Library Leadership and Succession Planning In Vietnam

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Business Information Systems

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Declaration

I certify that except where due acknowledgement has been made, the work is that of the author alone; the work has not been submitted previously, in whole or in part, to qualify for any other academic award; the content of the thesis is the result of work which has been carried out since the official commencement date of the approved research program; any editorial work, paid or unpaid, carried out by a third party is acknowledged; and, ethics procedures and regulations have been followed.

Huynh Thi Trang

May 17th, 2016
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Conference papers

During the doctoral candidature two papers were written by the researcher that were peer reviewed and accepted for presentation at conferences. These papers are:


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Abstract

Libraries in Vietnam have seen a marked change in the process of selecting leaders. In the past, the head of a library was appointed by the higher rank leaders from the parent organisation. Selection of library leaders is now a more democratic process. This change presents several challenges for consideration in the development of qualified cohorts of future library leaders.

Underpinned by transformational leadership theory, this study examines library leadership and succession planning in Vietnam by investigating existing succession planning in Mekong Delta libraries; examining how library leaders have dealt with succession planning challenges over the past decade; and positing a theoretical model for the succession planning process. This study utilised a case study multi-method approach in all of the thirteen public libraries and four selected academic libraries in the Mekong Delta through two phases. An online survey was first conducted with 172 respondents. Data from this phase were analysed and informed the second phase, which involved in-depth interviews with twenty-three senior managers and board of director members.

The research findings revealed that succession planning is very important and necessary due to its dual benefits for employees and libraries. However, most general staff members have not personally participated in library succession planning. The findings also showed that various factors influence succession planning, including the impact of the Communist Party of Vietnam. This study contributes a theoretical model of a succession planning process to the knowledge of library succession planning. Understanding the role of the Communist Party, the required elements of library succession planning and the steps following the process provide insights into the nature of succession planning as a process of leadership and professional growth. This study suggests that library leaders should maximise the participation of general staff in succession planning so as to help prevent bias. Insights into the implementation of succession planning in the Mekong Delta also suggest implications and recommendations for library leaders, parent organisation leaders, and policy makers in a broader context.
Chapter One  

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

*Leadership is the key to 99 percent of all successful effort*

Erskine Bowles

Leadership plays an important role in the success of an organisation. Erskine Bowles, an American businessman and a White House Chief of Staff, described the role of leadership as a process for influencing a group of people to meet the organizational goals (Northouse 2007). Effective leadership in a particular organisation or a company should therefore be developed and maintained. According to Onwubiko, Onu and Ossai-Onah (2010), “One of the tools used in sustaining the leadership success of many organisations is succession planning” (p. 33). Leadership in the library and information sector is not an exception and leadership can be seen as a decisive factor in library development (Robbins & Coulter 2012). Succession planning in libraries should be considered and conducted so that the next generation of leaders can inherit and develop the achievements of the previous library leadership.

My interest in this research topic began when I was a staff member at a university library and the academic library director unexpectedly left his job with no one to replace him. This caused me deep concern about why library succession planning was not in place. Having worked in one library for more than twenty years and in a leadership role for ten years, I realized that my library has witnessed the process from no succession planning to a very superficial level of succession planning. This is one of the practical reasons for my research into library leadership and succession planning in Vietnam.

Although library succession planning has been addressed in the literature for more than two decades, there is limited literature on succession planning in libraries compared with other industries. Moreover, there is no literature that specifically discusses how succession planning operates within the Vietnamese context. Research into succession planning is necessary for library leaders to know how to identify, recruit, and nurture the next generation of effective leaders. This research is sponsored by the Australian Government through an Australian Development Scholarship to create a model for
developing a cohort of library leaders who are fully prepared for key managerial roles in libraries in Vietnam.

In this chapter, research objectives and questions are identified, and the rationale and significance of the study presented. The historical influences on libraries in Vietnam are examined. The impacts of socio-economic and political contexts on library leadership are examined. There is also a description of the current government policy on succession planning which underpins this study. The chapter concludes with an outline of the structure of the thesis.

1.2 Research objectives and questions

This research aims to:

1. investigate existing succession planning in libraries in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam;
2. examine how library leaders have dealt with succession planning challenges over the past decade; and
3. posit a theoretical model for the succession planning process and make recommendations for the future to improve the quality of potential candidates.

In order to investigate existing library succession planning and examine issues related to this topic, this research aims to answer the overarching question “How can library leaders plan for succession in their organizations?” with four sub-questions:

1. To what extent is succession planning desirable in Mekong Delta libraries?
2. In what ways do leaders implement library succession planning?
3. How can library staff be involved in succession planning?
4. What factors challenge succession planning?

1.3 Rationale for the study

As a developing country, Vietnam is challenged by many problems, some of which are related to workforce and leadership. In terms of its workforce, Vietnam is one of four
countries in the East Asian Pacific region (with China, Indonesia and Thailand) which has an aging labour force (Packard & Nguyen 2014). As a result, a huge number of employees, including managers and leaders, will retire soon. In relation to succession planning in East Asia, Kim states that “Due to widespread downsizing and an aging workforce, succession planning is rapidly becoming a key strategic planning tool for human resource management” (Kim, S 2003, p. 533). This situation also applies to the library and information sector, where additionally there is a small talent pool, a general lack of motivation to apply for leadership positions, few, (if any) recruitment policies and a lack of on-going evaluation of library activities and strategies with regard to succession planning.

The shortage of talent in the library and information science profession is due to high levels of staff departure, an aging workforce and few training programs. Both employers and employees in urban areas report that the education system generally does not provide all the skills needed in the current Vietnamese labour market (Bodewig et al. 2014) and this may include libraries. Contributing to the small talent pool is the growing number of library and information management (LIM) graduate students who do not maintain interest in the library environment because they are attracted by high-paying jobs in companies or enterprises where their skills are desirable. From these situations mentioned above, it appears that employees are not encouraged to continue working in libraries due to the fact that there is often no job description, insufficient training and lack of on-going evaluation of work performance (Pennell 2010).

Staff recruitment in Vietnamese libraries and information sector is mainly from within the organization and does not allow for the recruitment of highly qualified people from the outside. In academic and public libraries, the quantity and quality of employees are still low and insufficient (Hanoi Moi 2010; Pham 2003; Vu, DTN, Pham & Le 2013). Some library leaders of academic libraries are forced to employ teaching staff in library roles who have no knowledge of library science (Vu, DTN, Pham & Le 2013).

Significantly, the government in Vietnam has issued numerous policies, documents and guidelines related to staffing and succession planning. However, there is no specific document for library succession planning. Evaluating how library succession planning is conducted and at what level the challenges are encountered, and how to deal with
these challenges are issues which have not yet been specifically identified. In particular, no official model for a succession planning process in libraries has been available. This study will assist in filling this gap.

1.4 Significance of the study

This study contributes to the body of knowledge about library leadership and succession planning in the Vietnamese context. This includes examining the role of the Communist Party as the only leading political party of the country in the process. It addresses the required components and impacting factors on the succession planning process.

The study also contributes to leadership theory, particularly transformational theory, where leaders can be taught and learn the skills and capabilities necessary. Potential candidates in succession planning can be trained in leadership skills and knowledge to become the next generation of leaders. In addition, this research suggests that training new generations of library leaders is very important for libraries to be run by well-trained managers.

The study develops a theoretical model of a library succession planning process. It offers insights into the purposes of succession planning and suggests that policy makers, government and library leaders should have an active strategy for succession planning in dynamic settings. As the research takes place in both public and academic libraries, the findings benefit library leaders in these sectors and could also be a valuable reference for library leaders in other types of library systems and information centres in Vietnam, and globally. As the research takes place in both public and academic libraries, the overarching benefit of the present study is to provide library leaders in these sectors with practical understanding and knowledge about how succession planning can be used to improve the current circumstances, as well as to enhance management practices in Vietnam libraries and other organisations.

Succession planning - an on-going process of action, assessment, evaluation and upgrading - is closely interrelated to professional growth. Library leaders can discover and improve the talent in their organisations for both library development and
development of the professional careers of staff. This research provides library leaders with insights into how to implement succession planning that can meet the developing needs of libraries and library staff as well as align with the Communist Party’s policies and guidelines in preparing the next cohort of library leaders.

This study also provides potential successors with an awareness of desirable professional criteria, including professional knowledge, leadership skills, and political ideology, so that they can be well prepared for future managerial positions. Through succession planning training, they can develop their professional knowledge and skills. In addition, this study also provides evidence that library staff cannot automatically proceed to managerial positions without continuing efforts and self-improvement. This is a positive motivation for staff to continue to learn and move forward in the organisation.

Finally, this study is important because it provides policy makers and governmental leaders with insights into how to upgrade government policies or guidelines for succession planning. This study also provides a direct voice from general library staff to policy makers and governmental leaders on matters related to succession planning. It provides policy makers with more evidence for producing policies, and assists government leaders in promulgating and evaluating the implementation of the policies and guidelines with regard to succession planning.

The following section provides the context for the study. This historical background is important and relevant for this present study. Historical, social and political changes not only influence how libraries in Vietnam have been developed but also contribute to government policy changes about succession planning.

### 1.5 Overview of Vietnamese libraries and leadership

Libraries in Vietnam have experienced four main stages of development. They are categorised as libraries in the feudalism period (11th century-1858), libraries in the French colonial period (1858-1954), libraries in the period of the Soviet Union in the North and United States of America in the South (1954-1975), and libraries after
reunification (1975-present). In each stage of library development, library leaders were selected differently, and these leaders have been recognised for their considerable contributions to the development of librarianship in Vietnam. The following section discusses libraries and library leadership in each of the four stages.

1.5.1 Libraries in the feudalism period (11th century-1858)

The feudalism period is divided into different dynasties named after national heroes or emperors. They were the Dinh Dynasty (968-980), the Early Le Dynasty (980-1009), the Ly Dynasty (1009-1225), the Tran Dynasty (1225-1400), the Ho Dynasty (1400-1407), the Later Le Dynasty (1428-1788), the Tay Son Dynasty (1778-1802), and the Nguyen Dynasty (1802-1945) (Vien Su hoc 2004).

Vietnamese libraries were first established in the Ly Dynasty, commencing in 1009. At that time, libraries were called ‘nha tang kinh’ - store houses of Buddhist canonical texts and prayer books (Le, VV 2005). Four of the main libraries in the Ly Dynasty were Tran Phuc kinh tang built in 1011, Bat Giac kinh tang in 1021, Dai Hung tang in 1023, and Trung Hung tang in 1036 (Le, Van Huu, Phan & Ngo 1985). All of these libraries were located in Hoa Lu, later renamed Thang Long and subsequently Hanoi. In the Tran Dynasty, Thien Truong phu kinh tang and Van Kha thu vien were established in Thanh Hoa province, a province in the north-central coast region of Vietnam, in 1384 (Ngo 1967). In the Later Le Dynasty, Bong Lai thu vien was established (Tran, VG 1970). In the Tay Son Dynasty, Sung Chinh thu vien was built in Nghe An province in 1791. It served not only as a library but also as a translating and annotating facility for Chinese books (Hoang, XH 1952). In the Nguyen Dynasty, six new libraries were established in Hue, the imperial capital of this dynasty. They were Co hoc thu vien, Su quan thu vien (1821), Tang thu lau (1825), Thu vien Dong Cac (1826), Tu Khue thu vien (1852) and Bao Dai thu vien (1923) (Duong 1999). Overall, Vietnamese libraries in the feudalism period were mainly constructed in the imperial capital of each dynasty to serve the academic needs of the emperors, mandarins and scholars (Nguyen, HC 2005).

The first academic library in Vietnam came into being in the feudalism period with the establishment of the first Vietnamese university, Quoc Tu Giam in Thang Long, Hanoi in 1076 (Le, VV 2005). In 1908, it was renamed Tan Thu Vien by Duy Tan, the 11th of
the thirteen Emperors in the Nguyen Dynasty, the last dynasty of feudalism (Phan 2013).

The library leaders in the feudalism period were chosen from knowledgeable and moral mandarins who were wise dignitaries, royal relations and elite scholars in Vietnam. Terms such as Thu dai tang kinh (head of the store house), Giam quoc tu thu kho (director of Quoc Tu Giam library), Bi thu giam hoc si (library director) were used to indicate the title of library leaders in Vietnam through different historical periods of time (Trinh 2010). They were not only in charge of taking care of library activities, but also involved in compiling valuable materials such as encyclopaedias, history books and bibliographies for the population. The most famous library leaders were Tran Ton (appointed in 1383), Ngo Thoi Trung (in 1435), Luong Nhu Hoc (in 1462), Le Quy Don (in 1760), and Nguyen Thiep (in 1791).

Luong Nhu Hoc (1420-1501) was known as the initiator of wood printing in Vietnam. During two trips to China he mastered the techniques of wood printing and transferred them to people in two villages, Lieu Trang and Hong Luc, in Hai Duong province in north-eastern Vietnam. One of his achievements was the printing of Dai Viet su ky toan thu (the Complete Annals of Dai Viet) in 1697 (Le, GL 2012).

Among these famous library leaders, Le Quy Don (1726-1784) was the first to lay the foundation for library cataloguing theory and methodology in Vietnam. He was also involved in collecting and compiling the bibliographies of Vietnamese books from the Ly Dynasty (11th century) to the end of the Le Dynasty (18th century) (Trinh 2010).

Nguyen Thiep (1723-1804), who became the Head of Vien Sung Chinh in 1791, initiated the translation of many books from Han characters into Nom characters for teaching and disseminating purposes in the population. In two years, Confucian books such as Tieu hoc (The basis), Tu thu (Four books) and Kinh thi (Analects) were completely translated. Two significant works - Thi kinh giai am (Buddhist canonical texts with phonetics) and Ngu kinh toat yeu dien nghia (Five classics) - are still used (Le, Van Hao 2014).
1.5.2 Libraries in the French colonial period (1858-1954)

This period commenced with the French invasion in 1858 and continued until 1954. During nearly 100 years of domination, French colonists established only three public libraries and some libraries in universities, institutes and public offices in Vietnam (Le, VV 2005). There are four major libraries from north to south. Firstly, the library of Truong Vien Dong Bac Co (The École Française d'Extrême-Orient / French School of the Far East) was built in Hanoi in 1903. The second library, the Indochina Central Library, was also established in Hanoi in 1917. This library was renamed Pierre Pasquier Library in 1935 after the governor-general of French Indochina from August 1928 until his death in January 1934. The third and the fourth libraries were Bao Dai Library in Hue (1923) and the Saigon Library (1917). These libraries chiefly served the French population, officials who worked for the French government and the intellectuals in the universities. The main reason for this limited number of libraries was that the French imposed an “illiteracy policy” in order to control the Vietnamese peoples (Nguyen, AQ 2008).

The leaders of these libraries were primarily French, but later Vietnamese library directors were appointed. The great contributions of these library leaders were the compilation of the bibliographies Bibliographie Annamite (1862), Bibliographie de l’Indochine (1880-1889), Bibliothéca Indosinica (1912-1915), and Bibliographie de l’Indochine Francaise (1929) (Duong 1999). These bibliographies were valuable for the collecting and preservation of publications in Vietnam and Indochina in this period. Currently, they still have research value.

After the success of the August Revolution in 1945, Vietnam was liberated from the French colonists and libraries in Vietnam underwent many changes. However, on September 23, 1945, the French entered the south of Vietnam and officially invaded Vietnam for a second time. On December 19, 1946 President Ho appealed for the entire nation to oppose the French colonists. This hard struggle ended with the Dien Bien Phu victory on 7 May 1954. In this period, Vietnam encountered three daunting challenges: famine, illiteracy and invasion. Beside the duty of fighting against the French invasion, cultural missions were also important. Publishing books was encouraged and libraries served military units. However, in these nine years of struggle, libraries were only
located in safe places such as the Viet Bac army zone. Library leaders in this period played a supporting role in the struggle against illiteracy of the masses and soldiers in the armed forces. On 21 November 1958 the Pierre Pasquier Library in Hanoi became the National Library of Vietnam.

1.5.3 Libraries in the period of the Soviet Union in the north and the United States of America in the south (1954-1975)

From 1954 to 1975, Vietnam was divided into two parts: the north of Vietnam which was influenced by the socialist Soviet Union, and the south of Vietnam which was under the control of the American government. In this period Vietnamese libraries developed in two directions. More libraries in the north were established at the communes, the third level of administrative divisions in Vietnam after provinces and municipalities (the first level) and provincial cities, districts, district-level towns, urban districts (the second level). Book-reading rooms aimed at improving everyone’s literacy were also established (Nguyen, TVB & Le 2010). A public library system was intensively developed with the National Library, provincial and urban libraries, and district and commune libraries. Besides the public library system, there were other library systems such as academic libraries, high school libraries and military libraries. In 1961, the Minister of Culture initiated tertiary programs to educate librarians to work in these library systems (Tran, TQ 2006).

In the south, American culture began to influence the culture of Vietnam, including librarianship. Libraries that existed in the south were the National Library of the Republic of Vietnam, three public libraries, eight university libraries, 100 high school libraries, military libraries and libraries of political, social and economic organisations such as the A. Lincoln Library which belonged to the American Culture Centre. Libraries in the south of Vietnam received American support for training, finance and facilities (Tran, LA 1999). However, librarianship in the south in the period of 1954-1975 showed some deficiencies in library strategic plan, budgets, collections and services. First, library strategic planning did not match with development to meet the needs of the population. Second, there was an imbalance between libraries in cities and the countryside. Most libraries were located in the city while the majority of the
population inhabited the countryside. In addition, library collections were not appropriate to meet the reading needs of the population. Furthermore, inter-library loan services were non-existent. The aim of libraries to serve society was overlooked (Vo 1996). Staff were trained by the Library Development Activity (LDA), part of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). From 1967 to 1975, this organisation educated 352 library staff for elementary, pre-intermediate and intermediate levels of library science, and published some standardised professional library materials. Notably, there were thirty to forty library staff with masters’ degrees and two to three with doctoral degrees, including sixteen graduating from American institutions. These professional librarians were promoted as the leaders in the large-sized libraries in the south of Vietnam (Lam 2006).

1.5.4 Libraries after the reunification (1975-present)

On 30 April 1975 Vietnam was liberated from the control of the United States and since 1975 libraries have seen many changes, especially in regard to professional development of library staff and leadership. Through national collaboration programs with Russia, the Netherlands, Hungary and Czechoslovakia, civil servants from different industries, including librarianship, were trained and became library leaders. These countries were willing to support developing countries such as Vietnam. More importantly, with the re-establishment of diplomatic relations between Vietnam and America in 1995 many librarians studied for higher degrees in the United States, New Zealand, and Australia (Truong & Chu 2010). Most of these well-trained librarians returned to Vietnam and now hold key managerial roles in libraries (Vietnamese Simmons GSLIS Alumni 2013).

In terms of library systems in Vietnam, Item 16 of the Vietnamese Library Ordinance (issued in 2000) regulates libraries into two categories: public libraries, and specialised and multi-discipline libraries. As of December 2014, public libraries consisted of the National Library of Vietnam and sixty-four provincial and urban libraries (Vietnam 2014). These libraries are under the leadership of seventy-nine female and sixty-six male directors. All of these library leaders (a total of 145) hold bachelor’s degrees and higher. Their qualifications consist of doctoral degrees (1.3%) master’s degrees (9.7%), library bachelor’s degrees (74%) and bachelor’s degrees of other disciplines (15%).
Their average age is forty-nine (Nguyen, TP 2011). The second category - specialised and multi-discipline libraries - consists of libraries of scientific research institutes, academic libraries, governmental libraries, military libraries and libraries of political, social, economic organisations (National Assembly Standing Committee 2000). According to the latest available statistics of the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, there are fifty-seven institutional and scientific research libraries; 336 academic libraries including university and two-year college libraries in state-owned and private sectors; eighty libraries in Ministries, Departments and government organisations; 1,405 libraries in military units; and thousands of libraries of political, social, economic organisations in Vietnam (Vu, DTN et al. 2013). In terms of academic libraries, there are 150 libraries at the state-owned universities and fifty-five libraries at private non-profit universities (Ministry of Education and Training 2012). Since 2000, libraries in Vietnam have been managed by four different ministries and consequently formed into four library systems (Le, VV 2005). As can be seen in Figure 1, public libraries are overseen by the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism; academic libraries are managed by the Ministry of Education and Training; scientific and technological libraries are led by the Ministry of Science and Technology; and military libraries are under the management of the Ministry of Defence.

As of 2014, Vietnam has had programs for five levels of library and information qualifications: doctor, master, bachelor, two-year college, and two-year vocational training programs. Only one university conducts all four levels of education. Hanoi University of Culture has a two-year college program (commenced in 1961), bachelor’s (commenced in 1961), master’s (1991) and doctoral programs (2008) (Nguyen, VC 2011). Another two universities offer three levels of education: two-year college, bachelor’s and master’s programs. They are the University of Social Science and Humanities in Hanoi and the University of Social Science and Humanities in Ho Chi Minh City. Another five universities offer bachelor’s programs: the University of Culture in Ho Chi Minh City (1980), Dong Do University (1996), Hanoi Pedagogical University No. 2 (1997), Can Tho University (2005), and Dong Thap University (2009). Two universities ceased their bachelor’s programs in library science because of a lack of teaching staff with doctoral degrees as required by university regulations enacted in 2010 (Nguyen, TN (2010)): they are Dong Do University in the north, which has not
run a library program since 2013, and the University of Saigon in the south, which began a library program in 2008 and closed it in 2014.

These library and information programs were primarily designed to educate generations of staff who can work in modern libraries and information centres including in managerial positions in every library sector (Nguyen, VC 2011). In order to gain knowledge and skills for these higher-level library positions, staff members have to attend short training courses organised by the Department of Library (a unit of Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism) and the National Library of Vietnam. One such
program is a two-day training workshop in ‘Increasing leadership capacity for library leaders of Vietnamese Library Association’ (Tran, THY 2013). This short training program was sponsored by the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions for the current leaders of the Vietnam Library Association (Pham 2013). A leadership program, with 300 hours of study and internship to educate potential library leaders, was recommended. This program was considered crucial because the leadership of directors is known to be a decisive factor for library success and librarianship development (Le, VV 2013).

**Public and academic libraries in the Mekong Delta**

This section describes in detail the two library systems considered in this research: public libraries and academic libraries in the Mekong Delta area.

**Public libraries**

In the Mekong Delta region of Vietnam, there are thirteen public libraries, with one in each province. Each library was established as directed by the Provincial People’s Committee. Public libraries operate under the supervision of the Provincial People’s Committee and the Provincial Department of Culture, Sports and Tourism. Nine public libraries were established in the period of 1975-1978, after the reunification of Vietnam. Four others have been established since, together with the establishment of four new provinces, in 1991, 1997 (two) and 2004. Therefore, the oldest public library has been operating for about forty years and the most recent public library is ten years old.

Public libraries operate under the principle of ‘head mode’. This principle regulates the responsibilities and powers of the head of the unit appointed by the parent organisation leaders. The directors of the libraries are the heads, with direct management and administration responsibilities. They are responsible for the implementation of the tasks assigned to the library by the Chairman of the Provincial Department of Culture, Sports and Tourism. The deputy director, an assistant to the library director, is governed by the rules of the state and reports to the director. Whenever the library director is away, the deputy director is authorised to direct operation of the unit. Senior managers or heads of library departments are in charge of professional tasks and directly guided by the deputy
director. Board of director members (a director and one or more deputy directors) are able to appoint or dismiss senior managers in the library (Ministry of Culture Sports and Tourism 2005). Managerial terms for public library directors have not been allocated in any official document to date. Members of public library boards therefore could remain in their roles until the retirement age with the provision that they are still respected and trusted by their employees.

**Academic libraries**

At present, there are fourteen academic libraries in the Mekong Delta (nine at state-owned universities and five at private non-profit universities). The university library is considered an important unit of the university in fulfilling teaching and learning tasks. The oldest library was established in 1966 and the newest one in 2011. The largest academic library of a state-owned university has thirty-three staff and the smallest library has eight employees. Academic libraries of the private non-profit universities have three to four employees and these libraries are not included in this research study because of their small numbers of staff.

The academic library director is responsible to the president of the university for the operation of the library and the implementation of assigned tasks. The deputy directors are in charge of a variety of duties as assigned by the director and are responsible to the director for the assigned tasks. Senior managers or heads of library departments, appointed by board of director members, are in charge of professional tasks and directly guided by the deputy director (Ministry of Culture Sports and Tourism 2008). In the university structure, the library is categorised at the same level as other support units of the university such as departments of academic affairs, international relations, personnel, and financial affairs. According to the regulations governing universities, the president of a university makes decisions regarding the appointment or dismissal of heads and vice-heads of the support units in the university, including library leaders. Promotion criteria include being less than fifty-five years old for men and fifty for women, and holding at least a bachelor’s degree of qualification. Their initial managerial term is five years and they can be re-appointed for another five year term (Nguyen, TN 2010).
Self-promotion is not common in Vietnamese culture. Vietnamese customs and habits mean that many people prefer to be discreet, modest, and unobtrusive and do not want to stand out (Vu, M 2011). They are also afraid of ‘losing face’ and losing the respect of others if they are not successful in ballots. Furthermore, many would not like to be criticised or assessed through a succession planning process.

1.6 Current government policies on succession planning

The Vietnamese government’s policy on succession planning for all industries of the nation is applied at three levels of management: the central government, ministry and province.

At the central government level, the Communist Party and the state of Vietnam pay much attention to staffing which is considered as an essential part of succession planning as well as of leadership (Communist Party of Vietnam 1960, 2001b, 2011f). Furthermore, succession planning is considered as the political duty of the Communist Party (Central Committee 1997; Communist Party of Vietnam 2011b, 2011e) and it is often discussed in the National Congresses of the Communist Party of Vietnam. The National Congress, which is held once every five years, is the decision-making division of the Party. The National Congress elects the Central Committee which usually meets twice a year to release resolutions for strategies that contribute to the development of the country. In four recent National Congresses (the 7th to 10th Congresses), staffing and succession planning have been considered. For example, the 7th National Congress of the Communist Party of Vietnam (in 1991) made basic changes in staffing, which aligned with new mechanisms and regulations for national civil officers (Communist Party of Vietnam 1991c). In light of this Congress, the 3rd Plenum of Central Committee VII decreed that succession planning be put into action. In particular, the Central Committee stated that it is necessary to change the programs and methods of conducting succession planning to build a cohort of leaders at three levels of administration: central, provincial, and city.

In addition, the implementation of succession planning, which includes staff training and screening, is centred on three age groups at each level. The ratio of candidates for
each age group varies and is based on the level of an organisation. For example, in the parent organisation 20-25% of all candidates should be under forty years old, 55-60% from forty to fifty years old, and 20-25% over fifty. Likewise, 30%, 60-70% and 20% respectively are the percentages of candidates of these age groups at a lower level organisation.

The succession planning process is encouraged to be undertaken at least once a year (Central Committee 1992). In the documents of the 8th Central Committee (in 1996), staffing, selection of key staff and succession planning were the key focuses of the Party. The Party was required to implement succession planning and training standards so as to reappoint, enlist or screen out leaders (Communist Party of Vietnam 1996). The 3rd Plenum of the Central Committee VIII emphasised staffing strategy to promote industrialization and modernization of the country. Priority was given to succession planning and staff training. Succession planning is a key aspect of staffing decisions to ensure staffing is undertaken systematically and interactively to meet the immediate and long-term tasks of the nation (Central Committee 1997).

