspect. Meanwhile, 24.4% agreed that the organization regularly seeks feedback. On the other hand, 17.9% disagreed, and 7.7% strongly disagreed with the organization's feedback-seeking efforts. When it comes to the statement, ‘the organization monitors service performance and takes corrective actions when needed.’ the responses also demonstrated diversity. An appreciable 41.0% remained neutral, suggesting uncertainty or a reserved judgment. Of the remaining participants, 29.5% agreed that the organization undertakes monitoring and corrective measures. Conversely, 12.8% disagreed, and 5.1% strongly disagreed.

Inferential Analysis

The Chi-Square test

The Chi-square test of independence, often known as the Pearson Chi-square test or just Chi-square, is a statistical technique used to determine if two categorical variables are related or independent from one another (Waller & Johnson, 2013). It is frequently used by researchers to ascertain whether there is a meaningful connection between two traits or qualities that can be divided into groups or levels (McHugh, 2013). The test enables researchers to determine whether there is a significant relationship between these factors or whether any detected relationships are purely coincidental.

Cramer's V is the primary measure of association used to assess the strength of the relationship when a significant Chi-square result is obtained (McHugh, 2013). The Chi-square test offers

several advantages, including its resilience in the face of non-normally distributed data, its straightforward computation, its ability to provide detailed insights from the analysis, its applicability in studies that don't meet parametric assumptions, and its adaptability for analyzing data in both two-group and multiple-group studies. A Cramer's V value ranges from 0 and 1 with a value that is closer to 0 indicating no association while that closer to 1 indicating the presence of a strong association (Elko et al., 2014).

The association can be summarized as follows:

- $0 \leq 0.1$ *litte if any association*
- above* $0.1 \leq 0.3$ *low association*
- above* $0.3 \leq 0.5$ *moderate association*
- ≥ 0.5 *higher association*

A) Association between Service Delivery and Strategic Leader Development

A Chi-Square test was used to investigate the association between "Service Delivery" and "Strategic Leader Development" for the health sector of Taita Taveta County Government. The results are as displayed by the tables below:

Table 8: Chi-Square test for Association between Service Delivery and Strategic Leader Development

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	3755.316 ^a	3477	.001
Likelihood Ratio	543.210	3477	1.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	9.528	1	.002
N of Valid Cases	78		

a. 3596 cells (100.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .01.

The p-value associated with the Pearson Chi-Square test is very small (approximately 0.001) as shown in Table 8 Chi-Square test for Association between Service Delivery and Strategic Leader Development. This tiny p-value suggests a highly significant association between "Service Delivery" and "Strategic Leader Development." More so, the Cramer's V is 0.919, which is very close to 1. This high value suggests a strong association between "Service Delivery" and "Strategic Leader Development."

Table 9: Symmetric measures for Association between Service Delivery and Strategic Leader Development

Symmetric Measures

		Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	6.939	.001
	Cramer's V	.919	.001
N of Valid Cases		78	

- a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.
- b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

The results shown in Table 9 Symmetric measures for Association between Service Delivery and Strategic Leader Development collectively indicate a significant and strong association between the "Service Delivery" and "Strategic Leader Development" within the health sector of Taita Taveta County Government. The low p-values, high Chi-Square values, and strong measures of association (Phi and Cramer's V) all provide robust evidence that there is a meaningful connection between how service delivery is perceived and the development of strategic leaders in this context.

B) Association between Service Delivery and Continuity Planning

The Chi-Square test was employed to explore the association between "Service Delivery" and "Continuity Planning" within the health sector of Taita Taveta County Government.

Table 10: Chi-Square test for Association between Service Delivery and Continuity Planning

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	3957.276 ^a	3762	.013
Likelihood Ratio	559.787	3762	1.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	7.627	1	.006
N of Valid Cases	78		

- a. 3886 cells (100.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .01.

From the chi-square test Table 10 above, the p-value associated with the Pearson Chi-Square test is 0.013 which is lower than the conventional significance level of 0.05. Therefore, it indicates statistical significance, suggesting that there is an association between "Service Delivery" and "Continuity Planning" within the health sector of Taita Taveta County Government. In this analysis, Cramer's V is 0.943, which is close to 1 as shown by the Symmetric measures table

below. This high value suggests a strong association between "Service Delivery" and "Continuity Planning."