The 9th National Congress of the Communist Party of Vietnam (in 2001) regulated appointments by term, leadership rotation and improving professional skills for civil servants (Communist Party of Vietnam 2001b). The 9th Plenum of the Central Committee IX indicated it is important to enhance and sustain succession planning. The documents of the Plenum required continued innovation in terms of programs, methods, organizational management, liability, personnel, assessment, succession planning, leadership rotation, training, retraining, appointment and employing (Central Committee 2004). The 10th National Congress of the Communist Party of Vietnam (in 2006) decreed that succession planning for future leaders is a necessity. More attention was paid to female leaders, ethnic groups, working class laypersons, and experts, with the intention of fostering talent pools and focusing on establishing a team of senior leaders (Communist Party of Vietnam 2006). In light of this Congress, the 9th Plenum of the Central Committee X aims to innovate in personnel management and policy, reviewing and modifying succession planning at all levels and focusing on conducting succession planning at a strategic level (Central Committee 2009). Most recently, the 12th National Congress of the Communist Party of Vietnam determined that it is necessary to improve the quality and effectiveness of leadership (Communist Party of Vietnam 2016b) as well
as to build a cohort of leaders with the capacity, quality, and prestige required for their managerial positions (Communist Party of Vietnam 2016a).

At the ministerial level, the Politburo released Resolution No. 42 on succession planning in 2004 in response to global integration, national industrialisation and modernisation. This resolution highlighted past achievements in order to position the new strategies for succession planning. This document also provides information on purpose, viewpoint, and principles of succession planning. Moreover, this resolution aims to enhance the content, methods and processes for conducting succession planning (Political Bureau 2004). The Standing Committee issued three guidelines to implement the contents of the 42nd resolution. The first is Guideline No. 17-HD/TCTW (in 2003) on succession planning in the era of industrialisation and modernisation of the country. The second is Guideline No. 22-HD/BTCTW (in 2008) on strengthening succession planning. The third, and current one, is Guideline No. 15 (2012) on succession planning, based on Resolution No. 42-NQ/TW of Politburo IX and Conclusion No. 24-KL/TW of the Politburo XI. It aims to accelerate succession planning and rotation of leaders and managers to 2020 and later. Another document related to succession planning is the Decision No. 286-QĐ/TW (in 2010) regarding staff and civil servant assessment. The evaluation of staff and civil servants is considered to be a key element to succession planning (Political Bureau 2010).

At the provincial level, the People’s Committee of each province issues its own policies on staffing, succession planning and staff training. These policies provide the foundation for operating succession planning in each unit of the province and result from a succession planning project (People's Committee of An Giang Province 2011a; People's Committee of Vinh Long Province 2013). In addition, these policies address the promulgation of the regulations of appointment, reappointment, leadership rotation, resignation and dismissal of heads and vice-heads of departments and equivalents (People's Committee of Kien Giang Province 2013). Human resources policies up to the year 2020 have been established (People's Committee of An Giang Province 2013; People's Committee of Can Tho City 2009; People's Committee of Tra Vinh Province 2012; People's Committee of Vinh Long Province 2009). Chairs of these provinces also release regulations for training and developing professional knowledge for staff and civil servants (People's Committee of An Giang Province 2011b; People's Committee of
Ca Mau Province 2013; People's Committee of Dong Thap Province 2013; People's Committee of Hau Giang Province 2014; People's Committee of Long An Province 2012; People's Committee of Soc Trang Province 2012; People's Committee of Tien Giang Province 2012; People's Committee of Tra Vinh Province 2011; People's Committee of Vinh Long Province 2013). Chairs of provinces and cities also promulgate regulations for recruitment, employment and management of civil servants, as shown in documents of the People’s Committee of Tien Giang and Tra Vinh provinces. Provincial chairs also issue the regulations of personnel and organisational management such as those in Ben Tre, Ca Mau and Long An Provinces. In particular, these chairs of provinces and cities have promotional policies and rewards to attract talented workers who hold higher qualifications to their hometowns (People's Committee of An Giang Province 2012; People's Committee of Can Tho City 2010; People's Committee of Tien Giang Province 2012).

In terms of conducting succession planning, leaders of each library system follow a number of documents from higher organisations. With regard to academic libraries, succession planning is based on three guidelines issued by the Party Division in the Ministry of Education and Training, by the Party Provincial Committee, and by the Party Committee of the university that the library belongs to. For example, succession planning for Can Tho University Learning Resource Centre is conducted based on three documents: Guideline No. 65 HD/BCSD (issued by Party Division from the Ministry of Education and Training), Document No. 1075/CV/BTCTU (released by Party Provincial Committee of Can Tho City) and Guideline No. 13 HD/DU (issued by the Party Committee of Can Tho University).

Similarly, succession planning of public libraries is implemented under guidance from three levels: the Party Division in the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, those from the Provincial Department of Culture, Sports and Tourism, and the Party Provincial Committee that the library belongs to. For instance, current succession planning of Vinh Long Public library is based on four documents: Document No. 61-VB/BCSD (issued by the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism), and Plan No.14-KH/TU, plan No. 34-KH/TU, and Guideline No.1-HD/TCTU (all issued by Vinh Long Provincial Party Committee).
As indicated in the charter of the Communist Party of Vietnam (Communist Party of Vietnam 2011d), the Communist Party Cell at the grassroots level is the political unit of the Party which helps to implement all policies as well as provide guidelines of the Communist Party. Each unit of an organisation which has three or more Communist Party members can form a Communist Party Cell. A Communist Party Cell with fewer than nine members can elect a Communist Party Committee with a Secretary and a Deputy Secretary. A Communist Party Cell with nine or more members can elect a Communist Party Committee with a Secretary, a Deputy Secretary and from one to not more than five Standing Trustees. The Communist Party Cell organises monthly meetings and extraordinary meetings when needed. In the monthly meetings, matters such as political duties of the unit, current national and international political news, or party and state documents, including staffing and succession planning, are discussed.

**General evaluation of implementation of succession planning in Vietnam**

Implementation of succession planning in Vietnam is generally assessed through documents of the National Congresses. For example, Resolution No. 42 from the 9th National Congress of the Communist Party of Vietnam addressed maintaining heritage of leadership, creating talent pools, and overcoming passive and confused attitudes towards staffing. The Resolution also indicated some drawbacks in the succession planning process. They include a lack of logic during implementation, shortage of external talent pool, and unqualified staff for short-term and long-term plans (Political Bureau 2004). The Politburo also stated that the main reason for these shortcomings is low awareness of the Communist Party Committee and the leader of the organisation. The 11th National Congress of the Communist Party of Vietnam produced Conclusion No. 24 on strengthening succession planning and leadership rotation to the year 2020, claiming that succession planning was not based on work performance assessment, training programs are not sufficient, and succession plans were formative and not feasible (Political Bureau 2012). The Politburo also stated in this document that the Communist Party Committee and leaders of government organisations had limited vision, and this is the major reason why succession planning does not respond to government demand.
In addition to the evaluations of the Politburo on conducting succession planning through the National Congresses, other individual assessments are made. For example, Nguyen, XT (2012) restates that there are several shortcomings in the process of succession planning. The first reason for ineffective succession planning is that it was not based on work performance assessment. The second shortcoming lies in the fact that succession planning did not stem from staff capabilities. The third is that succession planning had not focused on training programs. Fourth, there was poor quality and vision in succession planning, and so age groups targeted were inappropriate. It still remains the fact that young candidates and female candidates were not considered in the selection process. Recruiting of qualified candidates lagged behind their competitors for corresponding positions. The link between succession planning and promotion was not considered as a long-term process.

As Ha (2014) emphasised, succession planning is a sensitive issue, and it is therefore likely to lead to possible misunderstandings among staff and affect the sustainable development of the organisation. As a result, democracy and openness should be considered while implementing a succession planning process (Hong Hiep 2014). In the conference of key leaders in the Central Personnel Committee, To (2013) pointed out that the role of democracy in staffing was not transparent. Guidelines for succession planning and also those for assessing cadres were slow in being processed. From the above-mentioned perspectives, the process of succession planning was neglected. Although much research into succession planning has been carried out, no studies were found on library succession planning within the Vietnamese context. This study therefore aims to fill this gap.

1.7 Thesis structure

This thesis is organised into ten chapters. Chapter One identifies research objectives and research questions and explores the rationale and significance of the study. In addition, the key influences on succession planning in Vietnam, including an overview of Vietnamese libraries and leadership, and national policies and guidelines of succession planning, are presented. Chapter Two reviews the literature on succession planning, the succession planning process, succession models, recent research on library succession
planning, an overview of leadership theories, transformational theory, and the leadership role of the Communist Party of Vietnam, and presents the role of the Communist Party in librarianship. Chapter Three describes the methodology and details the investigative tools that were used to collect and analyse data. Chapter Four presents the first two themes of the research findings, on awareness of library staff of succession planning. The third theme of the research findings - insights into implementation of succession planning - is presented in Chapter Five. Chapter Six presents the final theme of the research findings, on the role of the Communist Party in library succession planning. Chapters Seven and Eight discuss the impacts of the findings of the study. Chapter Nine develops a theoretical model of a library succession planning process based on research findings. Finally, Chapter Ten concludes the thesis by summarising the key findings, indicating implications for theory and practice, recommending future research, and indicating practical implications and recommendations for library leaders, parent organisation leaders, and policy makers related to library succession planning.
Chapter Two  LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Succession planning is an important strategic approach that leaders should include in their management roles (Muna 2006; Young, A, Hernon & Powell 2004). Succession planning not only provides the successors with opportunities to prepare for future managerial positions, but also assists organizations to evaluate their talent pools and motivate staff to perform their tasks well (Galbraith, Smith & Walker 2012). In a library, “Succession planning cannot be ignored” (Stueart & Sullivan 2010, p. 87). Succession planning leads library leaders to an understanding of their employees’ strengths and weaknesses so that these leaders can develop staff training, coaching and mentoring. Furthermore, library succession planning also contributes to strategic retention of highly qualified staff (Warren 2011). This literature review starts with definitions of succession planning, describes the succession planning process, examines some succession planning models in different environments, and addresses recent research on library succession planning. It then presents an overview of leadership theories, notes the rationale for the relevance of transformational theory to the present study, provides an overview of the leadership role of the Communist Party of Vietnam, and concludes with the role of the Communist Party on librarianship in Vietnam.

2.2 Definitions of succession planning

Succession planning is defined as a combination of succession – action of a person or thing following, or succeeding to the place of another – and planning – the action or process of forming a plan (Oxford English dictionary 2012). In the relevant literature, many definitions of succession planning are raised in different contexts. In general, “succession planning is a process of developing talent to meet the needs of the organization now and in the future” (Rothwell 2010, p. 371). In business, succession planning is a process of ensuring a suitable supply of successors for current and future key jobs by managing the careers of individuals to optimize the organization’s needs and the individuals’ aspirations (Dessler 2000). More specifically, succession planning is a systematic method of determining the future management needs of the organization.
and developing high-potential employees to meet those needs (Mondy, Noe & Premeaux 2003). In other words, succession planning is a business concept that mainly focuses on systematically identifying and preparing individuals to take up key roles in an organization when they become available (Carriere et al. 2009). While leadership is viewed as how to get things done by influencing and guiding action (Mason & Wetherbee 2004; Roberts & Rowley 2008), the key function of management is to implement the vision to achieve desired goals or results (Roberts & Rowley 2008; Smith & Piele 1996). In order to provide sustainability for an organisation, succession planning is required. This refers to a process of identifying and preparing individuals for managerial positions in an organisation. In an empirical study by Sharma, Chrisman and Chua (2003), the authors indicate that succession planning is ‘planned behaviour’ driven by means rather than ends. In other words, succession planning is worth doing when a trusted successor is selected instead of simply meeting the requirement to maintain the organisation’s activities.

Researchers use different terms in the literature that convey similar or related meanings to succession planning. For example, ‘executive development’ is used as a part of succession planning (Murphy 2010); succession planning as a part of ‘leadership development’ (Dawson 2002; Leskiw & Singh 2007; Madsen 2010; Shirey 2008); succession planning as a strategy to ensure ‘leadership continuity’ (McMahan, Jannifer & Masias, Michele 2009; Rothwell 2010); succession planning as similar to ‘leadership preparation’ (Young, PK et al. 2011), ‘leadership succession’ (Balser & Carmin 2009; McMurray et al. 2012; Santora 1994), and ‘succession management’ (Pennell 2010; Stadler 2011). These terms deal with both the people in succession planning (consisting of executive leadership and leadership succession), and the procedure of succession planning (including leadership development, leadership continuity, leadership preparation, and succession management).

Another two terms that are widely used, but need to be distinguished from succession planning, are replacement planning and workforce planning. Generally, these terms involve strategies for educating, recruiting, retaining, training, developing, and mentoring staff. However, they are used for different purposes. Workforce planning is used for all staff throughout the organisation regardless of their positions (Whitmell
Rothwell (2010) explains that “Replacement planning is about finding the backups to fill vacancies on an organization chart while succession planning is about grooming the talent needed for the future” (p. 317). So, replacement planning puts people into positions based on what they did in the past, while succession planning prepares for potential candidates for future positions in order to mentor them and equip them with the necessary knowledge and skills. More precisely, while succession planning involves training of potential candidates, replacement planning focuses on back-ups (Rothwell 2011). Rothwell also claims that the individuals who are considered replacements may hold key positions in an organization. Both a talent pool and retention of the best candidates should be considered in order to select the right people.

The term succession planning was first introduced by Henri Fayol (1841-1925), a French management theorist (Kim, Y 2010; Rothwell 2001). Fayol’s idea was rooted in the belief that management is responsible for staff stability. The early research also paid much attention to the implementation process of succession of senior management (Kesner & Sebora 1994). Mahler stressed the need for succession planning and methods to improve its process (Mehrabani & Mohamad 2011). After the 1980s, succession planning research viewed succession planning as a system rather than an event (Friedman 1986). Since the 1990s, research into succession planning has mainly focused on variables instead of its process (Friedman 1984; Huang 2001; Hunte-Cox 2004). In business, succession planning has a dual purpose. First, it “guides the development activities of identified successors, serves to anticipate and manage issues of career ambition and avoids transition problems and premature promotions” (Stadler 2011, p. 268). Second, succession planning is intended to retain the talent pools which made reduce as a result of downsizing (Caplan 2013)

Why is succession planning desirable in a library? “Libraries are vulnerable to having a shortage of skilled people if they are not prepared” (Whitmell 2005a, p. 135), and succession planning is crucial for every library. Succession planning should cover all levels of the organization, not just the top position (Holcomb 2006), but it does play an important role in identifying and training potential leaders for libraries. Leadership is not innate but staff can be trained and coached to be productive leaders (Fallon et al. 2011) as a function of succession planning. Interestingly, development opportunities in
succession planning are one of the strategies to attract and keep potential talent despite libraries not offering top salaries (Simpson & West 2014).

Succession planning brings many benefits for both the library and employees, such as the development of skills, knowledge and confidence. Galbraith, Smith and Walker (2012) confirm that “Succession planning gives employees the opportunity to develop leadership skills that could be used in the employees’ current positions and any future positions” (p. 223). Succession planning aims to continue the key managerial positions, retain qualified staff, and maintain the tacit knowledge of the organization (Rothwell 2010). Succession planning can attract external talent as well as influence the retention of existing employees (Williams 2010). Additionally, “succession planning cannot be successful if it just deals with a vacancy by vacancy situation or is enacted on an individual basis” (Whitmell 2002, p. 154). Therefore, succession planning is not only necessary, but is a long-term process. All levels of library employees, not just chief executive officers, should participate because succession planning should meet the needs of the whole library in the future. “Getting everyone involved will ensure that a variety of concerns and issues are addressed and will engender organization wide commitment to its success” (Whitmell 2002, p. 149). The ultimate goal of succession planning is to ensure that the library has “bench strength” (Nixon 2008). In a human resources context the term “bench strength” means the same as a pool of talent, referring to a group of employees who may be available to take on additional leadership responsibilities if needed (Galbraith, Smith & Walker 2012).

2.3 Succession planning process

There are a number of perspectives on succession planning processes in the literature. In this study, these perspectives are presented chronologically from three main sectors: business, health care, and the library and information sector. These sectors were chosen as good examples of the necessity of succession planning to ensure effective management and leadership within an organization. There are both variations and consistency among the processes. The four key common stages of the process are: needs identification, candidate evaluation and selection, training or improving the candidates, and succession planning assessment. However, there is great variation including current
organization assessment, job description, supporting, and training or improving candidates.

In a business environment, Burke (2002) indicates that there are five principal stages in the succession process: a business case for proactive succession planning, identification of target roles and positions, determination of core competencies and skills, identification and assessment of successor candidates, and leadership developmental programs. The key strength in this process is that it addresses the business case - the environment where the leader is likely to develop his or her roles to the fullest. However, Burke does not mention the effects of the training program or succession planning assessment.

Another view of the succession planning process is discussed by Helton and Jackson (2007). They argue that there are six primary phases in the succession process: identification of the key positions from workforce planning, building of job profiles for each key position, competency gap analysis, development of opportunities, individual development plans, and maintaining a skills inventory (Helton & Jackson 2007). In this approach, the authors suggest that opportunities can be a positive impact on leadership capabilities of the potential candidates. However, the assessment of succession planning effectiveness is not noted by Helton and Jackson.

A more inclusive perspective of succession planning process is seen in Leskiw and Singh’s model. Leskiw and Singh (2007) define six steps with different labels: a thorough needs assessment, the selection of a suitable audience, the design of an appropriate infrastructure to support the initiative, the design and implementation of an entire learning system, an evaluation system, and corresponding actions to reward success and improve deficiencies. These authors highlight the fact that training goes hand in hand with evaluation. However, there is a need for the training step to be clearly operationalized in the process.

A more recent view of the succession process is indicated by Rothwell’s model. Rothwell (2010) suggests seven phases: “commitment making, assessment of present work requirements, appraisement of individual performance, assessment of future work requirements, assessment of future individual potential, closure of the developmental
gap, and evaluation of the succession planning program” (p. 83). Succession planning would probably be more effective if the gap between future requirements and the current talent pool has been identified. The key strength of this model is that the vision of the leader is an effective dimension of leadership and management.

Stadler (2011) presents a simple and succinct definition of the succession planning process by indicating four stages: “leadership needs assessment; successor candidate identification, development and transition; tracking and measurement; and achieve business results” (p. 266). These four processes reveal a simple and clear-cut process for leaders to maintain the quality of an organization.

In nursing research, Shirey (2008) provides a model of succession planning with five steps. First, the organizational need of the senior positions and the evaluation of the current talent pool with regard to organizational vision are identified. Second, candidates who are suitable for the required senior positions are chosen. Practical experience, coaching, and mentoring of these potential candidates is the third step. The fourth step is to evaluate the training results, and the model ends with the evaluation and dissemination of the achievements of succession planning. Although Shirey’s model plays a significant role in health care succession planning, it fails to identify the interrelationship between the existing staff, the developing staff, and the service director (Hampel, Procter & Deuter 2010).

The various succession planning processes presented above are suggested for business and health care environments, but there is little research into the succession planning process in the library and information environment. Holcomb (2006) indicates four steps of succession planning for libraries: “identification of key positions within the organization, evaluation of individual and team performance, prediction of future needs for the organization, and analysis of the effectiveness of the completed plan” (p. 437). Murray (2007) identifies five phases in the library succession process: assessing the current situation, carrying out a risk analysis, identifying high potential individuals, establishing a formal mentoring system, and creating individual development plans. These phases can be a source of reference to address succession planning, particularly mentoring. One year later, in a paper about ‘Growing your own leaders: Succession planning in libraries’, Nixon (2008) claimed that a succession planning process has four
basic steps: analysing the demographics of your key positions, identifying potential employees for lead positions, assessing candidates’ strengths and weaknesses, and developing a training program to build competencies. In this process, Nixon also considered the role that mentoring plays in the succession planning process. More recently, Singer and Griffith present a six-step plan that works for the position of library director. These steps are: assessing the risk, assessing staff for leadership potential, developing an up-to-date job description, appointing a selection committee, planning the search and searching, and identifying an interim library director and transition (Singer, PM & Griffith 2010). In this model, Singer and Griffith consider the development of an up-to-date job description as the third step. This is a significant step because the job description is not only the official document for job activities but also the basis of evaluating and promoting an employee. A flexible and up-to-date job description cannot be absent in the process of succession planning (Pennell 2010).

In contrast to Singer and Griffith, Stueart and Sullivan (2010) suggest a succession planning process with eight steps. The first step is analysing the demographics of the organisation. Identifying replacement needs is the second step. The following step is planning and defining the profiles of ideal performers. Assessing the talents and comparing the strengths and weaknesses of talents with those of the profiles are considered as the fourth and fifth steps. The next step is identifying potential recruits for the organisation. The seventh step is developing potential leaders with on- and off-the-job training programs. The final step is ascertaining the success of the program. All of these eight steps should be conducted systematically to maintain leadership continuity in key positions (Stueart & Sullivan 2010).

As shown, succession planning processes can have different stages; however, they all act to ensure consistency within the practices of an organisation. This consistency is reflected by identifying the requirements of the next generation of leaders, evaluating internal human resources, staffing (internal candidates or external recruitment), training or mentoring, and evaluating the impact of succession planning. Factors such as ‘commitment making’, ‘business case’ or ‘current organization assessment’ are also seen as important for identifying the future leaders. It seems that ‘job description’, ‘creating opportunities’ and ‘training assessment’ also contribute to the evaluation processes of succession planning. These complementary factors put each model in a
unique position compared to others. These processes present a framework of succession planning, outlining the role that leaders play in contributing to the success and sustainability of an organization. However, it is argued in the next section that there are several models that need to be examined more closely.

2.4 Succession planning models

In addition to the succession planning processes indicated above, four models of succession planning are dominant in a business environment. These models include identification and recruitment of potential successors. The first model is recruitment of successors from outside the company. This model brings organizations benefits due to fresh ideas initiated by the external successors. “External source of recruitment involves the recruiting of a greater number of applicants from outside who may bring in new ideas, work techniques and training, all in a bid to increase the productivity of the organization” (Anyim, Ikemefuna & Shadare 2011). The second model is choosing potential internal successors who can be groomed for future positions by training, coaching, or mentoring them in managerial skills and knowledge so that they can be prepared and feel more confident to perform their future job (Currie & Grundy 2011; Williams 2010). This model is cost saving and helps to build a strong loyalty within employees as they can move up to higher positions (Anyim, Ikemefuna & Shadare 2011). The third model is “horse race” succession where a company creates opportunities in which two or more internal candidates compete for the top spot (Davidson et al. 2006). The fourth model is training internal candidates and evaluating them in comparison with external candidates (Emerton 2009; Murphy 2010). These four models allow for an in-depth understanding of how recruitment of candidates for top positions.

In the library and information sector, two models of succession planning have been discussed prominently in the literature. Murray (2007) and Nixon (2008) indicate that libraries should grow their own future leaders by identifying potential in-house candidates and providing them with proper training and mentoring for their future positions. Growing a library’s own leaders does not only save costs but also encourages library staff to perform their tasks better and develop through their achievements.
Growing their own leaders also creates a sense of engagement and retention with employees in a library (Simpson & West 2014). In contrast, in research conducted by Galbraith, Smith and Walker (2012) library employees indicated that they strongly preferred external leaders because outside candidates can bring a fresh perspective and new ideas into the library. In addition, external recruitment aims to bring new candidates with capacity and desire to develop and advance into the organisation (Deards & Springs 2014). Although external leaders are preferred, recruitment of internal candidates for key positions brings its own advantages, and suggests that this internal recruitment sustains staff morale and promotes stronger collegial performance (Galbraith and Smith 2012).

2.5 Recent research on library succession planning

Library succession planning was first addressed in the 1990s, later than in other industries, when research into succession planning practices expanded to educational institutions, government, non-profit organizations, health care, and small businesses (Rothwell & Kazanas 2003). However, there is limited literature on succession planning in libraries compared with other industries. Research into library succession planning is necessary for library leaders to benefit from knowing how to identify, recruit, and nurture the next generation of leaders. No literature that specifically discusses library succession planning within the Vietnamese context was traced and there is limited literature on this topic in Western countries. Most research deals with the importance of succession planning and challenges (Arnold, Nickel & Williams 2008; Bridgland 1999; Galbraith, Smith & Walker 2012; Leibman, Bruer & Maki 1996; Munde 2010; Murray 2007; Nixon 2008; Singer, P, Goodrich & Goldberg 2004; Singer, PM & Griffith 2010; Topper 2008; Whitmell 2002). Some research discusses general aspects of succession planning, such as how libraries respond to preparation for future leadership (Fitsimmons 2013; Galbraith, Smith & Walker 2012; Maser 2009; McMahan, Jennifer & Masias, Michele 2009), how to develop and evaluate a succession planning program (Brunero, Kerr & Jastrzab 2009; Lipscomb, Martin & Peay 2009; Maser 2009; Romaniuk & Haycock 2011; Webster & Young 2009; Wilson, K & Corrall 2008), and the role of flexible job descriptions in succession planning (Pennell 2010; Simpson & West 2014).
Singer, P, Goodrich and Goldberg (2004) indicate that succession planning is essential because it can smooth the transition whenever leaders leave. Succession planning in libraries should be considered for an aging workforce (Franks 2012; Hartman & Delaney 2010; Walt & Plessis 2010). Succession planning is a long-term process that involves every library staff member; however, it is a challenging one. Leibman, Bruer and Maki (1996) indicate that the biggest challenge of succession planning is the “unavailability of key people at the appropriate time and overlooking development opportunities such as challenging work assignments, mentoring and feedback” (p. 19). These ideas are supported by Whitmell (2002) who states that identifying the right person to fit the corresponding position, or lacking qualified candidates, are perhaps the real concerns. In addition, four other challenges indicated by Bridgland (1999) are: lack of support from top-down policies, poor vision of succession planning, excessive paperwork, and many meetings. Another challenge is that if retraining, retaining, and recruiting are ignored in the organization with regard to management, the result will be a small talent pool for succession planning (Munde 2010). The themes of problem of succession, identification of future leaders, and the development of those leaders were also presented and discussed in the 2008 American Library Association Midwinter meeting (Boock 2008).

In terms of how to prepare future leadership, Hicks and Given (2013) claim that library and information management programs should include leadership training - one of librarianship’s core competencies - in the curricula so as to prepare students to be future leaders during the time they are at school. Hicks and Given also state that discourse of leadership is necessary because it enhances library students’ capacity to deal with change at their future workplaces and to move the profession forward. In libraries, leaders should create opportunities for staff to learn what they want, flexibly (Whitmell 2002). Whitmell further argues that library leaders should provide opportunities for their staff to advance up the career ladder. In addition, upgrading job descriptions is also necessary because it helps to evaluate and select qualified candidates for succession planning (Pennell 2010).

Two recent books discuss library succession planning. In Succession planning in the library: Developing leaders, managing change, Singer, PM and Griffith (2010) discuss succession planning and the development process of succession planning with three
phases: identifying and assessing talent, creating succession plans, and creating and implementing individual development plans. Singer and Griffith also suggest a plan for an upcoming vacancy of the library director’s position. However, this book is more focused on public libraries than academic libraries. In Developing library leaders: A how to-do it manual for coaching, team building and mentoring library staff, Stueart and Sullivan (2010) carefully explain the differences between leadership and management. Most importantly, Stueart and Sullivan focus on coaching, building teams, and mentoring library staff for leadership continuity in academic libraries. One chapter concentrates on succession planning and development. However, the authors only address the definition of succession planning, strategies, approaches, leaders’ role, accessing competencies, and key criteria for an effective program of succession planning. Matters relating to succession planning challenges, how to deal with them, and the succession planning process are not discussed.

Beside these two books, another publication presents tools to develop employees into future library leaders - Leadership primer for new librarians by Byke and Lowe-Wincentsen (2008). Byke and Lowe-Wincentsen emphasize that library employees can train themselves to be future leaders if they want to. Employees can learn through experience or challenge themselves by taking a leadership role. Another way can be that employees can share experiences with other colleagues so that they can prove their potential for key positions. The most important thing is that they should learn to be a good follower before training themselves to be a good leader. In library courses students learn about the library profession and leadership skills; however, their leadership skills need to be trained through practice.

### 2.6 Overview of leadership theories

Various leadership theories have been discussed extensively in academic literature from different points of view. In this section, four main aspects of leadership theories are considered: personal traits, performance, situation, and relationships.

With regard to leaders’ personal traits or characteristics, ‘Great man theory’ and ‘Trait theory’ emphasize innate leadership. In a guide to becoming a leader, Sheldon (2010)
indicates that “Napoleon would rather have an army of rabbits led by a lion, than an army of lions led by a rabbit” (p. 5). This concept strongly privileges the role of the leader as a powerful and decisive person – a “great man”. These leaders emerge in their community or society as a result of their naturally superior characteristics. ‘Trait theory’ has been around for over a century. It contends that leaders are different from non-leaders based on various attributes and personal traits (Bass & Bass 2008). Trait theory identifies a leader as having outstanding qualities such as ‘intelligence, self-confidence, determination, integrity and sociability’ (Crawford-Mathis 2009). These characteristics can be used by human resource departments to predict how successful and effective leaders are. However, this theory has not determined a comprehensive list of all traits that are needed to be a good leader, and researchers continue to explore the most helpful traits for today’s leaders (Hernon & Rossiter 2007). Leadership skills include interpersonal skills and rapport, skills in conflict resolution, assertiveness, and time management (Sutton & Booth 2012). Recently, more research has been conducted to not only pinpoint the required traits, characteristics and qualities that leaders must possess, but also prove that leaders’ traits or characteristics can be gained through learning and training (Hernon 2011; Hernon, Giesecke & Alire 2007; Hernon, Powell & Young 2003; Jordan 2012; Stueart & Sullivan 2010). Furthermore, McElrath (2009) indicates that many people can improve their own leadership skills and learn other required leadership skills if they want to be leaders. These researchers give evidence that people are not necessarily born to be leaders but can learn to be leaders.

As far as performance is concerned, employees’ performances will help a leader decide which leadership style should be applied and how to motivate employees to contribute more. In 1960, Douglas McGregor’s ‘Theory X and Theory Y’ was developed to view followers in two ways. Theory X symbolized followers as lazy, passive and pessimistic, where the leaders must be bossy, pushy and autocratic to push ahead. In contrast, Theory Y presented employees as active, optimistic and creative, allowing leaders to feel free to let them do their jobs their own way (McGregor 1960). Victor Vroom’s ‘Expectancy theory’ in 1964 explains that leaders have to use rewards to motivate followers and to satisfy their needs (Hernon & Rossiter 2007). In applying this theory leaders should know what kinds of rewards are suitable for certain types of staff. The right reward, which may just be words of praise at the right time in the right place, will be more effective than any other kinds of awards. Ten years later (in 1974), ‘Path-goal
theory’ developed by Robert House and Terence Mitchell determined a new way of leading people by setting a path of group goals for staff to follow (House & Mitchell 1974). In this theory, leaders show their followers what to do and how to do their work to fulfil the organizational goals and objectives. In this model, leaders tend to be more creative, while followers have less responsibility and tend to be passive. However, in reality, leaders can wisely apply this theory by soliciting contributions from their followers in planning the road to their goals. As a result, followers may be more active and enthusiastic in following their own developed plan instead of being directed by the leaders’ plan.

With regard to leadership, there is a wide range of different leadership styles for particular situations or stances. There are two theories to be considered: ‘Contingency theory’ and ‘Situational theory’. These theories explain that the most successful leaders have the capability of applying different leadership styles to specific situations.

‘Contingency theory’, developed by Frederick Fiedler in 1967, claims that a leader’s success relies on both the leader’s personality and the situation. To check if this type of leadership was successful, Fielder uses the ‘Least Preferred Coworker’ scale. This scale is used to identify if a leader's leadership style is relation-oriented or task-oriented. The test results show whether leaders are motivated by relationships or task-based on low or high scales. Also in 1967, Bill Reddin announced his 3-D management style theory, which mainly focuses on situations, in particular organization, technology, superiors, co-workers, and followers. These theories indicate that is important for leaders to prepare or plan ahead for effective management in their workplace. In 1969, Paul Hersey and Ken Blanchard developed Reddin’s theory into ‘Situational theory’. Hersey and Blanchard emphasize leaders’ flexibility in changing their style to meet the requirements of a situation (Hersey & Blanchard 1982).

With regard to the last aspect of leadership, the interrelationship between leaders and staff is considered key for leadership successes. Leadership is the process of building relationships that, in turn, motivate or encourage employer and employees to reach higher levels of performance. Academic literature indicates different kinds of relationships including work-based relationships, professional relationships, networking relationships, and community relationships. Two theories developed from the idea of relationships are ‘Leader–member exchange theory’ and ‘Transformational theory’.
‘Leader–member exchange theory’ focuses on the mutual relationship between leaders and staff, the focal point of the leadership process. This relationship is constructed based on three dimensions - respect, trust, and obligation from both directions - and goes through three phases - stranger, acquaintance, and partner (Northouse 2007). The second theory, ‘Transformational theory’ was developed by James Burns in 1978. Burns’ transformational theory is discussed in more detail in the following section.

### 2.7 Transformational leadership theory

Before studying Burns’ transformational leadership theory, it is necessary to understand the concepts of transformation and transformational leadership which convey the core value of this theory. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, to transform means to undergo a change of form or nature: to change. Transformation is the action of changing in form, shape or appearance (*Oxford English dictionary* 2012). More specifically, transformation is a process of changing in form, appearance, nature or character. So, the purpose of transformation is to “change” or “create the new thing, the new function”. This definition helps us understand the concept of “transformational leadership”.

Transformational leadership is a process that changes and transforms people (Burns 1978) and “is more likely to focus on change and actions that challenge the status quo and may therefore thrive in a relatively uncertain and unstable environment” (Oke, Munshi & Walumbwa 2009, p. 66). Transformational leadership relates to motivation and morale of followers through a process that meets their needs in a fair way (Northouse 2007). Through daily activity, work, behaviours, and beliefs, transformational leaders can influence their followers by demonstrating personal integrity and developing trust. Transformational leaders aim to convey or sell their vision to their followers (McMurray et al. 2012). Whenever the followers “own” their leader’s vision they are more likely to contribute effort and energy to pursue it and make changes. A transformational leader’s success can be measured by followers’ changes. The changes may only be small ones, such as collaboration among team members to reach team goals, acceptance of a new idea for a procedure initiated by an employee, or even personal interests which support organizational interests. These changes, regardless of volume, level or speed, all contribute to organizational development and may lead to more trust or other evidence that followers are changing in light of their leader’s vision.
In 1978, James McGregor Burns developed ‘Transformational theory’, which emphasizes the two-way relationship between leaders and followers. Leaders are responsible for creating more opportunities and motivating followers to reach their goals their own way or with their own approaches (Sheldon 2010). In 1985, Bernard M. Bass added to Burns’ theory the idea of how transformational leadership could be measured, as well as how it impacts followers’ motivation and performance (Bass 1985). Both Burns and Bass guide leaders in change procedures which may increase the value for both followers and leader. However, Burns and Bass have different ideas about change in their transformational leadership. As the initiator of this theory, Burns defined transformational leadership as a process where leaders and followers engage in a mutual process of raising one another to higher levels of morality and motivation (Bass & Riggio 2006). In this definition, Burns explained that in transformational leadership, both leaders and followers contribute to the procedure to improve values and inspiration. Transformational leaders should lead by modelling. They must be the examples of the values they are trying to develop in their followers. These values are identified as both social and spiritual. With regard to social values, transformational leaders create a greater relationship with the community, contribute more to professional networking, and have more communication to the media. For spiritual values, transformational leaders attempt to promote work-life balance and motivate followers’ enthusiasm.

In contrast to Burns, who believes transformational leadership is opposite to transactional leadership (Burns 1978), Bass indicated that transformational and transactional leadership are two positively correlated dimensions (Bass 1985). Burns later agreed that transformational and transactional leadership are not opposite ends of a single dimension, but multidimensional (Bass 1985). Bass emphasizes the role of leaders in transformational leadership. Leaders have to influence followers through trust, admiration, and respect (Bass & Bass 2008). In order to create these influences, transformational leaders need to train, coach, or mentor followers so that the followers recognize that their work and contributions are valuable to the organization’s development (Markgren et al. 2007), therefore giving them more identity and bringing them more personal benefits.
2.7.1 Components of transformational leadership theory

In transformational leadership theory, Bass and other authors indicate four components of the process of influence: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Bass & Avolio 1994; Eli Konorti 2008; Givens 2008; Lippstreu 2010). Avolio and Bass (2002) explain further:

First, leadership is idealized when followers seek to identify with their leaders and emulate them. Second, the leadership inspires the followers with challenge and persuasion that provide meaning and understanding. Third, the leadership is intellectually stimulating, expanding the followers’ use of their abilities. Finally, the leadership is individually considerate and provides the followers with support, mentoring, and coaching (p.2).

**Idealized influence**

In this component, transformational leaders should be the role models for followers to emulate. The leaders should demonstrate their willingness to take risks, consistent behavior, and high levels of integrity and ethics. Moreover, effectiveness of influence depends on moral aspects. Three moral aspects are emphasized in Bass’ transformational leadership: the leaders’ morality; morality in their visions; and the morality in carrying out every process of the organization (Bass & Bass 2008). It can be inferred that morality involves the engagement and collaborative process between leaders and followers. Sendjaya (2005) indicates the role morality plays in leadership. If a leader cannot judge things in the right ways, staff members are not convinced to make any commitment to the organization. Barsh and Lisewski (1997) suggest that morality helps library leaders shape the ethical climate in the organisation and deal with conflicts of interest in managing employees. Leaders’ morality exerts a strong influence on employees as indicated by Kaptein (2013): “In organisations, directors, managers and leaders are important role models for the behaviour of others within and around the organisation” (p. 44). Morality also impacts leaders’ ethical thinking and decision-making as well as employees’ ethical conducts (Huppenbauer & Tanner 2013). Therefore, leaders need to realize the role that ethical values play in leadership (Bass & Steidlmeier 1999).
Inspirational motivation

Transformational leaders should transfer the library vision, a sense of purpose and direction of the library to followers so that they can plan to fulfill this function. Muenich and Williams (2013) state that leaders inspire commitment to the vision of the organization through high expectations and using encouraging words. Through this commitment, leaders can build up trust and have a positive influence on their employees. Omar and Hussin (2013) suggest that leaders should use the simplest possible way to explain the meaning and the importance of the vision so that their employees can understand and follow.

Intellectual stimulation

This component requires transformational leaders to provide followers with challenging assignments to stimulate and encourage their creative and innovative capabilities. Singer, P, Goodrich and Goldberg (2004) indicate that library leaders can provide specific opportunities for potential candidates to practice skills in order to bridge gaps in their knowledge relevant to future leadership positions. In addition, Singer and his colleagues claim that library leaders can provide challenging assignments for their candidates’ learning. Challenging tasks are an opportunity to help employees think independently and increase their job satisfaction (Omar & Hussin 2013). Hartman and Delaney (2010) suggest that library employees should be involved in a variety of short-term projects, not only to hone their skills, but also to be involved with many people in the organisation.

Individualized consideration

Transformational leaders should coach or mentor staff members for their professional development. They should provide learning opportunities to satisfy followers’ unique needs and desires. Arnold, Nickel and Williams (2008) confirm that mentoring can be an extremely important aspect of librarians’ careers because it can inspire them to leadership. Mentoring ensures that the expertise of current library leaders is passed on to those who will follow. Similarly, Hartman and Delaney (2010) indicate that mentoring is also an effective way to retain valuable skills and knowledge of experienced
librarians before their retirement. Experience of library financial issues can be shared through mentoring (Hernon 2010; Mavrinac 2005), and furthermore, Sears (2014) indicates that “effective mentoring programs can help develop the potential of current employees and increase the size of the pool of candidates for promotion” (p. 129).

2.7.2 Why transformational leadership theory is suitable for succession planning

As indicated above, there are several leadership theories that may underpin succession planning. These include ‘great man’ theory, ‘trait’ theory, and ‘expectancy’ theory. While ‘great man’ theory and ‘trait’ theory are centred on innate characteristics of the leaders, ‘expectancy’ theory focuses on motivation. ‘Expectancy’ theory suggests that leaders of an organization respond to the expectations of employees and their performance. It does not address how leaders may influence and consider staff ideals. Transformational leadership theory addresses these issues and is relevant to this study.

First, transformational leadership theory reflects how leaders implement a library vision in relation to succession planning. This is indicated by McMurray et al. (2012). In engaging staff interest in effective performance, Palestini (2009) states that the process of developing a vision is not complex and education is considered as one way to approach it. In Palestini’s study, library leaders completed certain steps, such as developing a list of broad goals, merging and prioritising them, then summarising them into short vision statements. However, the most important step in this process is institutionalising the library vision so that “the vision endures when leadership changes” (Palestini 2009, p.19). By employing such strategies, leaders can inspire their successors to change their perceptions in order to commit themselves to contributing to the benefits of the organization and community.

Second, transformational leadership refers to the need to foster empowerment with regard to organizational restructuring (Conger 1999). Therefore empowerment is believed to play a major role in how leaders undertake succession planning processes. In other words, leaders need to identify what they can do and to identify if their capacities match intended managerial positions.
Third, transformational leadership “motivates employees to look beyond their own self-interest and to be of benefit to the organization or work-centre” (Parry 1996, p. 33). Thus, the extent to which a leader is ‘transformational’ can be explained in relation to staff motivation and performance, and the organizational goals.

Fourth, transformational leadership involves personal change. Northouse (2007) indicates that “transformational leadership is a process that changes and transforms people. It is concerned with emotions, values, ethics, standards and long term goals and includes assessing followers’ motives, satisfying their needs and treating them as full human beings” (p. 175).

Finally, “transformational leadership creates valuable and positive change in the followers with the end goal of developing followers into leaders” (Lin 2012, p. 38). This statement encapsulates why, in addition to the reasons given above, transformational leadership is considered relevant as a theoretical framework for this study of succession planning.

2.8 The leadership role of the Communist Party of Vietnam

According to Marxist-Leninist doctrine, the Socialist Republic of Vietnam came into being as a result of social struggle which was carried out by the working class, the farmers, and the intellectuals under the leadership of the Communist Party of Vietnam. The Communist Party of Vietnam is the vanguard of the Vietnamese working class, the faithful representative of the interests of the working class, labour, and of the whole nation. Therefore, leadership by the Communist Party of the state of Vietnam is inevitable. In the book Duong Kach Menh [Revolution path] published in 1927, Ho Chi Minh indicated that the Party plays an important role in leading the revolution successfully (Nguyen, AQ 2013).

The leadership role of the Communist Party of Vietnam is presented in the Constitution of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, the most powerful document of the nation. This role has been clarified through five amendments to the Constitution: 1946, 1959, 1980,
1992 and 2013. In the first Constitution of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam in 1946, the role of the Communist Party was not mentioned (Democratic Republic of Vietnam 1946). Since the Constitution of 1959, the role of the Communist Party has been visible. This Constitution affirmed the leadership role of the Labour Party (the former name of the Communist Party) in building socialism in the North of Vietnam and implementing unification for the whole country (Democratic Republic of Vietnam 1959). The Constitution in 1980 indicated that the Communist Party of Vietnam is the only leading political force of the state, and a decisive factor in the society (Socialist Republic of Vietnam 1980). The role of the Communist Party has been reaffirmed in the Constitution of 1992 as the only leading political force of the country (Socialist Republic of Vietnam 1992). Recently, the 2013 Constitution stated that the Communist Party of Vietnam is a party of the people, by the people and for the people (Socialist Republic of Vietnam 2013). It is therefore responsible for the legitimate rights and interests of Vietnamese people, as indicated by Bui (2014), Le, HN (2013) and Hoang, CB (2014) also confirm the role top leaders play in making appropriate decisions and policies within the framework of the Constitution and the law in response to the needs of the people and its activities.

The role of the Communist Party of Vietnam can be viewed through four political platforms and three charters of the party. The first brief political platform in February 1930 indicated that the leadership role of the Communist Party is the decisive factor for the victory of the Vietnamese revolution (Le, MQ 2011). In October 1930, the second political platform, namely the Indo-Chinese political platform, was born. It emphasized the role of the Indo-Chinese Communist Party in leading the civil rights revolution in Indo-China with the main force of workers, farmers and soldiers (Le, MH 2011). However, there was a mistake in this second platform because of the viewpoint of the compiler. In this political platform the intellectuals, students and bourgeoisie were excluded from the class struggle of the Vietnamese people (Dao 2009). This mistake was corrected in the third political platform (released in February 1951). It indicated the crucial role of the Labour Party, the only leading Party among every social class in Vietnam (Labour Party of Vietnam 1951). The fourth platform (released in June 1991) declared the leadership role of the Communist Party in transforming Vietnam into a socialist state (Communist Party of Vietnam 1991a). All of these political platforms
determined the important role of the Communist Party in leading the country through each historical timeline.

The leadership role of the Communist Party has been more visible through the charter of the Communist Party which has been emended every ten years. First, the charter of the Communist Party in 1991 indicated that the party leads the state through its political platform. In addition, the party introduces qualified employees into state agencies and government organizations (Communist Party of Vietnam 1991b). Secondly, the charter of the Communist Party in 2001 made clear the role of the party. It stated that the party leads the state and the political-social unions (Communist Party of Vietnam 2001a). Finally, the charter of the Communist Party in 2011 indicated its role in leading the state, the Vietnamese Fatherland Front, and the political-social unions (Communist Party of Vietnam 2011c).

2.9 The Communist Party of Vietnam and librarianship

The Communist Party of Vietnam has paid much attention to librarianship development. This is clearly shown in the documents of each National Congress of the Communist Party of Vietnam. Strategies for library development were based on the social-economic condition of the country in each historical stage.

In 1957, the President of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam enacted a resolution on cultural and social work in the process of consolidation of the north and the struggle for national reunification. The resolution stated a need to establish more bookcases, information houses and culture clubs in the communities. In addition, it also affirmed the leadership role of the Communist Party in culture and arts (Nguyen, AQ 1957).

In the 1st National Congress, the Communist Party of Indochina directed the organisation of night classes and reading clubs in order to help farmers out of illiteracy (Central Committee 1938).

The 3rd National Congress of the Communist Party of Vietnam was held in 1960 when the whole country was involved in two revolutions: the Socialist construction revolution
in the north and the national liberation revolution in the south. In terms of social and cultural development in the north, the party determined to focus on library and museum development. In particular, the party indicated, “The existing libraries need to be expanded, more libraries will be built at the factory areas and in towns, and the movement of reading by the masses needs to be expanded” (Communist Party of Vietnam 1960, p. 70). In the south, the biggest change was the integration of four libraries (the Southern Library, Hanoi General Library in the south, Children Library, and Dalat National Library) into the National Library of the Republic of Vietnam. This integration was necessary to establish a headquarter for managing all libraries in the south (Vo 1996).

In 1976, the 4th National Congress of the Communist Party of Vietnam took place when Vietnam was completely independent. This Congress paved the way to implement social revolution across the country. With regard to social and cultural developments, the Party stated that libraries, seen as culture centres, should be built in every part of the country. These aimed to promote literacy and enjoyment of reading (Communist Party of Vietnam 1977).

In the political report of the Central Party Committee at the 5th National Congress of the Communist Party of Vietnam on March 27, 1982, the General Secretary reported that culture, arts, exhibitions, libraries, clubs, and houses of culture continued to be expanded. In addition, he indicated that construction of houses of culture, cinemas, libraries, and stadiums in districts and communes had formed a network with the function of developing and disseminating new culture in rural areas (Le, D 1982).

The 6th National Congress of the Communist Party of Vietnam in 1986 was considered as a Congress of “innovation” – Doi Moi. It reaffirmed the determination to comprehensively make innovations in the economy, society and politics. It was intended to lay the foundation for finding the appropriate way to approach socialism in Vietnam. In terms of culture and arts, the Party stated that libraries are also the venues for lifelong learning so that everyone can get access to new technology, knowledge, and information needed for their own needs and interests (Communist Party of Vietnam 1986).
In 1993, Vietnam was in the process of innovation and construction of a market economy. The 4th Plenum of the 7th Central Party Committee outlined some tasks of culture and art work in the years ahead. It required the restoration and development of every library system, including the National Library with an international stature, in order to meet the intellectual development of the people (Do 1993).

The 5th Plenum of the 8th Party Central Committee decided to build and develop Vietnamese advanced culture, imbued with national identity. It indicated that libraries and information services must be built and developed to contribute to business and cultural development (Le, KP 1998).

In the stage of industrialization and modernization of the country in 2001-2010, the strategy was to promote the power of the entire nation, continue to innovate, and promote the construction and defence of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. The Central Committee of the 9th National Congress of the Communist Party of Vietnam indicated the importance of building new libraries in order to gather and distribute information to the community as well as preserve the national culture heritage (Central Committee 2001).

In 2006, the 10th National Congress of the Communist Party of Vietnam recognised the increasingly important role of libraries in Vietnam, a developing country. With this vision, lifting Vietnam out of an underdeveloped status to keep up with other developed countries is a real and urgent demand. It is for this reason that the Party further affirmed the urgent need for investing in building more libraries, as well as similar intellectual sites, to encourage all walks of life in Vietnam to read, appreciate, and preserve cultural heritage (Communist Party of Vietnam 2006).

Recently, the 11th National Congress of the Communist Party of Vietnam in 2011 aimed at continuing to enhance the leadership capacity of the Party in transferring Vietnam into an industrialized country by 2020 (Communist Party of Vietnam 2011f). In its strategies of economic and social development 2011-2020, the Party emphasised the construction and upgrading of the system of cultural institutions such as libraries and information services to enhance the cultural enjoyment of the people (Communist Party of Vietnam 2011a).
Beside the documents of the National Congresses, the Party issued directives related to library development. For example, Circular No.30-VH/TT dated March 17, 1971 provided guidelines for library operation and development as well as determination of the leadership role of the Communist Party in librarianship (Hoang, MG 1971). In relation to criteria for library leaders, Decision No. 428/QĐ dated June 2, 1993 by the Minister of Culture and Information on promulgating professional standards in culture and information sciences was made effective. In this decision, the required professional standard for public and academic library leaders is at least a bachelor’s degree of library and information science. Anyone qualified in other industries must be trained in the equivalent library and information science bachelor’s programs (Organising Committee 1993). Directive No. 14-CT/TW dated August 25, 2004 indicated that the State enact policies to raise more funding for books in order to make sure everyone can get access to available resources (Secretariat 2004). Decision No. 10/2007/QĐ/BVHTT dated May 4, 2005 provided a development plan for librarianship to the year 2020. This decision also affirmed that library activities are placed under the leadership of the Party and the unified management of the state (Ministry of Culture and Information 2007). The Prime Minister enacted decision No. 581/QD-TTg dated May 5, 2009, approving a strategy for cultural development till 2020, including a strategy to strengthen and increase library activities (Nguyen, TN 2009). Furthermore, the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism and the Ministry of Information and Communications signed a coordination program to increase the organisation and operation of making books and newspapers available at post offices and community cultural houses in the period of 2013-2020 (Ministry of Culture Sports and Tourism & Ministry of Information and Communications 2013). All directives emphasized the leadership role of the Communist party in developing libraries for intellectual, cultural, and social development.

2.10 Summary

As discussed in the sections above, succession planning is the process of preparation for potential managerial positions. Research suggests that it goes through different stages and requires contributions from different types of employees at all levels. Succession planning should be considered from the time of recruitment of employees to identification of potential for higher positions in the future. In the process, various
theories may be suitable to apply to successful succession planning. Burns and Bass’ transformational leadership theory is suitable as the theoretical framework for the context of succession planning. The core value of transformation can guide every activity in the process of changing a general employee into a potential leader. Although foundational research on succession planning in a library and information environment has been undertaken, it has not been applied in Vietnam where library leadership and succession planning is currently not strong. There is a particular need for a suitable model of succession planning process for library and information organizations to guide library leaders in preparing for the next generation of leadership – both in Vietnam and globally. Importantly, the Communist Party of Vietnam – the only leading political party of the nation – addresses its leadership role in the library and information sector through Congress meetings, circulars, and decisions in order to maintain and develop national culture, improve community services, and unify management from the top to the grassroots.
Chapter Three  METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This research project into library leadership and succession planning was conducted with four academic and thirteen public libraries in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam. The research used a multi-method case study approach, including an online survey with 172 responses and twenty-three in-depth interviews. This chapter first provides an introduction to case study methodology and a description of the multi-method approaches applied in this research. Next, the research population and samples are described. Instrumentation, research design and data collection are also addressed. The research procedures included a questionnaire, an online pilot survey, a substantive online survey, and in-depth interviews. This chapter also discusses the treatment of the data, research rigour, and ethical considerations. Finally, the chapter concludes with the limitations and delimitations of the study.

3.2 Case studies

Case studies were considered to be the most appropriate methodology for this study. The rationale for this centres on obtaining rich, detailed, and in-depth information (Berg 2009) and describing context-based phenomena (Yin 2011). Case studies provided an in-depth understanding of the reality of library succession planning in Vietnam by addressing several key matters, including challenges and conducting evaluations of current library succession planning (Yin 2012). Drawing on the understanding of case studies, the researcher used a case study approach for three reasons. First, case studies allowed for evaluation of current library succession planning. Case studies can consider the background, development, current conditions, and environmental interactions of one or more individuals, groups, communities, businesses, or institutions and are observed, recorded, and analysed for stages or patterns in relation to internal and external influences (Mauch, J E & Birch 1993). So, in this research study, two cases (public libraries and academic libraries) were considered to identify how leader-employee interactions are effected in the developmental and operational processes of succession planning. Second, case studies enhance and assist in understanding relevant contexts
and processes. They also assist in knowing what causes a phenomenon, how to link causes and outcomes, and, where necessary, to develop new research questions (Denzin & Lincoln 2011). Third, case studies facilitate the ability to provide answers to the “how” and “why” questions (Yin 2002). Case studies therefore helped the researcher to understand the challenging issues of library succession planning within the setting of Vietnamese culture.

Of the three different types of case studies considered—intrinsic, instrumental, and collective (Berg & Lune 2012)—collective case studies, also known as multiple-case studies (Merriam 2001), are relevant to the research context. Case studies can include both qualitative and quantitative approaches (Berg 2009). Using both quantitative and qualitative approaches can lead to richer data for the research. Qualitative methods are rigorous and extremely systematic (Berg 2006). Qualitative data allows for detailed description of the information embedded within the context of the research, while quantitative data provides factual information that may be generalisable. Qualitative data were obtained from interview responses and one open-ended question in the online survey. This enabled the researcher to gain in-depth perspectives of what succession planning is and how it can be structured.