Table 11: Symmetric measures for Association between Service Delivery and Continuity Planning

Symmetric Measures

		Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	7.123	.013
	Cramer's V	.943	.013
N of Valid Cases		78	

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

The results summarized by the Table 11 Symmetric measures for Association between Service Delivery and Continuity Planning above indicate a statistically significant and strong association between "Service Delivery" and "Continuity Planning" within the health sector of Taita Taveta County Government. The low p-values, high Chi-Square values, and strong measures of association (Phi and Cramer's V) all provide robust evidence that there is a meaningful connection between how service delivery is perceived and the practice of continuity planning in this context.

C) Association between Service Delivery and Exit Planning

The results of the Chi-Square test which was conducted to investigate the association between "Service Delivery" and "Exit Planning" within the health sector of Taita Taveta County Government is given in the tables below.

Table 12: Chi-Square test for Association between Service Delivery and Exit Planning

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	3307.352 ^a	2793	.000
Likelihood Ratio	497.042	2793	1.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	10.848	1	.001
N of Valid Cases		78	

a. 2900 cells (100.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .01.

The results shown by the Table 12 Chi-Square test for Association between Service Delivery and Exit Planning results shows that the p-value associated with the Pearson Chi-Square test is 0.000 which indicates a highly significant association between "Service Delivery" and "Exit Planning."

The Cramer's V as shown in the table below is 0.930, which is very close to 1. This high value suggests a strong association between "Service Delivery" and "Exit Planning."

Table 13: Symmetric measures for Association between Service Delivery and Exit Planning

Symmetric Measures		Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	6.512	.000
	Cramer's V	.930	.000
N of Valid Cases		78	

- a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.
- b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

The results in the Table 13 Symmetric measures for Association between Service Delivery and Exit Planning above indicate a highly significant and strong association between "Service Delivery" and "Exit Planning" within the health sector of Taita Taveta County Government. The low p-values, high Chi-Square values, and strong measures of association (Phi and Cramer's V) all provide robust evidence that there is a meaningful connection between how service delivery is perceived and the practice of exit planning

D) Association between Service Delivery and Corporate Governance

The Chi-Square test was employed to explore the association between "Service Delivery" and "Corporate Governance" within the health sector of Taita Taveta County Government.

Table 14: Chi-Square test for Association between Service Delivery and Corporate Governance

Chi-Square Tests	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	3751.248 ^a	3306	.000
Likelihood Ratio	541.568	3306	1.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	29.666	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	78		

- a. 3422 cells (100.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .01.

The Table 14 Chi-Square test for Association between Service Delivery and Corporate Governance above shows that the p-value associated with the Pearson Chi-Square test is 0.000. This extremely small p-value indicates an exceedingly significant association between "Service Delivery" and "Corporate Governance." In this analysis, Cramer's V is 0.919, which is very close to 1 as shown in the following table below. This high value suggests a strong association between "Service Delivery" and "Corporate Governance."

Table 15: Symmetric measures for Association between Service Delivery and Corporate Governance

Symmetric Measures

		Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	6.935	.000
	Cramer's V	.919	.000
N of Valid Cases		78	

- a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.
- b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

From Table 15, the Symmetric measures for Association between Service Delivery and Corporate Governance collectively indicate an exceedingly significant and strong association between "Service Delivery" and "Corporate Governance" within the health sector of Taita Taveta County Government as shown by the Chi-Square and the Cramer's V results.

In summary, the Chi-Square tests results that were conducted provide strong evidence that various organizational practices and strategies, such as strategic leader development, continuity planning, exit planning, and corporate governance, have a strong association to service delivery within the health sector of Taita Taveta County Government as evidenced by the high values of the Cramer's V and the significant p-values. These findings emphasize the importance of these practices in ensuring effective and high-quality service delivery to stakeholders.

Logistic Regression Analysis Results

The logistic regression analysis was performed to determine the relationship between the predictor variables (Strategic leadership development Indicator (SLDIND), Continuity planning Indicator (CPIND), Exit Planning Indicator (EPIND), and Corporate Governance Indicator (CGIND)), and the Service Delivery Indicator (SDIND), which is a binary outcome variable indicating either "Improved" or "Not improved" service delivery.

The logistic regression analysis performed on the dataset revealed valuable insights into the relationship between several predictor variables and service delivery improvement. This analysis is critical for understanding the factors that contribute to enhanced service delivery within an organization.

The Table 16 below displays the observed versus predicted values for the service delivery indicator, indicating whether service delivery improved or not. It also shows the percentage of correct predictions made by the logistic regression model.