### 3.2.1 Qualitative research

There are four key characteristics of qualitative research. The first characteristic is that it is naturalistic (Berg 2006). Thus, as library succession planning is socially situated, what it is and how it is conducted in a particular culture and environment is taken into account. The second major feature involves thick description of the setting (Mauch, J E & Park 2003); therefore, detailed information about library succession planning can be collected. The term ‘thick description’ here refers to the detailed account of the case being studied. Qualitative research allows for detailed information about how others structure their work over time (Berg & Lune 2012). This approach assisted the researcher to understand how leaders develop and operationalize succession planning in their organizations, including their work procedures and implementation. Finally, qualitative research focuses on meaning (Yin 2011). As the nature of knowledge is inherently contextualized, it is important that others’ views about the work of library leaders should be considered. In particular, through semi-structured interviews, the
researcher can investigate the extent to which the library leaders’ work was made explicit.

3.2.2 Quantitative research

Quantitative research was also applied in this study. First, a quantitative approach can systematically measure and compare across cases of specified variables (Goertz & Mahoney 2012). In this study, pairs of variables related to succession planning in academic and public libraries were cross-analysed to establish themes for the in-depth interviews. Second, in descriptive research, quantitative approaches help to describe the relationships between two variables without speculating about the cause (Hoy 2010). The context of library leadership and succession planning is suitable for descriptive research. For instance, there is a relationship between library leaders and potential successors, but potential successors do not automatically become library leaders. A quantitative approach assisted the researcher to establish these relationships so as to inform the themes used in the individual interviews. Third, quantitative research studies aim to classify features, count them, and construct statistical models in an attempt to explain what is observed (Punch 2005; VanderStoep 2009). In this study, quantitative data were used to explain the role of succession planning in libraries and the role of staff participation, and integrated with narrative data from the interviews to build a theoretical model for a library succession planning process.

3.3 Multi-method approach

A variety of terms have been used in the literature to refer to mixed-methods research. They include multiple-methods, multi-method, blended research, and triangulated studies (Harrison 2013). The terms mixed-methods and multi-method are understood somewhat differently by researchers. Hesse-Biber contends that both multi-method and mixed-methods can be used to interpret qualitative and quantitative data to answer the research questions in specific contexts (Hesse-Biber 2010). However, Harrison (2012) and Morse (2003) define differences between these two terms. Morse states that multi-method research involves multiple types of qualitative inquiry (e.g. interviews and
observations) or different sources of quantitative inquiry (e.g. surveys and experiments), whereas mixed-methods is the combination of the two types of data (Morse 2003).

The multi-method approach, as defined by Hesse-Biber (2010), was utilized in the study. The researcher used five features enabled by multi-method research: description of rich data, increased validity, a greater understanding of the findings of the study, sustainability, and future initiatives. Each of these features is described in more detail below.

First, with more than one method, the researcher was able to collect rich and reliable data rather than relying on a single method. According to Hossain (2012), “the combination of two approaches may complement each other and help in overcoming the limitations of using one method” (p. 149). In this study, a survey provided mostly quantitative information about existing library succession planning in the Mekong Delta. The information included whether succession planning was present, how important it was in the libraries, and the nature of who was involved in the succession planning process or what managerial positions should be considered in succession planning. This quantitative approach did not fully address why library succession planning was desirable in the Mekong Delta region, what challenges there were, or how library leaders implemented succession planning in their organizations. These requirements suited an in-depth interview approach that was developed to answer various types of “why” questions. Interviews could add detailed information in a way that improved the quality of the data relating to the succession planning process. Data from these two approaches were integrated to respond to the research questions.

Second, triangulation, that is collecting data from a variety of sources such as questionnaire and interviews, was necessary to increase the validity of the research results (Wilson, V 2014). Data obtained from surveys using quantitative analysis were therefore crosschecked against, and enhanced the validity of, the interview responses. In this study, data related to the role of succession planning, the role of the Communist Party, and individual participation in library succession planning was reinforced by responses from the interviews. Therefore, triangulation provided quantitative and qualitative data to corroborate the research findings (Zohrabi 2013).
Third, the multi-method approach further enhanced understanding of the findings from both qualitative and quantitative data through analysis and interpretation. A multi-method approach can mitigate against the mono-method bias in research (Brewer 2006) and is used to allow for more comprehensive understandings of the content (McKendrick 1999). Fourth, multi-method research creates extensive data. In this study, the findings of the online survey informed the construction of the questionnaire for the individual interviews. Fifth, a significant feature of using a multi-method approach is related to the concept of initiatives (Greene & et al. 1989). In multi-method research, “the apparent contradictions between findings led to new initiation” (Hammond 2005, p. 253). The findings of the study are expected to inform the initiation of a model of a succession planning process in Vietnam.

3.4 Research population and samples

The population and samples of this research were the employees from all thirteen public and four selected academic libraries in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam. They were invited to participate in the online survey through email forwarded by the library directors. The structure and scale measure of the online survey is discussed in detail in Section 3.7 (Data collection). There were 172 responses; however, it is not easy to know exactly how many potential participants were invited because the researcher does not know to whom the library directors forwarded the email. The approximate number of employees in thirteen public and four academic libraries was about 339, as determined from the websites of these libraries and personal emails (see Appendix 1). Therefore, the response rate was about 50.7% which is an adequate rate (Kittleson 1997; Krejcie & Morgan 1970; Sue & Ritter 2007). According to Kittleson (1997) a response rate of 50% is adequate, a 60% response rate is good, and a 70% response rate is considered very good. Respondents consisted of 110 females (64%) and sixty-two males (36%). Among these respondents (see Table 3.1), there were eighty-three responses from public libraries with fifty-seven females (68.7%) and twenty-six males (31.3%); and eighty-nine responses from academic libraries with fifty-three females (59.6%) and thirty-six males (40.4%).
Table 3.1  Gender of respondents by library type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Public library</th>
<th>Academic library</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>26 (31.3%)</td>
<td>36 (40.4%)</td>
<td>62 (36%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>57 (68.7%)</td>
<td>53 (59.6%)</td>
<td>110 (64%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>83 (100%)</td>
<td>89 (100%)</td>
<td>172 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The respondents comprised twenty-one board of director members (directors and vice-directors; 12.2%), forty-two senior managers (heads and vice-heads of library departments; 24.4%) and 109 general staff (63.4%). In eighty-three responses from public libraries, there were nine boards of director members (10.9%), twenty-nine senior managers (34.9%) and forty-five general staff (54.2%). In eighty-nine responses from academic libraries, there were twelve boards of director members (13.5%), thirteen senior managers (14.6%) and sixty-four general staff (71.9%). See Table 3.2.

Table 3.2  Respondents by position

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Library</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>General staff</th>
<th>Senior managers</th>
<th>Board of director members</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>45 (54.2%)</td>
<td>29 (34.9%)</td>
<td>9 (10.9%)</td>
<td>83 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Academic</td>
<td>64 (71.9%)</td>
<td>13 (14.6%)</td>
<td>12 (13.5%)</td>
<td>89 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>109 (63.4%)</td>
<td>42 (24.4%)</td>
<td>21 (12.2%)</td>
<td>172 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In terms of qualifications, most research participants had graduated from universities. One hundred and twenty-two (70.9%) held bachelor’s degrees and twenty (11.6%) held master’s degrees. There are thirty participants (17.5%) who held less than a bachelor’s degree, such as two-year college degrees, community college degrees, vocational training, high school certificates (for students after finishing grade twelve), and secondary school certificates (for students after finishing grade nine). Of the eighty-three participants from public libraries, ten did not have bachelor’s degree, sixty-eight had bachelor’s qualifications, and five had master’s. Fifteen academic library participants (16.9%) held master’s degrees, fifty-four (60.7%) had bachelor’s degrees and twenty (22.4%) had less than a bachelor’s degree (see Table 3.3).

Table 3.3  Respondents by qualification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Under bachelor</th>
<th>Bachelor</th>
<th>Master</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public</td>
<td>10 (12.1%)</td>
<td>68 (81.9%)</td>
<td>5 (6%)</td>
<td>83 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic</td>
<td>20 (22.4%)</td>
<td>54 (60.7%)</td>
<td>15 (16.9%)</td>
<td>89 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The highest qualification of board of director members was a master’s degree (52.4%) while the remaining members held bachelor’s degrees (47.6%). Only one senior manager held less than a bachelor’s degree, while 88.1 per cent and 9.5 per cent respectively held bachelor’s and master’s degrees (see Table 3.4).

Table 3.4 Academic qualifications of respondents by position

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>General staff</th>
<th>Senior managers</th>
<th>Board of directors</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under Bachelor</td>
<td>29 (26.6%)</td>
<td>1 (2.4%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>30 (17.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor</td>
<td>75 (68.8%)</td>
<td>37 (88.1%)</td>
<td>10 (47.6%)</td>
<td>122 (70.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master</td>
<td>5 (4.6%)</td>
<td>4 (9.5%)</td>
<td>11 (52.4%)</td>
<td>20 (11.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>109 (100%)</td>
<td>42 (100%)</td>
<td>21 (100%)</td>
<td>172 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nearly 34 per cent of research participants were under thirty-one years old (n = 58) and 44.2 per cent were in the age group thirty-one to forty (n = 76). Among twenty-one board of director members, 23.8 per cent (n = 5) were over fifty years old. Nearly forty-eight per cent (47.6%; n = 10) were in the age group of forty-one to fifty. Notably, 47.7 per cent of general staff were under thirty-one years old (n = 52) and 44.9 per cent (n = 49) were in the age group from thirty-one to forty (see Table 3.5).

Table 3.5 Respondents by age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Under 31</td>
<td>From 31-40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General staff</td>
<td>52 (47.7%)</td>
<td>49 (44.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior managers</td>
<td>6 (14.3%)</td>
<td>21 (50%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board of directors</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6 (28.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>58 (33.7%)</td>
<td>76 (44.2%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.5 Instrumentation

3.5.1 SPSS

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was the computer program used to analyse the data sets. SPSS is widely used in social sciences and business data.
analysis. SPSS possesses various functions and these are used for differing purposes. For a questionnaire with multi-scales SPSS helps to consider the number and percentage of responses so that the researcher can analyse and evaluate the obtained data. SPSS also enables comparisons between pairs of variables.

In this study, the researcher generally used the Chi-square test to compare sets of variables. Genders, positions, and ages were cross-tested with the categories related to them – awareness and insights into succession planning, and succession planning process. A probability (p value) of less than 5% (i.e. 95% confidence but not absolute) indicates that a pair of variables has statistical significance, or there is a significant difference between an expected and observed result. Another requirement of statistical significance is that the number of cells that have an expected count of less than five is ≤ 20% (Muijs 2011; Pallant 2010). In this research, bivariate correlations were also analysed to find the relationship between two continuous variables. This is Spearman’s rho correlation coefficient. Spearman’s rho coefficients vary between -1 and +1, with +1 indicating a perfect positive relationship, -1 a perfect negative relationship, and 0 = no relationship. In particular, effect size can be interpreted as follows (Muijs 2011):

- < +/- 0.1 weak
- < +/- 0.3 modest
- < +/- 0.5 moderate
- < +/- 0.8 strong
- ≥ +/- 0.8 very strong

The researcher only used Spearman’s rho coefficients whenever p value was less than .05 (i.e. 95% confidence but not absolute). This means that the research result is statistically significant. For example, a correlation coefficient between age and the importance of succession planning was examined. If Spearman’s rho was close to 1, it would mean that if staff were older, they were more likely to be aware of the role of succession planning in libraries. A coefficient close to -1 would suggest that if staff were older, they would be less likely aware of the role of succession planning, while a coefficient close to 0 would suggest that being older did not impact on the awareness of succession planning role: that is, the two are unrelated.
3.5.2 NVivo

NVivo is a software package commonly used to handle qualitative data. In this study, the researcher used NVivo 10 licensed by RMIT University to code and conduct thematic analysis of interview data. First, twenty-three interviews in MP3 format were transcribed into Word document format and sent back to the interviewees for verification of the responses. Then these files were translated into English by the researcher and a Vietnamese teacher of English. The accuracy of the English translation was also cross-checked by another teacher of English. After that, the English language files were imported into NVivo. Seventeen narrative comments from the open-ended question in the online survey were also imported into NVivo. The researcher then coded the interview transcripts sentence by sentence. Nodes and sub-nodes were used to code an idea, concept or category in the data. Coding, a way of classifying and tagging the data, enabled the researcher to retrieve any node or sub-node, including its sources, for analysis. As can be seen in Figure 2, the node ‘Succession planning criteria’ includes many sub-nodes such as political ideology, management and leadership skills including moral practices, professional knowledge, and others (age, seniority, work commitment). There are sixty-five references from twenty-four sources that can be viewed for the node “Succession planning criteria’. Similarly, each sub-node was coded with relevant references and sources.

![An example of nodes and sub-nodes](image-url)

Figure 2  An example of nodes and sub-nodes
Research themes emerged from the data when the concept or the idea was mentioned by many interviewees. For example, twenty of the twenty-three interviewees talked about the role of the Communist Party in terms of ‘Fairness and equality’ in succession planning. As a result, the theme ‘Awareness of the role of the Communist Party’ to maintain ‘Fairness and equality’ evolved.

NVivo also helps to identify the most frequent concepts and ideas that interviewees mention through ‘Word frequency’ or a ‘Word Cloud’. This querying tool graphically represents multiple themes to assist research analysis. For example (see Figure 3), the themes such as ‘library staff’, the ‘Communist Party’, ‘library professional’, ‘library leaders’, and ‘succession planning criteria’ are dominant themes that provided a focus for data analysis.

Figure 3  Word cloud
3.6 Research design

In this study, the researcher followed the sequential explanatory design developed by Creswell (2009). A description of the strategy and a visual model of this design are provided in Figure 4. The abbreviations ‘Quan’ and ‘Qual’ are used for ‘quantitative’ and ‘qualitative’ data collection methods respectively, and the capitalisation has meaning. “QUAN+QUAL (online survey)” indicates a simultaneous form of data collection, with both quantitative and qualitative data collected at the same time, and this data has more priority than that gathered during the interviews. An “→” indicates a sequential form of data collection or sequential step in the process.

![Sequential explanatory design](image)

**Figure 4**  Sequential explanatory design  
*Source: Adapted from Creswell et al. (2003).*

In this research design, quantitative and qualitative data collected by the online survey were analysed first. The themes emerging from the survey informed the construction of in-depth interview questions to collect additional qualitative data. Although these two forms of data were collected separately they were linked in the overall analysis.

The research involved purposive sampling (Berg 2009) of those who could contribute to the research outcomes regarding succession planning. The first phase (the online survey) included library employees who had worked in libraries for at least one year, regardless of gender, age, or nationality. This criterion was necessary as employees with at least one year of experience would be better able to know about and share ideas about library succession planning than those with less experience. In addition, the samples for
the first phase were chosen from the four medium-sized and large academic libraries in the Mekong Delta region where there were at least twenty staff employed. This criterion was applied because library leaders in the medium to large libraries were expected to have more experience of library succession planning than those in smaller libraries. In the second phase, twenty-three senior managers and board of director members from ten libraries were invited for individual interviews. The selection criteria for these samples related to leadership positions and seniority. The interviewees were selected with the proviso that they had experienced at least one year in a managerial position. The participation of those involved was on a voluntary basis. In order to protect the participants’ personal information pseudonyms are used for both personal and institutional names.

### 3.7 Research process

The research process consisted of four phases with relevant methods and specific outcomes, as illustrated in the following diagram (Figure 5) and explained in detail as follows.

### 3.8 Data collection

The two methods used to gather data in this study consisted of an online survey and semi-structured interviews. The online survey was conducted first, followed by individual interviews. Online surveys are used as an effective way to acquire direct data in a timely manner from a wide geographic region (Sue & Ritter 2007). In order to carry out the online survey Qualtrics, a web-based instrument licensed to RMIT University, was utilised via emails. Qualtrics was selected as it is easy to use, fast, and secure. The second step of data collection involved individual interviews in order to obtain in-depth information about library succession planning. In order to ensure reliability and objectivity, the researcher's senior supervisor at the time and his RMIT colleague undertook the two interviews conducted at her former organisation through Skype. This aimed to prevent data being contaminated by the researcher’s own views or place any duress on interviewees as a result of the researcher having formerly been their leader.
An RMIT staff member who was fluent in the language conducted the interviews in Vietnamese.

This data collection was carried out over a six-month period. First, the researcher referenced the main points in Rothwell’s (2010) questionnaire to compile her own online survey questionnaire. Then, she piloted the questionnaire to check its reliability and variability. Third, data collected from the substantive online survey was analysed using SPSS. The emerging themes from the online survey provided the researcher with an opportunity to gain insights to support the design of the questionnaire for in-depth face-to-face interviews conducted throughout the Mekong Delta.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PHASES</th>
<th>METHODS</th>
<th>OUTCOMES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PHASE I:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literature review</td>
<td>• Identifying research problem</td>
<td>• Research questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Reviewing the literature</td>
<td>• A theoretical framework</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
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<td>Data collection</td>
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<td>• Using Pearson Chi-square</td>
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<td>Forming interview</td>
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<td>• Developing interview questions</td>
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<td>Data collection</td>
<td>• Interview completed</td>
<td>• THEMES</td>
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<td>• Semi-structured interviews</td>
<td>• Key findings</td>
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<td>• Transcribing &amp; translating data</td>
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<td>• Thematic analysis</td>
<td>• Future research</td>
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Figure 5  Research procedure
3.8.1 The questionnaire

The questionnaire was developed in the first phase of the research. The researcher referenced the assessment questionnaire for effective succession planning and management from Rothwell’s book *Effective succession planning* (2010). This questionnaire was referenced as a starting point for a systematic approach to succession planning and management in an organization. The key points in Rothwell’s assessment, such as the role of succession planning, staff involvement, level of succession planning, work performance assessment, training programs, etc., were considered by the researcher to create a questionnaire using Qualtrics, geared specifically to the research questions appropriate to the Vietnamese context (see Appendix 2). The researcher’s redesigned questions aimed to be clear and detailed so as to avoid confusion for respondents. The questionnaire included twenty-nine multiple-choice items and one open-ended question. The multiple-choice items were constructed with five Likert Scale measures. For example, the options for the question ‘What do you think about succession planning in your library?’ were ‘Very unimportant’, ‘Unimportant’, ‘Neutral’, ‘Important’ or ‘Very important’. The questionnaire was bilingual (English and Vietnamese) so that the participants could readily understand and answer the questions accurately in the language of their choice. The questionnaire was tested in a pilot survey and modified in response to feedback to remove any ambiguities and reword as required to improve clarity.

3.8.2 Pilot online survey

The pilot online survey was the first activity in the second phase of the research. It was completed by thirty Vietnamese library staff. The purpose of the pilot survey was to ascertain the validity of the questions and the structure of the questionnaire. The feedback from pilot respondents allowed the researcher to refine the questions for the substantive online survey.

Information sheets were emailed to the leaders of seventeen libraries, both public and academic, in the Mekong Delta. These invitation emails included a ‘Plain Language Statement’ and a link to the Qualtrics online survey, and were forwarded to employees.
by the library leaders. The online survey participants could respond and comment on the items of the questionnaire, structure, time taken, as well as English and Vietnamese professional terminology by emailing the researcher. They could also add their comments and suggestions at the space provided for the answer to the open-ended item. Based on the pilot online survey respondents’ feedback, the researcher added an additional question and edited some Vietnamese terminology in the questionnaire. For example, item 26, ‘Were current library board director members and senior managers recruited as the result of succession planning?’ was developed into two questions in order to avoid confusion (i.e. item 26, ‘Were current library board director members recruited as the result of succession planning?’ and item 27, ‘Were current library senior managers recruited as the result of succession planning?’). This question was split into two questions because the online survey respondents indicated that they could have different answers for board of director members and senior managers about promotion. Another example of changes suggested by pilot online respondents was Vietnamese terminology translated from ‘senior managers’. It was ‘trưởng phó phòng’ instead of ‘người quản lý chính’. This change would help the substantive online survey respondents to avoid confusion in choosing the suitable answer. They might be confused by ‘người quản lý chính’ as another term for ‘board of director members’ if they did not read the question in English.

3.8.3 Online survey

The substantive online survey was conducted after getting the feedback from the pilot survey and editing professional terms appropriate in Vietnamese context. It comprised thirty items: one open-ended and twenty-nine multiple-choice questions. The questionnaire was bilingual (English and Vietnamese). Information sheets and the ‘Plain Language Statement’ were emailed to the leaders of seventeen libraries in the Mekong Delta. These invitation emails linked to the Qualtrics online survey and library leaders could participate directly and forward to available employees. Three weeks were allocated for responses to the online survey. The researcher also sent a follow-up message through email and conducted telephone calls to the library leaders one week before the deadline. After this reminder, the number of responses increased significantly.
3.8.4 Interviews

Interviews were the second investigative tool in the study and conducted in the third phase of the research, three weeks after collecting the data from the questionnaires. The researcher selected interviewees basing on their seniority. Interviews are seen as “purposeful conversations” (Berg 2009). Interviews were an essential source of the qualitative data as they allowed the researcher to gain rich insights into library succession planning. Interviews supplemented the data obtained from the surveys. The themes emerging from the collection and analysis of the numerical data informed the questions for in-depth interviews. The researcher used semi-structured interviews because they allowed for flexibility and could cover a wide range of topics while enabling and maintaining the conversations (Bernard 2002). The interview questions related to what, why and how, focussing on succession planning challenges and solutions, succession planning criteria and process, the role of the Communist Party, and the role of library leaders and library staff in conducting succession planning (see Appendix 3). The open-ended questions enabled the participants to express their own ideas and facilitated open and honest responses. Interviews took approximately one hour. Interviews were conducted in Vietnamese so that the interviewees were able to express their ideas without any difficulty or language barrier. These interviews took place in the interviewees’ offices which were considered to be quiet and comfortable for sharing succession planning experiences.

3.9 Data analysis

Data were analysed deductively and inductively. The online survey data were mainly numerical data, which were analysed by using SPSS 15. There are several ways to analyse numerical data with SPSS: in this study the researcher used two techniques, Pearson Chi-square and Spearman’s rho. With Pearson Chi-square, the researcher selected only the results of probability (p value) with less than 0.05 to indicate statistical significance of two variables or a significant difference between the expected and observed results. With Spearman’s rho, the researcher could measure correlations between two variables. The higher the Spearman’s rho value is, the stronger is the correlation between two variables, as indicated in Section 3.5.1. Narrative data from
interviews and from the open-ended question in the online survey were imported into the NVivo software package for coding. Narrative data and numerical data were integrated into the analysis to illustrate the emerging themes. This reflects the expectations of conducting multi-method research (Harrison 2013; Morse 2003).

### 3.9.1 Organizing data

Interview transcripts and survey data were input into the researcher’s computer for storage, analysis, and interpretation. The interview data were coded using NVivo 10 to organise it in a systematic and relevant way. The interview transcripts were shared and checked with research informants. Research participants were asked to validate the transcripts and confirm their accuracy. This model of organisation and analysis of data was recommended by Giudici and Figini since “An efficient analysis assumes and requires a valid organization of the data” (Giudici & Figini 2009, p. 8).

### 3.9.2 Coding data

Coding allowed for themes that were aligned with the research questions and categories to emerge from the data. According to Richards, coding is one way to link the selected passage of the text to the category created for coding. It allows the researcher “to make links between nodes, the data coded and the context” (Richards 1999, p. 93). There are many ways to code data in qualitative research, such as visual coding, attributes, and node coding. As indicated in Section 3.5.2 the researcher used nodes and sub-nodes to code the interview data. Tree nodes that could show the connections and relationships between ideas or concepts were created. The tree nodes displayed a hierarchical structure such as in this example:

- Staffing
  - Staff recruitment
    - Recruitment opportunity
    - Recruitment source
  - Staff retention
    - Reasons to quit job
Ways to keep staff
Work performance assessment
The researcher continued coding and recoding the data to determine new emerging themes until no more new themes could be determined. Nodes are a collection of references organised into hierarchies so that the researcher can look for a particular theme of the topic under investigation.

3.9.3 Identifying emergent themes

A specific pattern of meaning found in the data is called a theme (Braun & Clarke 2006; Joffe 2012). In other words, themes are described as conceptual linking of expressions. According to Boyatzis (1998), a good code to develop a theme should consist of the following components: a label for a theme, a definition of what makes the theme, a description of how to recognise the theme (indicator), differentiation from the defined theme, and examples to eliminate possible confusion when looking for the theme. Table 3.6 below shows an example of the coding of the data with regard to the theme The Communist Party.

Table 3.6 An example of coding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Label</th>
<th>The Communist Party</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Definition</td>
<td>The Communist Party is the only leading political party in Vietnam.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indicator</td>
<td>“The Communist Party plays an important role in library succession planning. This is the organization which introduces potential candidates into managerial positions” (ON.C2).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Differentiation</td>
<td>None. All participants showed that they held this view.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examples</td>
<td>“The Communist Party plays a decisive role in all social trends” (IN.E.PL2).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“The Communist Party plays a key role in determining who is in the succession planning list” (IN.I.AL1).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to Boyatzis (1998), themes can be developed in three ways: a theory-driven approach (initially generating themes deductively from theory), a prior-research-driven approach (initially generating themes from prior research), and a data-driven approach (initially generating themes inductively from the raw information). According to Ryan, GW and Bernard (2003) emerging themes can be identified in twelve different ways.
They are: repetitions, indigenous typologies or categories, metaphors and analogies, transitions, similarities and differences, linguistic connectors, missing data, theory-related material, cutting and sorting, word lists and key words in context, word co-occurrence, and meta-coding. In this study, the researcher did not use meta-coding because it is not relevant.

In this study, themes were developed by using a data-driven approach. Emerging themes were determined inductively through using repetition and grouping of categories. The researcher read and re-read a data set to find the repeated patterns of meaning to identify emerging themes. The four themes which emerged from the findings were:

- Awareness of the role of succession planning in libraries;
- The importance of staff participation in library succession planning;
- The role of the Communist Party in library succession planning; and
- Insights into how library leaders implemented succession planning.

These themes are discussed in detail in Chapters Four, Five and Six.

### 3.10 Thematic analysis

To examine library succession planning and how it is conducted, thematic analysis was used in this study as recommended by Boyatzis (1998) and Glesne (2011). According to Boyatzis (1998) thematic analysis is a process of encoding qualitative information. In particular, thematic analysis is a method for identifying and analysing patterns of meaning in a data set (Braun & Clarke 2006). In this study, qualitative data from the interviews and the open-ended question in the online survey were analysed under four themes as identified in the above section. In each theme, sub-themes were also examined more closely so as to contribute to the meaning of the overall theme. In particular, the researcher interpreted what the participants said to identify underlying ideas, patterns, and assumptions. The interpretation was conducted for each specific question across the majority of the data set. For instance, for the emerging theme of the role of the Communist Party in library succession planning, two sub-themes were
viewed (see Figure 6). They were awareness of the role of the Communist Party in succession planning, and the impacts of the role of the Communist Party in library succession planning. Each of these two sub-themes was analysed based on interpretation of collected data related to the Communist Party role in maintaining fairness and equity in succession planning, and concerns about whether potential candidates are Communist Party members. For each data set, for instance, to determine whether being Communist Party members or not was a factor in being included on the succession planning list, the researcher carefully read and re-read the interviewees’ responses to identify the underlying ideas.

![Diagram](image)

**Figure 6**  *An example of thematic analysis process*

### 3.11 Rigour of the research

Rigour, which can be understood as ensuring the validity and reliability of the research, needs to be considered in every single study. The validity of the research refers to the appropriateness of any inferences the researcher makes through the use of an investigative tool (for example, interview) (Fraenkel, Wallen & Hyun 2012). Reliability refers to consistency of the results of the study (Zohrabi 2013). Rigour is necessary since research findings are not useful without validity and reliability (VanderStoep 2009). Rigour is considered throughout all stages of the research. It commences with the design of the research, through to techniques of data collection, and to data analysis.
At the research design stage, the researcher carefully considered which methodology was to be used to avoid subjectivity in conducting the research and data collection. In this study, an online survey was conducted first to look for emerging themes to inform the structure of in-depth interviews. This means that the themes for examining library leadership and succession planning in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam originated from the research population rather than from the researcher’s preconceived ideas. In addition to this, the open-ended question in the online survey was designed to collect different ideas about library leadership and succession planning and focused on the voice of the participants.

Riege (2003) indicates that validity in case study research is constructed through using multiple sources of evidence. In this study, two sources of evidence were used: an online survey providing quantitative and qualitative data, and in-depth interviews providing further qualitative data. Second, online survey participants included library leaders, managers, and library staff to get various views about library leadership and succession planning from different levels of library employees.

External validity of the research is provided by using multiple cases of study (Parkhe 1993). This study involved two large library systems, one public and one academic, in the Mekong Delta Region (two cases as identified in section 3.2). Data were collected from all thirteen public libraries of the region and from four medium and large-size academic libraries with more than twenty employees. The selection criteria of medium and large size academic libraries were necessary because it was considered that leaders from these libraries would have more experience in succession planning than those from small libraries and could therefore provide better insights into the process.

Validity and reliability of the research were also ensured by other means. One of these was the number in the samples. There were 172 online responses from the total population (approximately 339 employees), with 50.7% regarded as an adequate response rate (Krejcie & Morgan 1970; Sue & Ritter 2007) and a representative sample of the research population. Second, a pilot survey was conducted with thirty respondents to test the questions and survey structure. A pilot survey helps to enhance validity and reliability of the study according to Yin (2012). Third, the online survey
questionnaire was in English and Vietnamese so that the participants could understand the research questions without any language barrier. This was aimed at increasing the accuracy of the answers.

Rigour in this research is also seen in the techniques of data collection, that is, an online survey and semi-structured in-depth interviews. First, the online survey allowed anonymity. As a result of this, participants could feel free to answer the questions and the data collected could be rich and objective. The open-ended question enabled participants to freely express their comments related to library leadership and succession planning. This helped to enhance the research reliability. Second, in order to enhance reliability, as highlighted by Yin (2011), semi-structured interviews were utilised. Interview questions formed a natural progression from addressing simple concepts to complex concepts. Interviewees were able to express their ideas and experiences. Moreover, with semi-structured interviews, the researcher could develop the issues raised by the interviewees. Most importantly, before conducting the interviews, the researcher sent the consent form and plain language statement to interviewees so that they could understand the objectives of the research and voluntarily participate in the research process. Thus, trust and co-operation was developed between the researcher and the interviewees. A drawback of interviews is that the interviewees may not want to answer the questions raised by the researcher (Partington 2001). In this study, the researcher used different ways to address the same issue during interviews to ensure some response.

Reliability of the study was achieved by recording data mechanically, as suggested by Nair and Reige (1995). Interviewees of this study were willing to be recorded, enabling a true record of the interviews. In addition, this allowed the interviewing process to proceed smoothly and naturally. The recordings allowed the researcher to keep the conversations going without any interruption from taking detailed notes. Berg and Lune (2012) suggest that conditions which enhance the mood of interviewees are necessary for collecting rich and valid data. Conducting interviews in the participants’ working offices allowed comfortable and pleasant conditions for sharing ideas and experiences of library leadership and succession planning. Furthermore, interviews were conducted in Vietnamese so that the interviewees could easily express their ideas about and experiences of library leadership and succession planning in their native language.
Quotations from the interviews have been translated into English. Finally, Neuman (2011) indicates that the use of participant checks is a way to increase a study’s validity. In this study, all twenty-three audio files were transcribed into Word files and sent back to the interviewees for verification of the responses. English translations of Vietnamese scripts were checked (see Appendix 4). All of this aimed to ensure that correct and valid data were collected before analysis.

Another method for collecting relevant data and enhancing research rigour is through personal relationships (Marshall 2001). The researcher has been working in the Mekong Delta Region for more than twenty years, and has good networks. Familiarisation built trust among the interviewees who were willing to answer the interview questions. For the library where the researcher had been the leader, the Senior Supervisor and his RMIT colleague helped to interview her staff to avoid bias and coercion.

Rigour of the research is also important in data analysis. Miles and Huberman (1994) state that data should be analysed within the case and across the cases so as to enhance internal validity. Data from public libraries and academic libraries, as well as among types of library staff, were considered and compared. In addition, data from the online survey and interviews were integrated in the overall analysis to build emerging themes for analysis as well as to enhance internal validity. Data from the online survey were analysed by using cross-tests and correlations provided by SPSS. These techniques were applied and show the internal validity of the data.

3.12 Ethical issues

Ethics clearance was required for this research. Ethics procedures aim to protect participants’ rights, privacy, confidentiality and safety, and also those of the researcher and their institution. The ethical issues are described in detail below. The research was approved by the RMIT Human Research Ethics Committee in February 2013 (No. 1000487).
3.12.1 Informed consent

Participation in the study was strictly voluntary. The participants were informed in detail of the nature of participation, the purpose of the study, its scope of activity, the use of digital recording, and the right to withdraw from the study prior to the submission of the thesis. For the online survey, the researcher contacted library leaders through the email lists of the South Vietnam Academic Library Association and the Mekong Delta Public Library Association. An information sheet in English and Vietnamese (see Appendix 5) and a consent form in English and Vietnamese (see Appendix 6) were sent to library leaders to ask for permission for the research to be conducted in their organizations. The researcher subsequently obtained written permissions from library leaders. When the library leaders agreed to the researcher’s inquiry, they then forwarded the information sheet and the invitation email linking to the Qualtrics online survey to their employees (see Appendix 7). Library employees participated in the survey voluntarily.

For the interview phase, the information sheet for interviewees in English and Vietnamese (see Appendix 8), the participant consent form in English and Vietnamese (see Appendix 9), and the authority for the release of transcripts in English and Vietnamese (see Appendix 10) were sent to interviewees in advance by email. The written permissions from the participants were subsequently collected at the interviews.

3.12.2 Privacy, confidentiality and anonymity

The survey respondents’ identities were not known, as the questionnaire responses were anonymous. The researcher knew the identities of the interview participants; however, pseudonyms are used in interview transcripts and in reporting of the study in order to protect the participants’ identities from disclosure. Twenty-three interview participants were named alphabetically, from Participant A to Participant W. Public and academic libraries were named numerically, from public library 1 to public library 13, academic library 1 to academic library 4. Data obtained from the interviews were stored securely throughout the research process. All data, including audio-recordings, transcripts and
surveys, will be deleted after five years, in accordance with RMIT University requirements.

### 3.13 Limitations and delimitations

#### 3.13.1 Limitations

There were some limitations in this study. First, library staff in public libraries in the Mekong Delta all shared the same library email address, as staff do not have an individual email address. Therefore, it was difficult to invite or remind individual potential participants for the online survey. The second limitation related to an unexpected incident during the interview process. The voice recorder failed in two interviews on one day. All of the data from those two interviews were lost and the researcher had to re-interview those library leaders. As a result, the length of responses was unintentionally shorter because these interviewees had already responded to the questions. However, in one case a library director contacted the researcher to modify some responses gathered during the interview as she remembered leaving some information out during the re-interview process. Third, two interviewees requested the researcher to delete some sensitive information in the transcripts, because it related to personal issues and confidential information. As a result, the researcher was unable to use some pertinent data relating to a “secret list of successors”, succession planning priorities for key staff and their dependents, and issues relating to the state and the Communist Party. The fourth limitation was related to the number of interviewees. One public library vice-director contacted the researcher to cancel the interview appointment because he was busy and, according to him, his senior managers were too young to share any experiences about library succession planning. The researcher asked for another appointment with the vice-director, but he declined to participate. Fifth, the number of online survey responses may have been reduced because there was at least one library director who forgot to forward the researcher’s invitation to staff.
3.13.2 Delimitations

This study was conducted in all of the thirteen public libraries and four selected (of nine) academic libraries in the Mekong Delta. The three main reasons for this sample were the potential number of respondents available, the accessibility to those sites, and because the libraries had succession planning experience. First, in terms of the potential number of respondents, there are thirteen provinces with thirteen public and nine academic libraries in the Mekong Delta region, with approximately 339 employees in total. From nine academic libraries the researcher selected four medium-sized and large academic libraries with at least twenty employees in each. Second, the distance between provinces is sixty kilometers, meaning that the researcher could readily access the intended research sites by public transport. Third, libraries in the Mekong Delta area are long established and consequently have considerable experience with succession planning. In particular, the staff from the oldest academic library (i.e. more than 50 years of operation) would be expected to provide a greater depth of knowledge of succession planning. Furthermore, most of the public libraries have more than forty years of operation and have faced many changes in leadership, and were therefore excellent sites for research on succession planning.

3.14 Summary

This chapter presents the methodology for the research using a multi-method case study approach. The data were collected from interviews and surveys conducted over a six-month period. The numerical data from the online survey were analysed using SPSS, and narrative data from the interviews and one open-ended question from the online survey were examined in depth using the NVivo software program. Thematic analysis was used for interpreting qualitative data. Emerging themes of the study were determined inductively by a data-driven approach using techniques of repetition and grouping of categories. This chapter also discussed research rigour, ethical issues, limitations and delimitations of the research. In the next three chapters, the findings of the research are reported.
Chapter Four  FINDINGS: LIBRARY SUCCESSION PLANNING AWARENESS AND STAFF INVOLVEMENT

4.1 Introduction

The research findings are presented in Chapters Four to Six. This chapter articulates two of the four emerging themes from the data: awareness of library staff of the role of succession planning in libraries, and the importance of staff participation in succession planning. The findings show that staff in public libraries and academic libraries had differing ideas with regard to the role of succession planning, staff involvement in the process, and awareness of the process for selecting senior managers.

In the presentation of the findings, participants have been de-identified and codes have been used for any quotations or discussion. The coding of IN and ON at the beginning of the quotes represents the interview script and online survey respectively. The interview participants are coded alphabetically in sequence and library names are coded numerically. For example, IN.A.AL2 indicates the quote is from the interview with Participant A, who worked in academic library 2. Similarly, IN.C.PL1 indicates the quote is from the interview with Participant C, who worked in public library 1. Quotes from qualitative questions in the online survey are coded by comment number. For example, the quote label ON.C1 indicates data from the first comment of the online survey.

One hundred and seventy-two participants responded to the online survey. Of the participants in the sample, 110 responses were provided by females and sixty-two by males. Eighty-three respondents were from public libraries and eighty-nine from academic libraries. The online survey aimed to collect responses related to evaluation and understanding of existing library succession planning, and to inform the construction of in-depth interview questions. The background information and managerial experiences of the twenty-three participants interviewed in the study are summarised in Table 4.1. The experience of the seven males and sixteen females ranges from four to thirty-one years. Managerial experience varied from three to twenty years.
The responses to in-depth interview questions focused on perspectives of, and concerns about, succession planning and the succession planning process.

Table 4.1  Interviewees’ background information and managerial experience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Years of experience</th>
<th>Years of managerial experience</th>
<th>Qualification</th>
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<td>N</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>BA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>BA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>BA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>Q</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>BA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>MA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>BA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>MA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>U</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>MA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>BA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>BA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Gender:  
M = Male, F = Female

Position:  
M = Manager, D = Director, V = Vice-Director

Qualification:  
BA = Bachelor, MA = Master
4.2  Awareness of library staff of the role of library succession planning

All 172 participants in the online survey responded to the question about the existence of succession planning in their libraries. As can be seen from Table 4.2, 123 (71.5%) respondents indicated their libraries already have a succession planning process in place, and twelve (7%) that their libraries were in the process of implementing one. Of the eighty-three respondents from public libraries and eighty-nine from academic libraries, there were five responses from each library type reporting that succession planning was non-existent in their libraries. More respondents (n=19) from academic libraries (21.3%) were unsure about the presence of library succession planning than those (n=8) from public libraries (9.6%).

Table 4.2  Existence of library succession planning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Library</th>
<th>Does your library have succession planning?</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Not sure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public</td>
<td>5 (6%)</td>
<td>8 (9.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic</td>
<td>5 (5.6%)</td>
<td>19 (21.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>10 (5.8%)</td>
<td>27 (15.7%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Awareness of the existence of library succession planning differed for participants by position, qualification, age, and years of experience. Table 4.3 indicates awareness of library succession planning by position. Sixty-one board of director members and managers (96.8%) and seventy-four general staff (67.9%) reported that succession planning existed in their libraries. In this case, existence means libraries have, or were in the process of implementing, succession plans. The statistic is significant and reliable because the p value is less than .05 (p = .000), and the zero cell (.0%) has an expected count less than five. Pearson Chi-square < .001 shows there is a significant difference in awareness of library succession planning between managerial staff (library leaders and managers) and general staff.
Table 4.3  
Awareness of existence of library succession planning by position  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Does your library have succession planning?</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NO (No + Not sure)</td>
<td>YES (In process + Yes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library leaders &amp; managers</td>
<td>2 (3.2%)</td>
<td>61 (96.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General staff</td>
<td>35 (32.1%)</td>
<td>74 (67.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>37 (21.5%)</td>
<td>135 (78.5%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 13.55.
b.  \( p = .000 \) (2-sided)

Similarly, Table 4.4 indicates awareness of library staff of succession planning by qualification. In general, more than three-quarters (78.5%) of research participants, with differing qualifications, are aware of the existence of library succession planning. In particular, data in this table show that staff who held higher qualifications such as bachelor’s and master’s degrees were more aware of library succession planning than those with lower level of qualifications (i.e. two-year college, community college degrees, vocational training, high school and secondary school certificates). In statistics, the minimum expected cell frequency less than 5 should be under 20% (Pallant 2010). With one cell (16.7%) expected count less than five, this assumption has not been violated. Therefore, the statistical result related to awareness of existence of library succession planning by qualification is significant and reliable (\( p = .000 \)).

Table 4.4  
Awareness of existence of library succession planning by qualification  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree</th>
<th>Does your library have succession planning?</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NO (No + Not sure)</td>
<td>YES (In process + Yes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master</td>
<td>4 (20%)</td>
<td>16 (80%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor</td>
<td>17 (13.9%)</td>
<td>105 (86.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under Bachelor</td>
<td>16 (53.3%)</td>
<td>14 (46.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>37 (21.5%)</td>
<td>135 (78.5%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. 1 cell (16.7%) has expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 4.30.  
b.  \( p = .000 \) (2-sided)

Effect size, the relationship between staff qualification and their awareness of existence of library succession planning, was shown by Spearman’s rho. Table 4.5 gives information on the correlation coefficient, significant level (\( p \text{ value} \)) and sample size.
The column ‘Does your library have succession planning?’ shows the correlation coefficient with itself and then with ‘Qualification’ in the next column. According to Muijs (2011) as described in Section 3.5.1, effect size is weak with \( r < \pm 0.1 \); modest with \( r < \pm 0.3 \); moderate with \( r < \pm 0.5 \); strong with \( r < \pm 0.8 \); and very strong with \( r \geq \pm 0.8 \). The Spearman rank order correlation coefficient is .260. This is a modest positive relationship. In other words, staff who held the higher level of qualification were likely to be more aware of the existence of succession planning in their libraries than those who held the lower level of qualification. The correlation coefficient is modest in strength and significant (\( p < .01 \)).

Table 4.5  Correlations between qualification and awareness of existence of library succession planning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correlations</th>
<th>Does your library have succession planning?</th>
<th>Qualification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spearman's rho</td>
<td>Does your library have succession planning?</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correlation Coefficient</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td></td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
<td>172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualification</td>
<td>Correlation Coefficient</td>
<td>.260**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td></td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
<td>172</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Data from the online survey also show that the age of library staff has a positive correlation with awareness of succession planning (see Table 4.6). Although this relationship is modest (Spearman’s rho = .203), it is significant with \( p \) value .007 (\( p \) value is less than .01). It indicates that the older the library staff were, the more awareness of succession planning they were likely to have.
Table 4.6  Correlations between age and awareness of existence of library succession planning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correlations</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Does your library have succession planning?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spearman's rho</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Correlation Coefficient</td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>.203**</td>
<td>.007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>172</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Another aspect of the awareness of library staff of succession planning was years of working experience. The data in Table 4.7 show that staff who had worked at the libraries for more than ten years were more aware of succession planning than those who had fewer years of working. For instance, eighty-four of the 119 staff (70.6%) working from one to ten years said their libraries did have succession planning. Meanwhile, 96.7 per cent of staff working from eleven to twenty years, and 100% of those who have been working at their libraries for over twenty-one years, stated that succession planning existed in their libraries.

Table 4.7  Awareness of existence of library succession planning by seniority

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years of experience</th>
<th>Does your library have succession planning?</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 1 year</td>
<td>1 (100%)</td>
<td>1 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 to 10 years</td>
<td>35 (29.4%)</td>
<td>84 (70.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 to 20 years</td>
<td>1 (3.3%)</td>
<td>29 (96.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 to 30 years</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>16 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 30 years</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>37 (21.5%)</td>
<td>135 (76.5%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition, Table 4.8 indicates that there is a moderate relationship between years of working experience and awareness of succession planning. With Spearman’s rho .325, it is understood that the longer staff had worked at the library, the more awareness of
succession planning they were likely to have. This correlation efficient is significant with \( p \) value .000.

Table 4.8  *Correlations between years of working experience and awareness of existence of library succession planning*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correlations</th>
<th>Working experience</th>
<th>Does your library have succession planning?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spearman's rho</td>
<td>Working experience</td>
<td>Correlation Coefficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does your library have succession planning?</td>
<td>Correlation Coefficient</td>
<td>.325**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>172</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Library staff differ in the awareness of the role of library succession planning. Differing awareness was varied by individual views, age, qualifications, library type (public or academic library), and years of working experience. When asked about the importance of library succession planning (see Table 4.9), fifty-nine of the 172 online survey respondents (34.3%) stated that library succession planning was important, and ninety-eight (57%) stated it was very important.

Table 4.9  *The importance of library succession planning by individual view*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Answer</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Ratio (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How important do you think library succession planning is?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Very important</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Important</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>34.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Neither important nor unimportant</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Unimportant</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Very unimportant</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>172</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.10 shows that there is a negative correlation coefficient between years of working experiences and an understanding of the importance of succession planning.
(Spearman’s rho = -0.175). This relationship is significant with \( p \text{ value} \, 0.021 \) (\( p \leq 0.05 \)). It can be deduced that the more years of working library staff had experienced, the more understanding of the important role of succession planning they were likely to have.

Table 4.10  Correlations between years of working experience and awareness of the importance of library succession planning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correlations</th>
<th></th>
<th>Working experience</th>
<th>How important do you think library succession planning is?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spearman’s rho</td>
<td>Working experience</td>
<td>Correlation Coefficient</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.</td>
<td>.021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Correlation Coefficient</td>
<td>-.175*</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.021</td>
<td>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>172</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

In particular, both public library and academic library staff had a positive view of the role of library succession planning (see Table 4.11). Eighty of the eighty-three public library staff (96.4%) and seventy-seven of the eighty-nine academic library staff (86.5%) stated that library succession planning was ‘Important’ or ‘Very important’. Only three public library staff (3.6%) had a neutral opinion, stating ‘neither important nor unimportant’. In addition, only eight academic library staff (9%) were neutral, and four (4.5%) reported that succession planning was ‘unimportant or very unimportant’.

Table 4.11  The importance of library succession planning by library type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Library</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>How important do you think library succession planning is?</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very important</td>
<td>Important</td>
<td>Neither important nor unimportant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public</td>
<td>56 (67.5%)</td>
<td>24 (28.9%)</td>
<td>3 (3.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub total</td>
<td>80 (96.4%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic</td>
<td>42 (47.2%)</td>
<td>35 (39.3%)</td>
<td>8 (9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub total</td>
<td>77 (86.5%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>98 (57%)</td>
<td>59 (34.3%)</td>
<td>11 (6.3%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As far as the role of succession planning in libraries was concerned, three themes emerged from the online survey and in-depth interviews. The themes were: the purposes of succession planning, perceived benefits of library succession planning, and insights into current library succession planning. These are discussed in more detail below.

### 4.2.1 The purposes of succession planning

Library staff had differing views about the purposes of succession planning. In the online survey (see Table 4.12), 111 of the 172 respondents (64.5%) stated that succession planning should be used for the positions of future board of director members and senior managers. Forty-one (23.8%) replied that succession planning was for future board of director positions only. Additionally, thirty-eight of the sixty-two males (61.3%) and seventy-three of the 110 females (66.4%) would like to develop succession planning for board of director members and senior manager levels.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Answer</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>For which level should library succession planning be developed?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Future board of directors only</td>
<td>13 (21%)</td>
<td>28 (25.5%)</td>
<td>41 (23.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Future senior managers only</td>
<td>4 (6.4%)</td>
<td>3 (1.8%)</td>
<td>7 (4.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Future board of directors and senior managers</td>
<td>38 (61.3%)</td>
<td>73 (66.4%)</td>
<td>111 (64.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Future general staff</td>
<td>7 (11.3%)</td>
<td>1 (0.9%)</td>
<td>8 (4.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Not sure</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5 (5.4%)</td>
<td>5 (2.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>62 (100%)</td>
<td>110 (100%)</td>
<td>172 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data from interviews also show participants’ views about the purposes of succession planning. For example, Participant C said, “Succession planning is a preparation for library leaders” (IN.C.PL1). Participant A considered that “Succession planning prepares for not only library leaders but also others including administration and support staff [general staff, cleaners, security guards] to be appointed to the appropriate roles” (IN.A.AL2). These comments suggest that succession planning could be for both managerial and non-managerial positions in their libraries.
4.2.2 Perceived benefits of library succession planning

As can be seen from Table 4.13, participants generally acknowledged the benefits of library succession planning. Eleven of the twenty-three interviewed participants reported that succession planning was important in libraries. These participants also identified why it is important. For example, Participant C stated “Succession planning is very important because it has a great effect on the quality of library operations” (IN.C.PL1). Similarly, a number of online survey responses indicated that “Succession planning should be paid more attention in the future because it has great influence on library development” (ON.C10). Participant U considered that “Library development depends on strong key leaders who are considered as the soul of the organization” (IN.U.PL2). Participant U's metaphor indicates a link between her understanding of the benefit of succession planning in a library and the role of library leaders in library development in the future. Participant J suggested: “Strategic and careful preparation for succession planning is essential. There is no need to be told to do so” (IN.J.PL5). The state and the Communist Party have paid much attention to succession planning. Participant C indicated that “The state and the Communist Party are interested in succession planning and issue many official documents and detailed guidelines for it” (IN.C.PL1). Participant H said, “The state and the Communist Party consider succession planning as a critical factor in personnel management. Good succession planning will help to nominate the right staff, and it can help to develop staff capacities and personal skills” (IN.H.PL3).

All eleven comments indicate that library succession planning was very important due to its benefits. It not only helped to maintain and develop the library, but also created an environment to use and improve its qualified staff appropriately. In addition, it seems that participants from the public libraries were more aware of succession planning benefits than those from academic libraries.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Descriptors</th>
<th>Public Libraries (N = 14)</th>
<th>Academic Libraries (N = 9)</th>
<th>Total (N = 23)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SP is a way to keep qualified staff</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SP creates chances for training</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SP encourages library staff

An additional benefit of succession planning was how it is used to retain qualified staff. Nineteen of the twenty-three interviewed participants reported that there was a relationship between succession planning and retention of qualified staff. Participant I from an academic library stated, “Succession planning has been considered as a good way to keep qualified staff” (IN.I.AL1). Similarly, Participant V from a public library believed, “If qualified staff are not satisfactorily acknowledged, then they will think of working for other organizations” (IN.V.PL4). Nevertheless, three respondents thought that succession planning was not a perfect way to retain good staff. For example, Participant C from a public library said, “We all want to use succession planning to keep qualified staff. However, it is hard for organizations like libraries where staff have low incomes” (IN.C.PL1). Again, participants from public libraries paid more attention to using succession planning to retain qualified staff than those from academic libraries.

All twenty-three interviewed participants from public and academic libraries were aware that succession planning created opportunities for staff training. Participant K said, “Training programs should include professional development, managerial skills and political competence” (IN.K.PL2). Participant V further stated, “In addition to technical matters and leadership skills, successors need to understand English or they will find it difficult to access useful resources on the Internet” (IN.V.PL4). Furthermore, potential successors thought succession planning was a good chance for them to learn and share in experiences of library management. Participant J also stated her view on succession planning benefits: “I have learned so much at work and from the former leaders about management and how to deal with leadership situations” (IN.J.PL5). In this case, understanding and learning from peers or experienced predecessors could enhance library professional development. Also, Participant T said, “As a library leader, I share my experience and expertise with potential successors” (IN.T.PL4). All twenty-three comments show that training programs benefited successors and training opportunities could be considered an indispensable part of the succession planning process.
According to the data, succession planning was pivotal to motivation. Sixteen of the twenty-three interviewed participants from both public and academic libraries considered it as a way to encourage general library staff to take opportunities in their working lives. Participant F reported, “Library staff can have another chance to be on the succession planning list … If they work well they are reconsidered for the list” (IN.F.PL6). Furthermore, succession planning also motivated potential candidates to perform their tasks well. Participant D said, “Potential successors are not automatically the next leaders or managers. Successors should continue to develop and they would be taken off the list if they no longer satisfied the required criteria” (IN.K.PL2). However, there were some cases where general library staff might not be motivated by succession planning. Participant C said, “General staff may not be interested in higher managerial positions. They would like to continue to work at their current positions, finish their tasks and go home” (IN.C.PL1). Similarly, Participant E stated, “General staff choose not to aim for higher positions or managerial positions because there is not much difference in benefits for general staff and leaders although there are different responsibilities” (IN.E.PL2). Comments such as these from Participants C and E indicate that succession planning may not impact positively on staff motivation. Some people may prefer to be general staff as they may not like the thought of a higher position requiring higher responsibility.

4.2.3 Insights into current library succession planning

When being asked about how succession planning is relevant for libraries, participants from public and academic libraries had differing views and responses. Table 4.14 below shows that fourteen of the twenty-three interview participants reported that succession planning was relevant to their library. Participant K from a public library stated, “Succession planning is suitable for my library. The library has already implemented succession planning and has good preparation for successors who are showing progress” (IN.K.PL2). In addition, Participant J said, “I realise that succession planning fits into my library as leaders find it relevant” (IN.J.PL5).
Table 4.14  Current library succession planning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Descriptors</th>
<th>Public Libraries (N = 14)</th>
<th>Academic Libraries (N = 9)</th>
<th>Total (N = 23)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SP is relevant to library</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SP is relevant, but not good</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SP is not relevant at all</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Five participants regarded succession planning as relevant but not as useful as it could be: “Library succession planning is not as good as expected” (IN.U.PL2), and two participants believed that succession planning was not relevant to their libraries at all. Participants explained that the reasons for irrelevance were the lack of a training program for staff, and library size. For instance, Participant O in an academic library said, “My library is lack of succession planning and professional training for potential successors” (IN.O.AL3). Participant M of the same academic library stated, “My library does not possess a full succession planning model because it is a small library. As a result of this, my library only has succession planning for the board of director members” (IN.M.AL3). Similarly, online survey participants commented, “Succession planning was only viewed on a superficial basis and that, in reality, the board of director members were appointed in advance” (ON.C15).