Table 16: Overall Model Fit

Observed	Predicted				
	Service Delivery Indicator		Percentage Correct		
	not improved	Improved			
Service Delivery Indicator	not improved	Improved	27	6	81.8
			2	26	92.9
Overall Percentage					86.9

For cases where service delivery did not improve, the model correctly predicted 81.8% of the cases while for cases where service delivery improved, the model correctly predicted 92.9% of the cases. The logistic regression model shows an overall percentage of correct predictions of approximately 86.9% as shown in Table 16 above of overall model fit. This indicates that the model has a reasonably good ability to classify cases correctly.

Table 17: Logistic regression model coefficients

	B	S.E.	Wald	Df	Sig.	Exp (B)
SLDIND	.608	.918	.438	1	.038	1.836
CPIND	.304	.848	.128	1	.029	1.355
Step 1 ^a EPIND	.501	.939	.284	1	.004	1.650
CGIND	3.922	.878	19.961	1	.000	50.514
Constant	-3.384	1.003	11.291	1	.043	.034

a. Variable(s) entered on step 1: SLDIND, CPIND, EPIND, and CGIND.

Table 17 shows the coefficient of the predictor variable SLDIND which represents the degree of strategic leadership development within the organization. From the table, the positive coefficient of 0.608 suggests that an increase in strategic leadership development is associated with an increased likelihood of improved service delivery. Specifically, improving strategic leader development multiplies the probability of an improved service delivery by about 83.6%. More so, the SLDIND has a statistically significant impact on service delivery improvement ($p = 0.038$). The CPIND measures the extent to which continuity planning practices are implemented. The positive coefficient of 0.304 indicates that organizations that focus on continuity planning tend to experience improved service delivery by about 35.5%. The significance level of 0.029 demonstrates that CPIND is statistically significant in predicting service delivery improvement.

The variable EPIND represents the level of exit planning practices within the organization. The positive coefficient of 0.501 indicates that organizations with strong exit planning measures are more likely to see improvements in service delivery. In particular, improved exit planning increases the probability of service delivery by about 65.0%. The significance level of 0.004 underscores the statistical significance of EPIND in predicting service delivery improvement.

The CGIND measures the implementation of corporate governance practices within the organization. The substantial coefficient of 3.922 highlights a powerful and highly positive relationship between corporate governance and service delivery. The extremely low p-value ($p = 0.000$) indicates the remarkable statistical significance of CGIND. Improved corporate governance is associated with a very high probability of improved service delivery

The optimum logistic model as per the results in Table 17 is:

$$\text{Logit}(p) = -3.384 + 0.608x_1 + 0.304x_2 + 0.501x_3 + 3.922x_4$$

Where

p =probability of having/experiencing service delivery

x_1 = Strategic leader development

x_2 = Continuity planning

x_3 = Exit planning

x_4 = Corporate governance

When all the predictor variables (x_1 , x_2 , x_3 , and x_4) are equal to zero, the log-odds of experiencing improved service delivery (p) would be -3.384

The logistic regression analysis reveals that strategic leadership development, continuity planning, exit planning, and corporate governance all play significant roles in influencing service delivery improvement within organizations. Among these factors, corporate governance emerges as the most influential predictor of improved service delivery. Organizations should consider these findings when strategizing for enhanced service delivery and prioritize investments in these critical areas of management and planning.

5.0 CONCLUSION

The study sought to understand how succession planning had been executed and how it had an influence on service delivery within the health sector in Taita Taveta County.

The main objective of the study, to determine the relationship between succession planning Practices and service delivery in the health sector of Taita Taveta County Government, was supported by the research findings. The study confirms that corporate governance, continuity planning, departure planning, and strategic leader development all have a positive influence on service delivery.

6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

Several actionable recommendations are made to improve succession planning procedures and service delivery within the Health Sector of Taita Taveta County Government based on the thorough research findings and their congruence with the literature: The study underlines how leadership development programs, continuity planning, exit planning, good corporate governance affects the provision of services which includes changes in leadership and emergency situations. This can entail the creation of thorough transition plans, the clarification of roles, and the regular testing of these plans via drills and exercises. Creation of clear exit strategies for important leaders, identifying potential hazards, and making sure that backup plans are prepared in case a leader must

go suddenly. Effective corporate governance procedures, which include accountable systems, open decision-making processes, and adherence to legal and ethical requirements, should be given top priority by healthcare businesses and creation of thorough transition plans, the clarification of roles, and the regular testing of these plans via drills and exercises

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