4.3  Awareness of staff participation in succession planning

Twenty-two of the twenty-three interview participants identified matters associated with staff participation in succession planning. The interviews resulted in two sub-themes: a concept of responsibilities of library staff in succession planning, and concerns about possible restrictions of library staff in succession planning process.

4.3.1  Roles of library staff in succession planning

Table 4.15 shows that 136 of the 172 respondents (79.1%) stated that general staff should participate in library succession planning. More specifically, 81.9% of public library and 76.4% of academic library participants responded that general staff should be involved in succession planning.
Table 4.15  General staff involvement in library succession planning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Answer</th>
<th>Public</th>
<th>Academic</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Should general staff be involved in library</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>9 (10.8%)</td>
<td>12 (13.5%)</td>
<td>21 (12.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>succession planning?</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Not sure</td>
<td>6 (7.3%)</td>
<td>9 (10.1%)</td>
<td>15 (8.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>68 (81.9%)</td>
<td>68 (76.4%)</td>
<td>136 (79.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>83 (100%)</td>
<td>89 (100%)</td>
<td>172 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Among 109 general staff, 78.9% responded that they should be involved in library succession planning process (see Table 4.16). However, nearly twenty-one per cent (15.9% + 4.8%) of library leaders and managers indicated that general staff shouldn’t participate in this process.

Table 4.16  General staff involvement in library succession planning by position

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Answer</th>
<th>General staff</th>
<th>Library leaders &amp; managers</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Should general staff be involved in library</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>11 (10.1%)</td>
<td>10 (15.9%)</td>
<td>21 (12.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>succession planning?</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Not sure</td>
<td>12 (11%)</td>
<td>3 (4.8%)</td>
<td>15 (8.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>86 (78.9%)</td>
<td>50 (79.3%)</td>
<td>136 (79.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>109 (100%)</td>
<td>63 (100%)</td>
<td>172 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Interview data show that general staff participated in different activities in the succession planning process (see Table 4.17). This section presents some selected roles indicated by a number of participants. First, twenty-two of the twenty-three participants reported that library staff could contribute to evaluating and commenting on the succession planning candidates. For example, Participant Q from a public library reported, “Library leaders will organize a meeting so that library staff can evaluate strengths and weaknesses of each succession planning candidate” (IN.Q.PL6).

Similarly, Participant E from another public library said, “Library staff will comment on the list of candidates who may be involved in the succession planning” (IN.E.PL2). Comments such as these from Participants Q and E indicate a particular role that library staff could have in succession planning; that is, consideration of candidates for succession.
Table 4.17  General staff participation in succession planning by gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Descriptors</th>
<th>Males (N = 7)</th>
<th>Females (N = 16)</th>
<th>Total (N = 23)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discuss SP list, Comment on SP candidates</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exchange ideas, Email to higher leaders</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommend SP candidates</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make decision, Choose the SP candidates</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vote</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No self-nomination</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SP list through email, meeting, bulletin, notice board</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervise the SP candidates</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to the two particular roles noted above, library staff could recommend candidates for succession planning. For example, Participant F from a public library said, “Every staff [member] can suggest their candidates” (IN.F.PL6). Nine participants stated that library staff could select candidates by voting. Participant I from an academic library indicated, “If our colleagues hesitate to express their ideas, we [department managers] will let them vote by means of secret ballots” (IN.I.AL1). Voting was carried out because library staff might be shy or hesitant to express their ideas. However, one staff member from an academic library (Participant L) mentioned that library staff could email their opinion of the candidates on the list to the university board of trustees (IN.L.AL4).

Table 4.18  General staff participation in succession planning by library systems

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Descriptors</th>
<th>Public Libraries (N = 14)</th>
<th>Academic Libraries (N = 9)</th>
<th>Total (N = 23)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discuss SP list, Comment on SP candidates</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email, meeting, bulletin, notice board</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervise the SP candidates</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Express their opinions about training programs</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluate SP candidates in each period</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comment on the policies &amp;</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As can be seen in Table 4.18, twenty-two of the twenty-three participants in both academic and public libraries determined that general staff were involved in discussing succession planning list and commenting on potential candidates. Six of the nine participants from academic libraries and five of the thirteen participants in public libraries indicated that general library staff had the right to be notified about the final succession planning list by various means of communication: email, meetings, bulletins, notice boards, civil servants conferences, websites and official documents. “We inform library staff about the official succession planning list through library meetings and civil servants conferences”, said Participant R from a public library (IN.R.PL6), and Participant B from an academic library reported, “The succession planning list is made public via emails, meetings, bulletin boards, or official documents” (IN.B.AL4).

In addition to the activities noted above which were common to both academic libraries and public libraries, there are some activities that only took place in public libraries. Three comments illustrate this:

Succession planning must be conducted in an open and transparent process. Party Committee, library leaders and library staff must be involved. In particular, the candidates need to be observed all the time in the selection process (IN.H.PL3).

We [board of director members] inform staff of the official succession planning list so that potential successors can perform their duties and other library staff can screen them to ensure they are properly selected (IN.Q.PL6).

We [board of director members] inform the staff about how the official succession planning list is structured for their reference and decision-making. In addition, they can keep on evaluating the candidates to determine if they are still worthy or not (IN.T.PL4).

Comments such as these from Participants H, Q and T show that in public libraries, staff could have a role in evaluating succession planning candidates as to whether or not
these candidates were worthy of inclusion on the succession planning list. No participants from academic libraries mentioned this role. Additionally, one public library staff member expressed an opinion about training programs for succession planning candidates and evaluation of candidates in each stage. Participant V said, “We [library leaders] seek staff opinions of the succession planning process in order to train and finalise the list of promising candidates” (IN.V.PL4).

Similarly, only one participant in an academic library expressed the view that library staff had a role to comment on the policies and regulations related to succession planning issued by the parent organizations. This does not appear to occur in public libraries. Participant L stated, “The policies or directives set by the university and communist party are publicly known for staff feedback and opinions” (IN.L.AL4).

Table 4.19  General staff participation in succession planning by position

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Descriptors</th>
<th>Directors (N = 5)</th>
<th>Vice-Directors (N = 9)</th>
<th>Managers (N = 9)</th>
<th>Total (N = 23)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discuss SP list and comment on SP candidates</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommend SP candidates</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make decision and choose the SP candidates</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No self-nomination</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email, meeting, bulletin, notice board</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.19 illustrates staff participation in succession planning by position. Twenty-two of the twenty-three participants in managerial positions (Director, Vice-Director, Manager) indicated that general staff were involved in discussing the succession planning list and commenting on potential candidates. Only one participant in each position stated that general staff had a role to actually make decisions about the managers of library departments and select candidates for succession planning. For instance, Director T from a public library said, “Library leaders only guide staff to select the appropriate candidates and have no involvement in decision making. All general staff will make decisions about the managers of their departments” (IN.T.PL4). Vice-Director O from an academic library stated, “Library managers are internally
chosen by staff in the library” (IN.O.AL3), and Manager J from a public library reported, “All general staff will participate in selecting candidates” (IN.J.PL5). One of the issues raised by participants was that staff did not promote themselves or put themselves forward as potential managers. For example, Director T from a public library said, “There is no candidate who self-nominated for the managerial positions” (IN.T.PL4). Vice-Director L from an academic library stated, “A few candidates self-nominate in other units of the university but no staff self-nominates for library succession planning” (IN.L.AL4). The participants sometimes explained why self-nomination was not present in the context of their library. Manager M from an academic library explained, “Capable candidates can nominate themselves for succession planning but no staff did so because they are afraid of losing face” (IN.M.AL3). In this case, candidates are afraid of losing the respect of others if they are not then selected to be on the list.

Two of the twenty-three participants who were talking about staff participation in succession planning described how general staff could be involved. Participant I in an academic library explained that general staff could have a role in succession planning based on the library structure. They could make comments and opinions on candidates in their own departments, then on those in the library as a whole: “We conduct succession planning through two levels. First, it is at departmental level ... [and] second, it is library level” (IN.I.AL1). Meanwhile, Participant C in a public library focused on staff roles. The library initially received the administrators’ comments and opinions on the candidates, and then from all general staff. Participant C said, “In the succession planning process, it is required to get all staff comments and opinions. First this is done among key administrators, then among all general staff” (IN.C.PL1). In the Vietnamese setting, key administrators are the board of director members, managers, the Communist Party Committee, the Youth Union Committee, the Trade Union Committee, and the Veterans Association Committee.

Participant I further explained that staff assess their candidates at their own departmental level and then they assess candidates in the other departments at a library meeting. Staff from other departments re-assessed for their observed capacity, behaviour and enthusiasm for collaborating in the library’s work. “Every department manager of the library should organize the meeting to listen to the colleagues’ opinions about the
candidates ... In library meetings, we [department staff] get opinions from colleagues in the other departments about our own departmental candidates” (IN.I.AL1). This comment suggests that succession planning in the library was currently conducted in two levels based on library structure and library role. Participant J from a public library stated that each library had its own way to conduct succession planning: “When I participate in the training programs and seminars, I learn about succession planning from the other libraries. I recognize that each library has its own way to conduct succession planning” (IN.J.PL5).

4.3.2 Concepts of responsibilities of general staff in succession planning

When being asked how to avoid bias in succession planning, interview participants responded in several suggestions, two of which are staff involvement and the roles of library leaders. Interviewees indicated that general staff had responsibilities to participate in succession planning by raising opinions or comments on potential candidates, and voting. Interview participants also suggested that library leaders should consider criteria to enhance democracy, equity, and openness in the succession planning process.

Table 4.20 How to avoid bias in succession planning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Descriptors</th>
<th>Public Libraries (N = 14)</th>
<th>Academic Libraries (N = 9)</th>
<th>Total (N = 23)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Democracy, equity &amp; openness</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Get opinions from all library staff</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follow succession process, sense of justice &amp; transparency</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SP criteria</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voting</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work performance assessment</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consider suggestions from general staff</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As can be seen from Table 4.20, participants from both public and academic libraries suggested various ideas to help library leaders avoid bias in succession planning. In this
section, only some selected ideas are presented, the selection based on the number of participants. Ten of the twenty-three participants determined that the solution was getting opinions from all general staff about potential candidates and succession planning. Participant K from a public library stated, “Library leaders should ask for general staff comments before nominations. This will help to prevent bias in succession planning” (IN.K.PL2). Another way to avoid bias was suggested as building and following succession planning criteria. For example, Participant O from an academic library claimed, “Bias cannot be present because the library leader builds and gets approval on the succession planning criteria and applies them to select potential candidates” (IN.O.AL3). In addition, Participant P from a public library said, “Anyone who fits into succession planning criteria will be on the list and this will help to prevent bias in succession planning” (IN.P.PL3). Participant N from another academic library said, “In the succession planning process, conducting secret ballots from all general staff is one way to avoid bias” (IN.N.AL1). This quote indicates that general staff might recognize their responsibility for preventing bias in succession planning by participation. In particular, one online survey respondent stated, “General staff should participate in succession planning in order to help library leaders avoid bias which is the result of acquaintance or seniority. This helps to prevent succession planning for unqualified and incapable candidates” (ON.C4). This online comment indicates that general staff participation could prevent library leaders from conducting succession planning based on personal or familial relationships. In addition, staff involvement could avoid a bias towards staff working for a long time at the library becoming leaders. Their participation also helps library leaders select the most suitable candidates for succession planning. Furthermore, general staff also indicated that it was their responsibility to participate in order to promote democracy and openness in succession planning.

Table 4.21  How to conduct democracy and openness in succession planning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Descriptors</th>
<th>Public Libraries (N = 14)</th>
<th>Academic Libraries (N = 9)</th>
<th>Total (N = 23)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Get opinions from all general staff</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talk to intended successors</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voting</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General staff select the candidates</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.21 indicates how libraries can be democratic and open in succession planning. Fourteen of the twenty-three participants determined that the best way is getting opinions about candidates from all general staff to strengthen democracy and openness in succession planning. Meanwhile, six participants indicated voting for the list, and another three stated that general staff selected the potential candidates for the list. Participant P from a public library said, “Getting comments and opinions from general staff is a way to strengthen democracy and openness. Succession planning does not depend on the top leader’s decision” (IN.P.PL3). Participant M from an academic library added, “Currently, collecting comments is considered as a way to be democratic” (IN.M.AL3). These two quotes suggest that succession planning should not be dependent on a library leader’s decision. In contrast, general staff could have rights and responsibilities in succession planning. They could perform this role by expressing opinions, commenting upon, and voting for the candidates.

An additional responsibility of general staff was to remind library leaders of the need to conduct succession planning. Participant J from a public library said, “As socially responsible persons, we [managers] have to take responsibility for the next-generation organisation by reminding leaders of succession planning” (IN.J.PL5). Furthermore, Participant H from another public library stated, “We should pay attention to being innovative and upgrade the quality of commenting on and assessing each potential candidate”. Then she added, “This is considered the basis for a democratic, equitable, fair and effective succession planning process” (IN.H.PL3). These two comments indicate that general staff took responsibility for the next generation of library leaders and for effective succession planning.

### 4.3.3 Possible restrictions of general staff in succession planning

Five of the twenty-three interview participants mentioned possible restrictions of general staff in succession planning. Participant F from a public library said, “General staff are considered as the ‘eyes of a pineapple’; therefore, library leaders should actively listen to as many opinions as possible from general staff about the potential
candidates” (IN.F.PL6). This metaphor suggests that general staff should have a role in succession planning because they were present everywhere in the library and they could keep an eye on every activity of the candidates. However, the role of general staff in succession planning has only recently been recognised, as mentioned by Participant L in an academic library:

It is the first time the university board of trustees made known the succession planning list. They formerly applied the top-down succession planning model. The University board of trustees, the Communist Party Committee and Personnel Officers discussed and selected candidates based on their qualifications (IN.L.AL4).

I [Vice-Director] think we [Board of director members] should make some changes in the succession planning process. One way to do that is by voting. This must be done by secret ballots rather than only the board of director members and the Communist Party Committee choosing the candidates (IN.W.AL2).

The two quotes from Participants L and W show that succession planning was previously conducted by the university board of trustees, board of director members, the Communist Party Committee, and Personnel Officers. This is a top-down succession planning model. One change in the succession planning process was to allow voting so that general staff could enact their right to participate in succession planning.

In addition to recognising that the role of the general staff in succession planning may be restricted, there were other possible restrictions on general staff involvement. These restrictions were the role of staff comments and opinions, knowledge of short-term and long-term succession planning, and revealing the final succession planning list.

Within one public library, three participants of different levels showed two opposite views about the role of general staff comments and opinions. Participant E (the Vice-Director) and Participant K (the Manager) believed that all staff comments and opinions were one step in the succession planning process and these should be considered in order to select the qualified candidates.
When the library leader presents succession planning list in the library meeting, all staff will comment and express their opinions about these candidates (IN.E.PL2).

Based on all staff comments and library leaders’ opinions, potential successors are considered for suitable positions and then the list of the successors is built (IN.K.PL2).

In contrast, Participant U (the Director) said that staff opinions were collected but these opinions were just for reference, because the decisive opinions were from the Communist Party Cell and the administrators:

The library collects all staff opinions during the succession planning process. After that, staff opinions are considered but the key opinions are from the Communist Party Cell and the administrators (IN.U.PL2).

Comments such as these from Participants U, E and K indicate that the director of this library had a different view from the vice-director and a manager about the role of general staff comments in succession planning. This difference occurred due to the level of their involvement in the succession planning process. The directors are involved in this process more than other members, including vice-directors and managers.

An additional restriction on succession planning was differing views about disclosure of information about short-term succession planning and long-term succession planning. The director of a public library stated that general staff could only have the right to know about the long-term (i.e. ten years long) succession planning list because short-term (i.e. five years long) succession planning was a sensitive issue. General staff only cared about what would happen in the immediate future. Therefore library leaders think that hiding the short-term list might help to avoid problems before nominating the candidate. In contrast, the vice-director of this same library said that general staff should only know about short-term succession planning: “Currently, I [Vice-director] am conducting succession planning 2015-2020, but the staff do not know. They only know about short-term succession planning” (IN.E.PL2). This difference may come from
different understandings about what is short-term and what is long-term. In this context, the vice-director considered 2015-2020 period to be long-term; however, it means short-term to the director. Therefore, lack of knowledge of the short-term list is a restriction for general staff.

Contrary views about providing the final succession planning list to general staff were also seen. Eight participants did not mention whether the official succession planning list was disseminated to staff or not. Another three participants assumed that the library leaders should not or and not need disclose the final succession planning list to all staff for two main reasons. The first reason was staff already knew the list from library meetings: “After getting approval from higher leaders, the library leader does not inform the list of successors to all staff. It is because staff already know the list of successors via library meetings about succession planning” (IN.G.PL5), or “After getting approval from higher leaders, the library leader does not need to talk about the succession planning list to staff again because they all knew and agreed with the list” (IN.J.PL5). The second reason was that the board of director members did not disclose this list. Participant F said, “It is right to inform the final succession planning list to all staff. However, our library leader has never done this yet”. He also explained, “After getting approval from the parent organization, only the board of director members know about this list” (IN.F.PL6).

Comments from the online survey stated that general staff might not be personally involved in succession planning: “Succession planning is conducted in secret and the board of director members do not inform who successors are until nomination. General staff can only know the succession planning list at the last minute” (ON.C7). In particular, academic general staff had less involvement in library succession planning than those in public libraries. As shown in Table 4.22, ninety-nine of the 172 participants (57.6%) have not personally participated in succession planning. Among eighty-nine academic general staff, there were fifty-nine respondents (66.3%) who were not directly involved in developing succession planning. Only forty of the eighty-three public general staff (48.2%) were not involved (p = .016).
Table 4.22  *Staff participation in succession planning by library type*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Library</th>
<th>Have you personally participated in library succession planning?</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public</td>
<td>40 (48.2%)</td>
<td>43 (51.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic</td>
<td>59 (66.3%)</td>
<td>30 (33.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>99 (57.6%)</td>
<td>73 (42.4%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 35.23

Table 4.23 shows that nearly seventy per cent of general staff (69.7%) were not involved in succession planning process. Half of senior managers (50%) were not either. However, more than ninety per cent of members of boards of director members (90.5%) participated. It is likely that succession planning was conducted by top leaders and managers and the role of general staff has not generally been considered yet ($p = .000$).

Table 4.23  *Participation in succession planning by position*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Have you personally participated in library succession planning?</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General staff</td>
<td>76 (69.7%)</td>
<td>33 (30.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior manager</td>
<td>21 (50%)</td>
<td>21 (50%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board of directors</td>
<td>2 (9.5%)</td>
<td>19 (90.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>99 (57.6%)</td>
<td>73 (42.4%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 8.91 b. $p = .000$ (2-sided)

Table 4.24 shows general staff knowledge of a succession planning list. Half of the 172 participants (50%) did not know who was on the list of successors ($p = .011$). Similarly, sixty-four of the 109 general staff (58.7%) did not know or were ‘not sure’ who was being considered for succession. It seems that more library leaders and managers (65.1%) know about the succession planning list than general staff (41.3%) do.
Table 4.24  Acknowledgement of succession planning list by position

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Should general staff know who is being considered for succession?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General staff</td>
<td>39 (35.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Sub total</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library leaders &amp; managers</td>
<td>14 (22.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Sub total</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 12.09.
b. p = .011 (2-sided)

Table 4.25 illustrates that there is a modest positive relationship (r = .212) between position and knowledge of the succession planning list. This suggests that the higher the position general staff held, the more knowledge of the list they were likely to have. Although this relationship is modest, it is significant because *p value* is .005.

Table 4.25  Correlations between position and knowledge of succession planning list

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Correlations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What is your current position in the library?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spearman's rho</td>
<td>Should general staff know who is being considered for succession?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is your current position in the library?</td>
<td>Correlation Coefficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Should general staff know who is being considered for succession?</td>
<td>.212**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The statistically significant relationship between qualification and knowledge of the succession planning list can be explained because the higher level of qualification general staff held, the more knowledge of the succession planning list they were likely
to have (see Table 4.26). Although this relationship is modest (Spearman’s rho = .200), it is significant in quantitative research because its \( p \) value is .009.

Table 4.26  *Correlations between qualification and knowledge of succession planning list*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spearman's rho</th>
<th>Qualification</th>
<th>Correlation Coefficient</th>
<th>Qualification</th>
<th>Should general staff know who is being considered for succession?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Correlation Coefficient</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td></td>
<td>.009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
<td>172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Should general staff know who is being considered for succession?</td>
<td>Correlation Coefficient</td>
<td>.200**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td></td>
<td>.009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
<td>172</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

In contrast to the finding about less knowledge of the succession planning list, more online participants stated that selection of current board of director members was from a succession planning list (see Table 4.27). For instance, 118 of the 172 participants (68.6%) knew that the current board of director members were recruited as the result of succession planning. Of 109 general staff, sixty-seven (61.5%) identified that library board of director members were selected from a succession planning list. The statistic is significant and reliable because \( p \) value is less than .05 (\( p = .022 \)), and one cell (16.7%) has expected count less than five.

Table 4.27  *Selection of board of director members by position*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Were current library board of director members recruited as the result of succession planning?</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Not sure</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General staff</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>36 (33%)</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not sure</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library leaders &amp; managers</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9 (14.3%)</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not sure</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>45 (26.2%)</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>172</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Were current library board of director members recruited as the result of succession planning?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Not sure</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General staff</td>
<td>6 (5.5%)</td>
<td>36 (33%)</td>
<td>67 (61.5%)</td>
<td>109 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library leaders &amp; managers</td>
<td>3 (4.7%)</td>
<td>9 (14.3%)</td>
<td>51 (81%)</td>
<td>63 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>9 (5.2%)</td>
<td>45 (26.2%)</td>
<td>118 (68.6%)</td>
<td>172 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. 1 cell (16.7%) has expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3.30.
b. \( p = .022 \) (2-sided)

Similar to the selection of library board of director members, more online participants knew that current senior managers were chosen from a succession planning list (as shown in Table 4.28). For example, 103 of the 172 participants (59.9%) reported that senior managers were chosen from a succession planning list. More public general staff (74.7%) recognised this than academic general staff (46.1%). In particular, forty-eight of the eighty-nine academic general staff (53.9%) stated that they did not know, or were ‘not sure’ their current senior managers were selected as part of succession planning (\( p = .000 \)).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Not sure</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public library</td>
<td>7 (8.4%)</td>
<td>14 (16.9%)</td>
<td>62 (74.7%)</td>
<td>83 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic library</td>
<td>8 (9%)</td>
<td>40 (44.9%)</td>
<td>41 (46.1%)</td>
<td>89 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sub total</strong></td>
<td><strong>48 (53.9%)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>15 (8.7%)</td>
<td>54 (31.4%)</td>
<td>103 (59.9%)</td>
<td>172 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 7.24
b. \( p = .000 \) (2-sided)

### 4.4 Summary

This chapter presents two themes that emerged from both the online survey and the in-depth interviews: both public and academic library participants were aware of the role
of succession planning, and the importance of staff participation. With regard to the first theme, public and academic library participants presented differing views on the role of library succession planning. They reported that succession planning was important due to its benefits to library development and to the improvement of individual staff members in terms of professional knowledge. In addition, they also had differing perspectives about current succession planning in their libraries. Though succession planning was generally considered relevant to libraries, its use was not as prevalent as expected.

In relation to the second theme – the awareness of staff participation in succession planning - the role of general staff in succession planning was mainly through evaluation of and commenting on the candidates. In addition, general staff could recommend candidates and select the managers of library departments. General staff participation in succession planning allowed for the process being democratic and open, but also helped library leaders to avoid bias in the succession planning process. The participants indicated some differing views about restrictions of general staff. In some libraries, general staff comments on candidates were seen as the grounds to select potential candidates and others. The final decision of the succession planning list was from the top leaders and the Communist Party. General staff in these libraries did not even know the final list of succession planning. Lack of knowledge of the final list did not motivate them to perform their work better so as to be on the list.

As a result of staff awareness about succession planning and its processes, research participants believed that libraries could be stronger and more productive under the management of leaders who are engaged in succession planning. The following chapter discusses the third emerging theme of the study: insights into how library leaders implemented succession planning.
Chapter Five  FINDINGS
IMPLEMENTATION OF SUCCESSION PLANNING

5.1 Introduction

As noted in Chapter Three, four themes emerged from the data. Chapter Four discussed the first two of the four themes. This chapter now turns to the third theme: insights into implementation of succession planning. The ways in which leaders in Vietnamese public and academic libraries implement library succession planning involve criteria for selecting potential candidates, insights into the succession planning process, challenges, and some suggestions to deal with succession planning challenges.

5.2 Awareness of the criteria for selecting potential candidates

This section examines the desirable criteria for selection of potential successors. The interviewees identified a number of criteria or skills that a potential successor should hold. These include library professional knowledge, leadership skills including moral practices, political ideology, and other factors such as enthusiasm, working experience, work commitment, age, and external relationships (see Table 5.1).

Table 5.1  Criteria for selecting potential successors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Descriptors</th>
<th>Public Libraries (N = 14)</th>
<th>Academic Libraries (N = 9)</th>
<th>Total (N = 23)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professional knowledge</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership skills</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moral practices</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political ideology</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other factors (enthusiasm, working experience, work commitment, age, external relationships)</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The following section presents the findings related to each selection criterion noted in Table 5.1.

5.2.1 Professional knowledge

Professional knowledge is the knowledge required to respond effectively to the demands of the job (Haruki et al. 2006). Professional knowledge or expertise was viewed as a mandatory criterion for potential candidates by twenty-two of the twenty-three interview participants. For instance, Participant J stated, “We select candidates who have good professional knowledge” (IN.J.PL5). She also reported, “These candidates must have graduated from library and information school. If not, they must work at the library for many years to gain on-the-job knowledge” (IN.J.PL5). They also provided reasons why this criterion is necessary. For example, Participant I said, “Potential successors should have library expertise in order to allocate tasks and manage well” (IN.I.AL1). This comment suggests that, in this library, professional knowledge played an important role in human resource management and task performance. Similarly, Participant L stated, “The first thing intended successors should have is library expertise” (IN.L.AL4). Participant N explained, “It is hard for the potential leaders to manage their employees if they do not have professional knowledge” (IN.N.AL1). Participant H said, “With professional knowledge, successors can know how to deal with library work” (IN.H.PL3). Participant O added, “With professional knowledge, they can meet the users’ inquiries immediately” (In.O.AL3).

While these participants recognised the importance of professional knowledge and expertise in relation to human resource management, task supervision and job performance, another participant believed that professional knowledge could be developed on the job. Participant O said, “Intended successors must know library work although they did not graduate from library schools” (IN.O.AL3). Thus, professional knowledge through experience with hands-on tasks could support them in competing with other candidates.
5.2.2 Leadership skills

Leadership skills are a wide range of required abilities that leaders should have in their journey to success as managers. They include motivational skills, communication skills, time-management skills, fiscal skills, and conceptual skills (Coatney 2010; Kumaran 2012b; Martin 2009; McElrath 2009; Sutton & Booth 2012). Leadership skills were indicated by seventeen of the twenty-three participants as further criteria to select potential candidates for succession planning. For instance, Participant P asserted that, “Successors must have leadership skills. These skills are important because they will pilot, guide and direct library leaders to succeed” (IN.P.PL3). Participant W emphasised that “Candidates need leadership and management experiences in order to run the library activities successfully and move their employees forward” (IN.W.AL2). Participant B explained, “Candidates must have organisational and leadership capabilities. Without these attributes, it will be hard for them to know what leadership is about as well as how to deal with the challenges that may occur during practice” (IN.B.AL4). Moreover, Participant S said,

Potential successors must know how to direct or orient the employees and run library activities. As a result of working with a range of tasks allocated by the board of director members over two years, I learned that working in different roles with different general staff through interacting had enabled me to improve my leadership skills (IN.S.PL1).

From this comment, it appears that interaction with other general staff and performance of different assigned library tasks helped to develop appropriate potential successors in the library.

One of the leadership qualities required in Vietnam is moral behaviour. In Vietnamese settings, moral practices are understood as right and acceptable behaviour such as politeness, gratefulness, honesty, modesty, virtue, and so on. A moral person is a person who can control his/her behaviour so as to conform to these community standards. Moral practices, as another compulsory criterion for selecting successors, were identified by fourteen of the twenty-three interview participants. All of the fourteen comments indicate that moral behaviour should be a required criterion to select
candidates for succession planning. This characteristic would help potential leaders in directing staff and in considering and solving leadership problems logically and equitably. For example, Participant G said, “Good leaders should have both experience and moral practices” (IN.G.PL5). Likewise, Participant P believed that “A potential successor must have both professional knowledge and moral practices.” She also explained, “A leader will become a saboteur and the library will not achieve its goals if he/she has talent but behaves badly. Therefore, the staff cannot work with leaders who lack moral values” (IN.P.PL3). Participant B explained, “The leaders or managers who lack moral values are likely to be in a vulnerable situation. They will only care for themselves or think of their own rights rather than others” (IN.B.AL4). Participant Q commented, “Morals are necessary because some leaders are selfish and egotistic. They are not pleased when others are better than them” (IN.Q.PL6). Participant E considered that “Leaders with good morals find it easy to influence the other staff to work effectively” (IN.E.PL2). The issues of not being a moral person is further indicated by Participant B who stated, “When a leader is accused of corruption and abuse of power over his or her employees, they will soon leave their workplace” (IN.B.AL4).

These comments suggest that it would be hard to develop staff loyalty if leaders only thought of their own benefits. Whenever library leaders used their influence to gain benefits for themselves, general staff would be inclined to stay away from them. Participant E said, “Leaders are able to convince other people to follow them to complete organizational tasks if they lead with a good example for their employees” (IN.E.PL2).

5.2.3 Political ideology

Political ideology refers to the political beliefs and attitudes that citizens follow in the current social and economic system (Feldman & Johnston 2014). Political ideologies that reflect the views of the Communist Party relating to social and economic systems were indicated as necessary for successors by fourteen of the twenty-three participants. Participant F said, “Potential candidates should have good behaviour, moral values and political ideology” (IN.F.PL6). Participant G added, “Succession planning includes political ideology in order to abide by the Communist Party and state rules and policies”
Participant W commented, “If candidates are not good at political ideology, they cannot be added on the succession planning list” (IN.W.AL2). Participant E explained, “Political ideology is most important because our regime is Socialist under the Communist Party of Labour; all matters about management in society, or in the library must follow the national policies”. She also thought that “The Communist Party plays a decisive role in all social trends; therefore, leaders should have firm political ideology” (IN.E.PL2). Participant V stated, “If staff political ideology is inconsistent, then a would-be leader may face a real problem” (IN.V.PL4). Participant P explained, “If we do not consider political ideology in the selection process, we may be completely mistaken about potential successors” (IN.P.PL3). Political ideology was deemed by the participants to be a necessary criterion for selecting candidates for succession planning, as this would guide them in directing the library as determined by the Communist Party.

5.2.4 Other criteria

When being asked about other criteria for selecting succession candidates, many of the interview participants offered suggestions. Criteria with less than ten comments (out of twenty-three) such as responsibility, soft skills, sacrifice, and selflessness are not addressed in this finding. The criteria with ten or more comments were demonstration of enthusiasm for the position, working experience, work commitment, age, and external relationships.

Enthusiasm

Thirteen of the twenty-three interview participants indicated that demonstration of enthusiasm for the position should also be considered to select potential candidates. For example, Participant K said, “Intended successors should have enthusiasm for their job as a library professional” (IN.K.PL2). Participant F added, “A potential candidate must have enthusiasm for the library profession. From this enthusiasm, they will try their best to fulfil their tasks and develop their profession” (IN.F.PL6). Similarly, Participant E reported, “Enthusiasm will enable them to do their best for the development of library services” (IN.E.PL2).
**Working experience**

Thirteen of the twenty-three interviewees reported that long experience is another criterion that potential successors should possess. For example, Participant M stated, “Years of experience must be included in succession planning criteria” (IN.M.AL3). In particular, Participant N added, “The candidates must work at the library at least three or four years so that we can consider how they manage their work”. Participant J said, “Candidates must work at a library for a long time to gain real experience” (IN.J.PL5). Furthermore, Participant K reported, “I have learned so much experience at work and from former leaders about management and how to deal with leadership situations” (IN.K.PL2). Participant G stated, “We should consider other criteria such as gender, male and female balance, age, experienced people, young people with progressive tendencies and ethnic groups”. He also added, “The most important criteria are job loving, enthusiasm, activeness and clear viewpoint. According to me, these are so important because the other criteria (such as soft skills, writing skills, and English capacity) can be trained and improved in work performance” (IN.G.PL5).

**Work commitment**

Ten of the twenty-three participants reported that work commitment is necessary for selecting successors. For instance, Participant U said, “Potential candidates must desire to work at the library for a long time” (IN.U.PL2). Similarly, Participant E commented that “We choose the candidates who have capacity and tend to work at the library for a long time” (IN.E.PL2). Participant E also explained, “If the employees often raise ideas or suggestions to develop the library, we can believe that they will be with us for a long time” (IN.E.PL2).

**Age**

Twelve of the twenty-three participants mentioned age as a required criterion for selecting successors. For example, Participant H said, “Potential candidates must be in the ratio of three age groups (under 40, 40 to 50, over 50) assigned by the government guidelines” (IN.H.PL3). Participant V claimed, “We should select young and capable
candidates for succession planning” (IN.V.PL4). Participant G also stated, “Attention should be paid to gender, sex and young age” (IN.G.PL5). Comments like those of Participant V and G indicate that young candidates are preferable in succession planning.

**External relationships**

Ten of the twenty-three participants indicated that having the skills to maintain external relationships, such as social relationships (with friends), community relationships (with governors and laypersons) or professional relationships (with other librarians), is one of the leadership skills that a potential leader should have. For example, Participant B stated, “The fifth criterion is good relationships in order to collaborate with other units and organisations” (IN.B.AL4). In particular, Participant U said, “Potential leaders must have a social relationship because it helps to advocate library activities and increases library networking” (IN.U.PL2). These comments indicate that external relationships are necessary for selecting successors because they benefit the library when these successors become official leaders.

**5.3 Succession planning model**

Two models for succession planning emerged from the interview data, a bottom-up model and a top-down model. In a bottom-up model, general staff suggest a list of potential successors, and then the authorities consider the suggestions and make decisions from this list. In a top-down model, library leaders and/or Communist Party Committee members generally write an initial list of intended successors. Other general staff then evaluate possible successors from the list and select the best ones to be on the final list.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Descriptors</th>
<th>Public Libraries (N = 6)</th>
<th>Academic Libraries (N = 4)</th>
<th>Total (N = 10)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bottom-up model</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Top-down model</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.2  Models of succession planning process
Table 5.2 illustrates the number of libraries conducting succession planning with bottom-up and top-down models. One of the four academic libraries did not mention a succession planning process. All of the three remaining academic libraries employed a bottom-up model. In the meanwhile, half of the public libraries (N=3) selected a top-down model and half (N=3) followed a bottom-up model. In total, the number of libraries following bottom-up model is double to those conducting top-down model. In particular, Participant A explained,

We follow the top-down model of a pyramid. This model includes the governing board, then heads and vice-heads of library departments, and the like… The board sets up rules, regulations, and criteria for staff training for future jobs. Moreover they plan for long-term succession planning (IN.A.AL2).

This comment suggests that in this library the top leaders are the decision makers with regard to library policies about working performance, training programs, and succession planning. Additionally, Participant J explained that a top-down model was conducted in her library because there was no difficulty with it and it fitted into university guidelines. Participant J said, “Since a long time ago, my library has followed the process of succession planning from top down. I think it is satisfactory and the Personnel Officers also accept it. There is no problem to do this” (IN.J.PL5).

Experiencing challenges in conducting succession planning with a top-down model, one academic library decided to change from a top-down model to a bottom-up model. Participant L reported, “Learning from experience and succession planning problems, our university board of trustees changed the succession planning process by following the bottom up model” (IN.L.AL4). Participant L also thought that the bottom-up model enhanced succession planning and attracted contributions from the general staff. She said, “Building succession planning from the bottom up is a factor for sustainability. Library leaders should create opportunities for staff to develop their capacities and show their progress in order to be on the succession planning list. It also shows democracy and openness in succession planning” (IN.L.AL4). Similarly, Participant D advocated a bottom-up model because it helped him select suitable candidates for succession planning. He said, “Succession planning should be started from the bottom up. I mean
from our library. Then it will move to university level in order to select the right candidates” (IN.D.AL4).

### 5.4 Succession planning process

When being asked about what steps are implemented in succession planning, twenty-one of the twenty-three interview participants indicated a process with five phases: identifying the initial list, assessment, authority approval, training, and evaluation. Two participants did not provide information about a succession planning process. In the first step, participants had different views of how to develop an initial list. Thirteen of the twenty-one interview respondents reported that board of director members and the Communist Party Committee of the library made the list. Eight of the twenty-one interview respondents indicated that library staff are the list initiators.

The Communist Party may not necessarily provide its suggestion of candidates for the list. For example, Participant U said, “First, board of director members and the Communist Party Committee organise the meeting to make the initial succession planning list” (IN.U.PL2). Similarly, Participant C reported, “First of all, the Communist Party and library leaders select the potential candidates based on succession planning criteria and their capacities” (IN.C.PL1). However, Participant D stated, “First, succession planning starts from the bottom up. I mean from our library staff to create the initial list of candidates” (IN.D.AL4). In addition, Participant G explained, “The Communist Party may send us a list of suggested candidates. We can select or add new candidates for the list”. The differences in identifying an initial list are that in a top-down model board of director members and the Communist Party Committee of the library made the initial list, compared with library staff building the list if a bottom-up model was applied in their libraries. Although this step was conducted by different groups of people, its outcome on both models was a list of potential candidates which was ready for the next step — assessment. Potential candidates on the list may be different due to who initiated the list.

There were three views about by whom potential candidates were assessed. The first view was that general staff assessed and commented on the candidates’ strengths and
weaknesses. Eleven of the twenty-one interview respondents indicated assessment by general staff in their libraries. For instance, Participant V stated, “The second step in succession planning is collecting all library staff’s comments and opinions about the potential candidates” (IN.V.PL4). In particular, Participant P said, “Work performance history helps us consider if the candidate is talented, moral, and knowledgeable enough to take charge of a future managerial position” (IN.P.PL3). The second view was that candidates from the initial list had been assessed and commented on by the Communist Party members of the library before they were evaluated by general staff. Six of the twenty-one interview respondents addressed that process in their libraries. For instance, Participant R said, “We collect comments and opinions from members of the Communist Party Cell. Next, we collect library staff’s comments on the candidates’ strengths and weaknesses” (IN.R.PL6). As identified by four of the twenty-one interview participants, the third view was that after being assessed by general staff, potential candidates were evaluated by members of the Communist Party Cell if they were party members. For example, Participant C stated, “We move to the second step of collecting comments from all general staff. If a candidate is a Communist Party member, the Party Cell assesses his/her strengths and weaknesses, too” (IN.C.PL1).

These three different views of assessment show that libraries in the Mekong Delta conducted different processes for commenting on and evaluating candidates. They also indicate that there is no single clear guideline for how library succession planning is conducted. However, these libraries had two things in common. First, general staff might suggest more candidates or self-nominate for the list. Participant M indicated, “Capable candidates can nominate themselves for succession planning because we are conducting succession planning in a democracy-based atmosphere” (IN.M.AL3). Second, a trust ballot was conducted in these libraries to choose candidates for an official list to submit to leaders and the Communist Party Committee of the parent organisation. For example, Participant N claimed, “We collect library staffs’ trust ballots. Candidates must get a certain level (over 50% of total number of votes) to be on the succession planning list” (IN.N.AL1). However, Participant U complained, “I recognize that a female staff has good managerial skills, works well, criticizes and self-criticizes well. However, these things make her get less ayes in trust ballots and she can not be on the list” (IN.U.PL2).
Getting the approvals of leaders and the Communist Party Committee of the parent organisation is the third step of the process. This step is compulsory, as indicated by twenty of the twenty-one interview respondents. For instance, Participant R said, “We submit the list to the Department of Culture, Sports and Tourism to get their approval and decision on the official succession planning list for the library (IN.R.PL6). Participant W noted, “Although library leaders collected all staff opinions, intended candidates could not be added to the succession planning list if the Communist Party Committee did not consent” (IN.W.AL2). Only one participant stated that the Communist Party does not interfere in the succession planning process. “The Communist Party Cell will view the succession planning list and express opinions about the candidates, then ask library leaders to re-consider any particular candidate. The Communist Party does not decide who is on or off the list” (IN.T.PL4).

The next step is sending candidates to relevant training programs. Required is an intermediate or advanced course of political theory. Participant I reported, “On the professional aspect, candidates should attend the training programs for higher degrees. Every year, they are sent to short or long-term training courses. In addition, they should learn political theory, take the state management course and attend the course of the Communist Party to become Party members” (IN.I.AL1). Similarly, Participant B noted, “Advanced or intermediate level of political theory is a required course that potential candidates have to attend” (IN.B.AL4). In addition, potential candidates should be trained in English and computer capacity as suggested by Participant E. “For the specific programs, they must improve their English, IT and other skills for their future work” (IN.E.PL2).

The process ends with evaluating potential candidates again to ensure that they are qualified enough to stay on the list. Unqualified candidates will be sent to more training programs or removed from the list. For example, Participant H said, “We re-evaluate the candidates and if any candidate does not meet professional criteria, we can remove him/her from the list” (IN.H.PL3). Participant U stated that other qualified candidates will also be added to the list: “Succession planning is very flexible. We can re-check the candidates in order to add more active ones and remove any unsatisfactory ones from the list in a year” (IN.U.PL2).
5.5  Challenges of succession planning

In conducting the succession planning process, challenges are unavoidable. These challenges are related to position descriptions, work performance assessment, the age of library leaders, training programs for potential successors, and a weak link between succession planning and promotion. In addition to these challenges, potential candidates, general staff and library leaders have also encountered their own challenges, which are presented next.

5.5.1  Impact of position descriptions

Position descriptions or job descriptions are generally lacking in the libraries considered in this study. Table 5.3 illustrates the existence of position descriptions ascertained from the study’s questionnaire. Sixty-seven of the 172 participants (39%) responded that they did not have a job description. Forty-seven per cent (n = 39) of these were from public libraries and 31.5 per cent (n = 28) from academic libraries. Job descriptions were more common in academic libraries (56.2%) than in public libraries (44.6%).

Table 5.3  Awareness of position description

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Library type</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>In Process</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public</td>
<td>39 (47%)</td>
<td>7 (8.4%)</td>
<td>37 (44.6%)</td>
<td>83 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic</td>
<td>28 (31.5%)</td>
<td>11 (12.3%)</td>
<td>50 (56.2%)</td>
<td>89 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>67 (39%)</td>
<td>18 (10.4%)</td>
<td>87 (50.6%)</td>
<td>172 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When asked if position descriptions were updated (see Table 5.4), nearly three-quarters (74.7%) of participants stated ‘Yes’. One-quarter of participants were either not sure of (5.8%) or did not have an updated job description (19.5%).

Table 5.4  Awareness of updating position description

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Library type</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Not sure</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public</td>
<td>11 (29.7%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>26 (70.3%)</td>
<td>37 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic</td>
<td>6 (12%)</td>
<td>5 (10%)</td>
<td>39 (78%)</td>
<td>50 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>17 (19.5%)</td>
<td>5 (5.8%)</td>
<td>65 (74.7%)</td>
<td>87 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
From the online survey data it can be seen that the age of general staff had a moderate positive relationship with an awareness of position descriptions being updated (see Table 5.5). With a Spearman’s rho of .303, it can be understood that the older the general staff were, the more awareness of updating job descriptions they were likely to have. This is a significant relationship with \textit{p value} .004.

Table 5.5 \textit{Correlations between age and awareness of updating position description}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Correlations</th>
<th>Has your position description ever been updated?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spearman's rho</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Correlation Coefficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Has your position description ever been updated?</td>
<td>Correlation Coefficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Sixty-four of the eighty-six participants (74.4\%) indicated that they were personally involved in updating their own job descriptions (see Table 5.6). Once again, academic library general staff (77.6\%) were more involved in updating position descriptions than public library general staff (70.3\%). Nearly thirty per cent of public library respondents did not participate in updating their job descriptions. The number of academic library participants not involved with updating their position descriptions is fewer (22.4\%).

Table 5.6 \textit{Awareness of participating in updating position description}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Library type</th>
<th>Do you personally participate in updating your position description?</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Not sure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public</td>
<td>11 (29.7%)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic</td>
<td>7 (14.3%)</td>
<td>4 (8.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>18 (20.9%)</td>
<td>4 (4.7%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The age of general staff also has a modest positive relationship with awareness of participating in updating job descriptions (see Table 5.7). The data show that the older the staff, the more involvement in updating position descriptions staff they were likely to have (Spearman’s rho = .237). This is also a significant relationship because the \( p \) value was .028.

**Table 5.7 Correlations between age and awareness of participating in updating position description**

|                  | Correlations                                      | Age     | Do you personally participate in updating your position description?
|------------------|---------------------------------------------------|---------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Spearman's rho   | Age                                               | Correlation Coefficient | 1.000  | .237*
|                  | Sig. (2-tailed)                                  | .028    | .028*
|                  | N                                                 | 172     | 86*                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|                  | Do you personally participate in updating your position description? | Correlation Coefficient | .237   | 1.000*
|                  | Sig. (2-tailed)                                  | .028    | .028*
|                  | N                                                 | 86      | 86*                                                                                                                                                                                                 |

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

### 5.5.2 Work performance assessment

The second challenge to successful succession planning is work performance assessment, which was not commonly used in the succession planning process, especially in academic libraries. In the online survey (see Table 5.8), only thirty-two of the sixty-one academic library general staff (52.5%) reported that the results of work performance assessment were used for succession planning. However, for forty-nine of the sixty-six public library general staff (74.2%) work performance was relevant \( (p = .038) \). In addition, academic general staff (34.4%) were more confused about whether work performance assessments of general staff were used for succession planning than public general staff (18.2%). However, 63.8 per cent of online respondents indicated that work performance assessments were generally used for this purpose.
Table 5.8  Work performance assessment used for succession planning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Library</th>
<th>Is the work performance assessment used for succession planning?</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Not sure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 6.24
b. $p = .038$ (2-sided)

Table 5.9 displays correlations between position and awareness of work performance assessment being used for succession planning. There is a modest positive relationship, with Spearman’s rho .219. The higher the position general staff held, the more awareness they were likely to have about using work performance assessment to select potential candidates for succession planning. This is a significant relationship with $p$ value .011.

Table 5.9  Correlations between position and awareness of performance assessment used for succession planning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correlations</th>
<th>What is your current position in the library?</th>
<th>Is the work performance assessment of general staff used for library succession planning?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spearman's rho</td>
<td>Correlation Coefficient</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td></td>
<td>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the work performance assessment of general staff used for library succession planning?</td>
<td>Correlation Coefficient</td>
<td>.219*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td></td>
<td>.011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
Similarly, Table 5.10 illustrates correlations between position and satisfaction with the work performance assessment process. Spearman's rho -0.205 shows that is a modest negative relationship. In other words, the higher the position general staff held, the more satisfied they were likely to be with the process of assessing work performance. This also means that library leaders were satisfied with this assessment process, but general staff were not. It is a significant relationship with \( p \text{ value} .007 \).

Table 5.10  Correlations between position and satisfaction with performance assessment process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correlations</th>
<th>What is your current position in the library?</th>
<th>Are you satisfied with the processes in the way general staff work performance is assessed?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spearman's rho</td>
<td>Correlation Coefficient: 1.000</td>
<td>-.205**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed): .</td>
<td>.007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N: 172</td>
<td>172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are you satisfied with the processes in the way general staff work performance is assessed?</td>
<td>Correlation Coefficient: -.205**</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed): .007</td>
<td>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N: 172</td>
<td>172</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

5.5.3 Age

The fourth challenge was the age of female library leaders. Table 5.11 illustrates that nearly thirty-two per cent (31.7%) of library leaders in Mekong Delta libraries were middle-aged (from forty-one to fifty). Fifteen of the forty-two female leaders (35.7%) will retire in the next decade, with a mandated retirement age of fifty-five for women and sixty for men. Currently, six of the forty-two (14.3%) female leaders will retire after they finish their current managerial term. The age of male leaders was not as much an issue. Only four of the twenty-one male leaders were in the age group of over fifty, meaning that nineteen per cent of male leaders will retire in the next ten years. Similarly, the age of general staff was not an issue. Nearly forty-eight per cent (47.8%)
of general staff were under thirty years old and 45 per cent were aged thirty-one to forty years. In general, the library workforce in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam consisted of younger general staff and middle-aged library leaders. This contributes to the necessity of conducting succession planning to prepare for the next generation of library leaders, especially female leaders.

Table 5.11  Age of library staff by gender and position

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>General staff</th>
<th>Board of directors &amp; managers</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under 31</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>16 (14.7%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>36 (33%)</td>
<td>6 (9.5%)</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>52 (47.8%)</td>
<td>6 (9.5%)</td>
<td>58 (33.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From 31 to 40</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>21 (19.3%)</td>
<td>12 (19%)</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>28 (25.7%)</td>
<td>15 (23.8%)</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>49 (45%)</td>
<td>27 (42.8%)</td>
<td>76 (44.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From 41 to 50</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>3 (2.7%)</td>
<td>5 (7.9%)</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>4 (3.6%)</td>
<td>15 (23.8%)</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>7 (6.3%)</td>
<td>20 (31.7%)</td>
<td>27 (15.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher than 50</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>1 (0.9%)</td>
<td>4 (6.5%)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6 (9.5%)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1 (0.9%)</td>
<td>10 (16%)</td>
<td>11 (6.4%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

|                | Male   | 41 (37.6%)    | 21 (33.3%)                     | 62 (36%) |
|                | Female | 68 (62.4%)    | 42 (66.7%)                     | 110 (64%) |
|                | Total  | 109 (100%)    | 63 (100%)                      | 172 (100%) |

5.5.4 Training programs

The fifth challenge for succession planning was the organisation of training programs.

Table 5.12 shows that sixty-five of the 134 respondents (48.5%) said there were training programs for successors, while 27.6% (n = 37) thought there were not, and 23.9% (n = 32) were unsure about this matter (p = .012). It is evident that about half of the survey population (51.5%) indicated that training programs were not available for successors. In particular, more females claimed that they did not know or were unsure about the
existence of training programs for successors than males. This claim is discussed in more detail in Chapter Eight.

Table 5.12  *Training programs for potential successors*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Is there any program to prepare successors for their new roles?</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Not sure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td></td>
<td>7 (14.6%)</td>
<td>10 (20.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td></td>
<td>30 (34.9%)</td>
<td>22 (25.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>37 (27.6%)</td>
<td>32 (23.9%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 11.46
b. \( p = .012 \) (2-sided)

Only respondents who indicated that there was a training program for successors responded to the question in Table 5.12. Data in this table show that more than half of the respondents (67.2%) reported the training programs for potential successors have been evaluated. When a training program was evaluated, content and techniques for training was modified and as a result, this could enhance the effectiveness of training. However, it is likely that the higher the degrees held by staff, the less consideration there was of training programs for successors. Table 5.13 shows that participants with a masters' degree responded 'Yes' less than those with a bachelor’s degree.

Table 5.13  *Evaluation of the training program*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualification</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Has this program been evaluated?</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Not sure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master</td>
<td></td>
<td>4 (50%)</td>
<td>1 (12.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor</td>
<td></td>
<td>4 (8.1%)</td>
<td>11 (22.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than bachelor</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1 (14.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>8 (12.5%)</td>
<td>13 (20.3%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Supporting this pattern, Table 5.14 indicates the correlations between qualification and the evaluation of the training program for potential successors. This is a moderate negative relationship (Spearman’s rho = -.304). In particular, the general staff who were more qualified commented that there was no evaluation of the training program. Although this correlation is moderate, it is significant with \( p \) value .015.
Table 5.14  *Correlations between qualification and evaluation of the training program*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correlations</th>
<th>Qualification</th>
<th>Has this program been evaluated?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spearman's rho</td>
<td>Qualification Correlation Coefficient</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has this program been evaluated? Correlation Coefficient</td>
<td>-.304*</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Years of working experience also had a modest negative correlation with awareness of the evaluation of training programs (see Table 5.15). With correlation efficient Spearman’s rho of -.258, it can be seen that general staff who had more working experience were more likely to say that there was no evaluation of the training programmes. This is also a statistically significant relationship with *p value* .040.

Table 5.15  *Correlations between working experience and evaluation of the training program*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correlations</th>
<th>Working experience</th>
<th>Has this program been evaluated?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spearman's rho</td>
<td>Working experience Correlation Coefficient</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has this program been evaluated? Correlation Coefficient</td>
<td>-.258*</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.040</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
5.5.5 Poor link between succession planning and promotion

The sixth challenge was the weak relationship between succession planning and promotion. Table 5.16 shows that 118 of the 172 respondents (68.6%) stated that current library board of director members were promoted as a result of succession planning. More than thirty-one per cent of them were not sure or confirmed that current library leaders were not always from a succession planning list. This result attains significance and reliability with \( p \text{ value } .022 \), and one cell (16.7%) expected count less than five.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Was current library board of director members recruited as a result of succession planning?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Not sure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General staff</td>
<td>6 (5.5%)</td>
<td>36 (33%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library leaders &amp; managers</td>
<td>3 (4.7%)</td>
<td>9 (14.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>9 (5.2%)</td>
<td>45 (26.2%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. 1 cell (16.7%) has expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3.30
b. \( p = .022 \) (2-sided)

Table 5.17 shows the correlations between position and awareness that current board of director members were promoted from a succession planning list. This is a modest positive relationship with Spearman’s rho \( .217 \) and statistical significance with \( p \text{ value } .004 \). This indicates that library staff in higher positions were more likely to be aware that library leaders’ promotions were as a result of succession planning. It can be assumed that general staff might not know if board members were selected as a result of succession planning.
Table 5.17  Correlations between position and awareness of promotion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correlations</th>
<th>Were current library board of directors recruited as the result of succession planning?</th>
<th>What is your current position in the library?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spearman's rho</td>
<td>Correlation Coefficient</td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>.217</strong></td>
<td>.004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is your current position in the library?</td>
<td>Correlation Coefficient</td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>.217</strong></td>
<td>.004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>172</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Differing awareness of promotion was also linked to years of working experience (see Table 5.18). Seventy-seven of the 119 participants (64.7%) who have been working from one to ten years understood that current board of director members were promoted from a succession planning list. All staff who had worked more than twenty years were aware of library leaders’ promotions being as a result of succession planning (n = 22).

Table 5.18  Awareness of promotion by seniority

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Was current library board of director members recruited as the result of succession planning?</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years of experience</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Not sure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 1 year</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 to 10 years</td>
<td>6 (5%)</td>
<td>36 (30.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 to 20 years</td>
<td>3 (10%)</td>
<td>9 (30%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 to 30 years</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 30 years</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>9 (5.2%)</td>
<td>45 (26.2%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.5.6 Other challenges

Data from the in-depth interviews indicated various challenges associated with conducting current library succession planning. They consist of challenges for library staff, challenges for potential successors, and challenges for library leaders.

Challenges for library staff

Interviewees reported that there are various challenges related to succession planning for library staff (see Table 5.19). Here only a selection of the challenges is noted, based on the number of participants who reported the challenge. Twenty of the twenty-three participants indicated that their libraries have a small talent pool. For example, Participant I said, “At department level, we have a lack of qualified staff. We cannot find a candidate for the position of department head when the current one is not available” (IN.I.AL1). Similarly, Participant E stated, “As per regulation, our library must have another vice-director. However, we cannot find the right person for that position” (IN.E.PL2). In addition, Participant V claimed, “Most of our staff hold vocational training degrees and their professional level is low. Therefore, we have a lack of qualified staff for managerial positions” (IN.V.PL4). All of these quotes showed that a small talent pool is a great challenge for succession planning in Mekong Delta libraries in Vietnam.

Table 5.19 Challenges for library staff

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Descriptors</th>
<th>Public Libraries (N = 14)</th>
<th>Academic Libraries (N = 9)</th>
<th>Total (N = 23)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Talent pool</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional knowledge</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SP criteria</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff awareness of SP</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How to conduct SP</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library management</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personnel work</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A concern of library staff in regard to the talent pool was a lack of candidates with
professional knowledge. Seven of the twenty-three interview participants mentioned the shortage of suitable staff for succession planning.

The first difficulty is our library staff do not have managerial knowledge and skills. The second one is the staff are young and their involvement is low level. Most of our staff hold vocational training degrees and their professional level is low. Therefore, we have a lack of qualified staff for succession planning (IN.V.PL4).

According to the employment quota, my library can have forty-four staff. However, currently we only have thirty-four. Our library staff must therefore help each other to fulfil their tasks. Because of this work overload, our staff cannot manage any training program. So, the next difficulty is a shortage of staff for succession planning (IN.S.PL1).

Comments like these from Participants V and S indicate that library staff were concerned about the quality and quantity of the candidates available to be considered for succession planning in libraries with low numbers of professional staff, who are therefore overloaded with their daily tasks.

Another concern of library staff was their understanding of succession planning. The concept that library staff who had worked for a long time at the library would become leaders still existed in the minds of both public and academic library staff. Participant O from an academic library stated that library staff should pay attention to qualified staff in conducting succession planning. They should avoid the thought “Live long to be the village leader” (IN.O.AL3); that is, the ideal that long-serving staff will automatically succeed to leadership positions. In addition, Participant V from a public library worried about selecting the wrong candidates when the idea of “Living a long time will move up to leader” still existed (IN.V.PL4). However, Participant G from a public library said, “Among the staff who have similar qualifications, only the better and more competent are on the shortlist. Therefore, it is not the case that working for a long time means being promoted to a leader” (IN.G.PL5). These three comments indicate a belief that seniority should not be considered as a criterion in succession planning, and that library
staff were concerned about the existence of the concept “Long live to be the [village] leaders”.

**Challenges for potential successors**

In terms of challenges for potential successors, the main concern of both public and academic participants was the lack of desire to be part of succession planning. As shown in Table 5.20, nine of the twenty-three interview participants reported that potential successors did not want to be part of succession planning or be leaders. Participant B from an academic library thought, “Potential successors would not want to be library leaders because as a leader they have to focus on their leadership tasks and they cannot do part-time jobs for extra salary” (IN.B.AL4). Participant E from a public library explained, “Library staff think that doing professional work such as cataloguing books is easier than doing managerial work; they do not like supervising or guiding others. Thus, they do not accept when we add them to a long-term succession planning list” (IN.E.PL2).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Descriptors</th>
<th>Public Libraries (N = 14)</th>
<th>Academic Libraries (N = 9)</th>
<th>Total (N = 23)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Desire to participate in SP</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic, family and children</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communist Party member</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managerial and leadership experience</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library qualification</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English and IT skills</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenging tasks</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personnel record</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No challenge</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Another challenge for potential successors is related to family and economic issues, appearing in responses from both public and academic library participants. For example, Participant B from an academic library thought, “Library leaders should focus on their
leadership tasks and should not have part-time jobs for extra money. Therefore, many library staff do not want to be leaders” (IN.B.AL4). In addition, they might not be able to participate in the training programs because of their children. Participant C from a public library said, “Potential successors who are busy with their families have to postpone their training” (IN.C.PL1). Sometimes, they might leave the library even though they were on the succession planning list because they recognised “Salaries in the other organizations are much more than their library salary” (IN.F.PL6). These quotes indicate that library staff have to do part-time jobs for their living because library salaries are still poor. In addition, succession planning seems to be less attractive to them than financial gains from other high paying jobs.

Library qualifications were also considered as a succession planning criterion that challenged potential successors. Participant J indicated, “The library should choose those who have had good professional knowledge and graduated from library schools” (IN.J.PL5). Participant J also explained, “If potential candidates do not have library knowledge gained at schools, they do not know what is wrong with their staff and they cannot help them to solve the problem” (IN.J.PL5). Similarly, Participant N reported, “The first challenge in succession planning is a library qualification. Even though library staff may have worked for a long time and mastered all library activities, they cannot be on the succession planning list because they do not have a library qualification” (IN.N.AL1). This quote also shows that ‘long life in the library’ is not a necessary criterion for the selection of potential candidates.

**Challenges for library leaders**

Eleven of the twenty-three interview participants mentioned challenges that board of director members encountered. One concern was how to trial potential successors so that they could gain experience in library management and leadership. Director B from an academic library said library leaders should assign tasks for potential successors, and create opportunities for them to show their capacity for organizing and managing. This was also a way to challenge them in relation to responsibility and other necessary qualities of a leader (IN.B.AL4). Vice-Director C from a public library thought intended successors should be rotated to every library department so that they could understand all library work. This would be beneficial for them whenever they moved up to
managerial positions (IN.C.PL1). Director U from a public library reported, “Potential successors will develop gradually through practice. This will make them know how to deal with leadership tasks because nobody is perfect at the beginning” (IN.U.PL2). In addition, Director T from a public library believed that library leaders should introduce potential successors to the Trade Union, Communist Party, and the Youth Union Committee. Practising Union leadership was a good way for them to be better leaders later (IN.T.PL4).

Library directors are also faced by their own challenges in conducting succession planning. Knowledge of financial matters was their greatest concern in relation to what potential candidates should understand. Director U said that she encountered many difficulties in budgeting because only a director can decide on library finances and no one else can be involved. She reported, “I have never been trained for budgeting issues. Former training programs did not focus on library budget, either” (IN.U.PL2). Participant P added, “If leaders do not know accounting, accountants may cause problems for them” (IN.P.PL3). Thus, these concerns show that sometimes nothing is in place to assist potential successors in tackling financial issues. In Vietnamese libraries, only the director can decide on library finances; therefore, library directors should mentor successors in relation to knowledge and experience of library budgets to enable them to become better prepared for their future tasks.

Another challenge for library directors was their sense of justice. Six of the twenty-three interview participants determined they had to be fair in conducting succession planning. Participant C stated that the Communist Party Secretary and library director had the most power in succession planning; therefore, they had to have good judgement in carrying out succession planning. The most important thing was that library leaders should deal with problems fairly (IN.C.PL1). Participant R said, “The last decision of succession planning is made by the library director. Thus, a good director should have a sense of fairness and pay attention to library development in making any decision (IN.R.PL6).
5.6 Suggestions to deal with succession planning challenges

In the previous section, challenges in conducting succession planning are described: lack of job description, poor work performance assessment, unbalanced library workforce in terms of gender, age of library leaders, lack of training programs, and poor link between succession planning and promotion. Six suggestions to deal with succession planning issues were identified from the data: knowledge of succession planning, recruitment of qualified staff, more training programs, work performance assessment, challenging work, and leadership learning and innovation in succession planning.

5.6.1 Knowledge of succession planning

In order to deal with the challenge of understanding succession planning, library leaders should clearly brief potential successors about the role of succession planning, selection criteria, selection processes, and objectives of this activity. Participant H said, “Library leaders must explain to successors so that they can understand the purposes and role of succession planning. They should explain, give positive feedback and make them clear about succession planning processes and their future developments” (IN.H.PL3). Participant G stated, “Library leaders should follow the succession planning process properly” (IN.G.PL5). Participant K reported, “Library leaders should clearly reiterate the required strengths of the successors. They also determine that it is not automatic to be the next leader after succession planning” (IN.K.PL2). Participant J added, “Library leaders should pay attention to how their successors develop. It is not necessary to automatically become managers or leaders after they are on the succession planning list” (IN.J.PL5). “Succession planning is seen to be open and flexible. Staff should strive for mastery of skills and management. If you do not develop, you will be off the succession planning list” (IN.P.PL3). Participant D thought, “Mind must go with vision and vice versa. Library leaders cannot do anything if they have minds without vision and the same thing happens if they have vision without mind” (IN.D.AL4). This comment suggests that library leaders need to have ability to think for future actions and put this into practice.
In regard to the ability of potential successors to participate in succession planning as well as manage family and economic issues, library leaders could talk to them about their willingness to be promoted before recommending them. Participant M thought, “Library leaders should ask potential candidates if they would accept the position in succession planning. It is logical because it is not good if they refuse when they receive the decision” (IN.M.AL3). Participant S stated, “It is essential that we should know what staff are concerned about or interested in before listing them in the succession planning. If not, the succession planning process may be delayed if they refuse the offer” (IN.S.PL1). Participant V explained, “Library leaders should do this so that potential successors are ready and feel confident for their new positions” (IN.V.PL4).

As far as family and financial issues were concerned, Participant A said, “Library leaders should create more opportunities for them to get extra income” (IN.A.AL2). Participant L pointed out, “Libraries should bring in supplemental income (financial support) in order to improve their staff living standards” (IN.L.AL4). Supplemental income can be from a coffee shop, canteen, conference room for rent, bicycle shed and photocopy services. Leaders of a library could also consider this type of financial support as part of their responsibility. Participant F suggested, “Library leaders should find ways to support their employees financially so that they can stay at their jobs” (IN.F.PL6). All of these comments indicate that financial support for employees plays an important role in retaining qualified staff.

5.6.2 Recruitment

Recruitment of qualified staff was viewed as a suggestion to improve a shallow pool of talent. An emerging theme was the awareness of general staff that managerial position recruitment could be from inside and/or outside the library. As shown in Table 5.21, fifty per cent of academic and forty-one per cent of public libraries preferred to use advertisements for their recruitment both inside and outside the organization to attract qualified staff. This result is significant and reliable with p value .009, and two cells (20%) have expected count less than five.
Table 5.21  Recruitment of qualified staff

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Library</th>
<th>How do people know about recruitment opportunities for managerial positions?</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>External notice</td>
<td>Internal notice</td>
<td>Internal notice</td>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>None of these</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>2 (2.6%)</td>
<td>30 (38.5%)</td>
<td>32 (41%)</td>
<td>11 (14.1%)</td>
<td>3 (3.8%)</td>
<td>78 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Academic</td>
<td>9 (10.7%)</td>
<td>15 (17.9%)</td>
<td>42 (50%)</td>
<td>17 (20.2%)</td>
<td>1 (1.2%)</td>
<td>84 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>11 (6.8%)</td>
<td>45 (27.8%)</td>
<td>74 (45.7%)</td>
<td>28 (17.3%)</td>
<td>4 (2.4%)</td>
<td>162 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. 2 cells (20.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.93
b. $p = .009$ (2-sided)

However, fifteen of the twenty-three participants in the in-depth interviews stated that libraries should promote candidates from inside the library for managerial positions. They thought inside candidates had greater advantages. Participant I said, “We can trust library candidates within the organization because these people know the personalities and capacities of each library staff member and what they are doing for the benefit of the library” (IN.I.AL1). Participant J noted, “Potential candidates within the library can work well because they understand what should be done for the library and face less challenges” (IN.J.PL5). Only three participants preferred recruitment of outside candidates. Participant B said, “If our library does not have enough qualified candidates, we can recruit people who love to work in libraries and whose majors are close to library science such as education management, information technology, literature and English” (IN.B.AL4). These three participants believed that outside candidates might bring more benefits for their libraries. Participant P said, “New library leaders from the outside will bring new thoughts, innovation and the library will definitely develop” (IN.P.PL3). Participant M stated, “With the outside candidates, they may have new knowledge, new thoughts and new ideas that the library has not applied yet. This will help the library develop” (IN.M.AL3).

On the other hand, seven participants reported that their libraries had never recruited from outside for managerial positions. Participant E said, “My library has never recruited staff for managerial positions” (IN.E.PL2). Participant N reported, “Since I worked here, the library has not recruited anyone for managerial positions, especially the library leader position” (IN.N.AL1). These comments indicate that perhaps in the future a shortage of qualified candidates for succession planning in libraries may be
solved by recruiting outside library candidates. However, in the Vietnamese library context, staff recruitment from outside the organisation is only feasible in provincial areas, not in rural or remote regions where there are limited human resources.

5.6.3 Training programs

Another suggestion to having qualified candidates is training programs. Eighteen of the twenty-three interview participants recommended various training programs for potential candidates: higher education, professional librarianship, leadership and managerial skills, foreign languages, information technology, political ideology, state-run management, financial management, and soft skills. Eleven of the twenty-three interview participants reported that their libraries had sent successors to higher education programs. Participant A said, “We sent our candidates to study for higher degrees in foreign countries” (IN.A.AL2). Participant N stated, “College and vocational training staff can study for bachelor degree. Bachelor staff can study post graduate. They can apply to study abroad or in the local universities for higher degrees” (IN.N.AL1). Eighteen of the twenty-three interview participants determined that intended candidates should study to be library professionals. Participant Q said, “In my library, many staff have not graduated from library schools. Therefore, library leaders let them attend professional training courses” (IN.Q.PL6). Participant O stated, “When employees are recruited to work at libraries and plan to be successors, libraries should allow them to study professional librarianship” (IN.O.AL3). Participant W explained, “Potential successors should be trained in professional librarianship so as to apply it to their library’s management” (IN.W.AL2). Participant T said that “Library leaders should create priority conditions for them to study or attend seminars, workshops and conferences to update their knowledge” (IN.T.PL4).

Fourteen participants said that potential candidates should learn leadership and managerial skills as well as political ideology. Participant K commented, “Training programs are mainly about professional work, managerial skills and political ideology”. Participant R said, “Intended successors can be trained in leadership skills, human resource management, professional and political ideology” (IN.R.PL6). Similarly, Participant W reported, “Training programs will include both library management and
leadership” (IN.W.AL2). Participant E stated, “We send our successors to short courses on management skills. They are trained in management language, response to managing people, psychology, and other necessary skills for managers to deal with future managerial problems” (IN.E.PL2). Participant C explained, “We send our staff to training courses to get ready for succession planning” (IN.C.PL1). Participant J said, “Potential candidates should be trained in various skills and knowledge based on the requirements of their future positions” (IN.J.PL5).

Eight of the twenty-three interview participants indicated that successors should study English and information technology. Participant V said, “English and information technology knowledge are included in the training programs. In library work, we need foreign languages. We will face great difficulties if we have limited knowledge of English and information technology” (IN.V.PL4). Participant J stated, “In my public library, most employees major in library science. Therefore, it is necessary to train those employees in writing skills, computer skills, foreign languages, and state-run management” (IN.J.PL5). Participant K reported, “English skills are not included in the training programs. In order to encourage staff to study English, library leaders will support the admission fees for those who complete the English certificates” (IN.K.PL2). Only four participants mentioned studying state-run management in the training program. Participant B said, “If our staff want to be in leadership positions, they must attend some courses such as: advanced or intermediate level of political theory, state-run management, and keep on improving their own professional skills” (IN.B.AL4). In addition, Participant U indicated, “Beside training programs, the library director must mentor the potential candidates about financial management in the library so that they can avoid certain mistakes in financial decisions” (IN.U.PL2).

5.6.4 Work performance assessment

Twenty of the twenty-three interviewees reported that more attention could be paid to using the result of work performance assessment for succession planning. Participant T indicated, “Some criteria of work performance assessment are similar to criteria to select potential candidates such as moral practice, behaviour, result of work completion” (IN.T.PL4). “Work performance assessment shows general staff’s
strengths and weakness”, said participant C (IN.C.PL1). Participant E explained, “Through the work performance assessment process, general staff can know their colleagues’ task achievements which are used for selecting succession candidates and transparency in the succession planning process” (IN.E.PL2). In addition, participant J reported, “Choosing candidates for succession planning based on the result of work performance is a good way to avoid bias in conducting succession planning” (IN.J.PL5). Participant K noted, “From the work performance assessment, we can select the candidates who have outstanding achievements for the succession planning list” (IN.K.PL2). Participant B added, “Besides annual work performance assessment, my library also used monthly assessment. In a scale of A (Excellent), B (Good), C (Average) to D (Weak), only candidates with As or Bs are considered for succession planning” (IN.B.AL4). Participant P stated, “Work performance is one element to select qualified candidates for succession planning, we also consider their trend of progress in a year” (IN.P.PL3).

Participant H suggested, “We should add more criteria such as communication, behaviour, activities at the library, political qualifications, foreign languages, and information technology in the work performance assessment form to evaluate library employees” (IN.H.PL3). Moreover, participant M said, “We should discuss staff assessment in more detail. This involves political ideology, the extent of work completion, and self-improvement. In our university, we only have general reports like listing task assignments at the beginning of the year. The extent to which the tasks are fulfilled should also be considered.” (IN.M.AL3). Participant F made the comment that “Work assessment is not completely successful. For example, the “good employee” title requires having creative ideas. However, these creative ideas are not evaluated against standards. Whenever they register for this title, they will make up their work result to sound creative. This is not exactly right” (IN.F.PL6). Participant G recognised that “The way to conduct work performance assessment is important. If this procedure is done seriously and properly, it is reliable and not formalistic at all” (IN.G.PL5).

5.6.5 Challenging work

Challenging potential successors in their performance could be addressed by library leaders by assigning work for the candidates and assessing their performance regularly.
In the interviews, Director B said, “Library leaders should create opportunities for employees to prove their capacities for organizing and managing. Another benefit of this is that it may enable employees to take up new challenges” (IN.B.AL4). Director T added, “I assign potential candidates more difficult tasks. If they fulfil these tasks, trust in them from the other staff will be higher” (IN.T.PL4). Vice-Director O said, “Library leaders should know how to use their knowledge, guide them to work for the library. They can be on the list of successors if they show potential capacities” (IN.O.AL3). She also added, “The former generation of leaders should observe and introduce the next generation”. Director R stated, “When leaders praise their staff properly, they will be happy and have high spirits in doing their work” (IN.R.PL6). Manager A said, “Leaders should create a good working environment for staff and promote them into suitable positions” (IN.A.AL2). Vice-Director W said, “Library leaders should advise and train potential successors gradually” (IN.W.AL2).

5.6.6 Leadership learning and innovation

In order to deal with the challenges of having leadership and management skills, library leaders could learn from different organizations, including experience with conducting the succession planning process. Participant E suggested, “Leaders should look at other companies and organizations such as supermarkets and private companies to learn from them why they work more effectively” (IN.E.PL2). He also added, “Library leaders can experience and learn from these organizations so that library leaders can modify their managerial tasks”. Participant J reported, “Library leaders should take full advantage learning from other organizations such as the Labour Union and Female Committee” (IN.J.PL5).

In addition, library leaders have made some innovations in the way succession planning is conducted. Participant I said, “It will be better if we upgrade succession planning in three years” (IN.I.AL1). Participant K suggested, “The library should organize examinations for staff promotion and job retention. Staff among library departments should be involved in competition so that library leaders can select the most suitable, outstanding candidates and create more opportunities for their training” (IN.K.PL2). She also added, “We consider general staff benefits. We should use and develop the heritage of the previous succession planning results, add the current work requirements
and consider the present library situation” (IN.K.PL2). Participant G said, “Library leaders should conduct succession planning with required criteria by government, a sense of justice, objectivity, matching the right person with the right work” (IN.G.PL5). Participant V thought, “The board of director members and heads of library departments should meet, consider each candidate, and prioritise them, because the succession planning list from the library does not show priority” (IN.V.PL4). She also noted, “Library leaders can introduce potential candidates first so that all staff can comment on and recommend more candidates” (IN.V.PL4). Furthermore, library leaders should know how to deal with consequences such as staff frustration with library leaders and lack of enthusiasm for the future when they are not promoted as planned. For example, Participant K said, “Library leaders should clearly explain why they are not successful to be successors, help and encourage them for other opportunities” (IN.K.PL2). It could be that leaders had to take responsibility to every matter related to preparing top positions in their organizations.

5.7 Summary

This chapter discusses the findings of the online survey and of the interviews of the twenty-three library leaders and senior managers who shared their views and experiences about succession planning in a Vietnamese context. In particular, the criteria for selecting potential successors were taken into account. The most necessary criteria are library professional knowledge, leadership and management skills, and political ideology. Together with these criteria, others such as age, work commitment, enthusiasm, and years of working experience have to be considered. The data for this chapter also provided evidence of challenges of conducting succession planning. These challenges are related to position description, work performance assessment, age of library leaders, training programs, and promotion. Participants were also concerned about possible challenges not only for intended successors, but also for general staff. Library leaders have also encountered several challenges relating to potential successors and a sense of justice. Finally, the chapter concludes with some suggestions to deal with these challenges from the respondents.

The following chapter indicates the role of the Communist Party in library succession planning and the succession planning process.
Chapter Six THE ROLE OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY

6.1 Introduction

As noted in Chapter One, the Communist Party of Vietnam, also known as the Vietnamese Communist Party, is the only political party of the nation. The Communist Party plays the dual role of leading the Vietnamese people in the struggle against foreign invaders in time of war, and managing political, economic, cultural, and social matters of the country in peacetime. As also noted in Chapter One, succession planning is specifically considered a political duty of the Communist Party. It is the duty of the Communist Party to oversee the process of determining the next leaders for the nation, including in library and information contexts. This chapter articulates the role of the Communist Party in library succession planning and the impacts of the role of the Communist Party in library succession planning.

6.2 The role of the Communist Party in the library succession planning process

The role of the Communist Party in library succession planning was identified in the online survey data and in-depth interviews. This is a new finding of the research that emerged from the open-ended questions within the survey. This theme was not initially an issue under investigation, but was constantly raised by the participants in this research, as illustrated by the following participant comments:

The Communist Party plays an important role in succession planning. This is the organization which introduces potential candidates into managerial positions (ON.C2).

At present, succession planning is related to the political system. Only members of the Communist Party are selected to be the members of the board of directors. Library directors must be Communist Party members and they must be approved by the Communist Party Committee to become library top leaders (ON.C13).
We used to consider whether potential successors are Communist Party members. Their curriculum vitae (grandparents, parents, siblings, and relatives up to three generations) should be carefully verified for those who participated in any political organization or religion (ON.C17).

These three online survey comments indicate that being a member of the Communist Party was an essential criterion in succession planning for each of the libraries. In one library this related in particular to the position of library director, who had to be a member of the Communist Party. Other respondents suggested that at the beginning of the succession planning process, recommendations of potential candidates from the Communist Party were considered. At the end of this process for every library, the approval of the Communist Party Committee was required. In addition, intended successors in one library had their curriculum vitae examined in relation to three previous generations of their families. This is not uncommon in Vietnam.

As noted in the methodology chapter, emerging themes from the online survey were included in the in-depth interviews to obtain further information. Data collected for this purpose was also illustrated in the word cloud in Chapter Three – Methodology (Figure 3) where the researcher discusses the data tool and analysis, and it is also displayed in Table 6.1.

The word cloud from NVivo (Figure 3, Chapter 3) shows a visual representation of text based on word frequency. The more often a particular word occurs, the larger it will appear. In other words, the larger the word, the more attention the content of that word is paid in data analysis. The most frequent words are staff, leader and Communist. The matters related to ‘staff’ and ‘leader’ have already been discussed in Chapters Four and Five. This chapter focuses on the emerging theme of the Communist Party. The term ‘Communist Party’ appears in most of the responses related to the succession planning process, selection criteria, training programs, and succession planning challenges.

The Communist Party was noted when the respondents talked about steps in conducting the succession planning process. As noted in Chapter One, Communist Party members in an organisation usually have a monthly meeting, called the Party Cell meeting, to discuss major activities which have occurred and are planned to occur in the
organisation. Succession planning is included in such a meeting. Participant E explained:

Firstly, in the Communist Party Cell meeting, we [the Communist Party members] initiate the succession planning list. After that, this list is sent to the general staff. Staff of all levels will comment and express their opinions about the candidates. Thirdly, we submit the final list to the Department of Culture, Sports and Tourism (IN.E.PL2).

Another participant from a public library, Participant R, said:

In the first step of the succession planning process, there must be a discussion among board of director members and the Communist Party Committee to make a potential succession planning list. The second step is getting comments and opinions from administrators, including board of director members and heads and vice-heads of the library departments. The third step is collecting comments and opinions from the Communist Party Cell. The fourth step is collecting general staff’s comments on the candidates’ strengths and weaknesses. Finally, we submit the list to the Department of Culture, Sports and Tourism to get their approval and decision on the official succession planning list for the library (IN.R.PL6).

Participant L, from an academic library, reported:

At the library meeting, we [general staff] introduce the active and responsible candidates for each designated position. The Library Director will then submit the succession planning list to the Personnel Office of the university. Then this list will be sent to the Communist Party Committee and the university board of trustees for approval. The finalist is determined by the university board and the Party (IN.L.AL4).

With regard to criteria for selecting potential successors, being a Communist Party member was listed as one of the selection requirements. For instance, Participant Q stated, “According to my experience, the basic criteria are capacity, moral practice and
enthusiasm. The other criteria include being a Communist Party member for library leaders and appropriate qualifications for the heads of the library departments” (IN.Q.PL6). In addition, Participant E said:

    Political ideology which was led by the Communist Party is the most important criterion. Vietnam is planned to develop into a Socialist state and the Communist Party of Labour is the leading political party. Therefore, all matters about management in the society including the library must follow the state policies and leadership of the Party (IN.E.PL2).

When asked about training programs for potential successors, the majority of respondents prioritised training courses for intermediate and advanced levels of political theory. These courses are designed for Communist Party members. In other words, education relating to the Communist Party is necessary but only for Communist Party members. For example, Participant S said, “In library succession planning, I will be a vice-head of the administration division. Then I am appointed to study professional skills and political theory. It will take me six months to get the intermediate level of political theory” (IN.S.PL1). Participant B stated, “If qualified staff expect to be in leadership positions, they must attend an intermediate or advanced course of political theory” (IN.B.AL4). Participant E noted, “With regard to political ideology, potential successors have to take intermediate or advanced classes on policies and strategies in order to master them and apply them in particular library contexts” (IN.E.PL2).

Potential candidates who are not Party members attend a required course related to the Communist Party, such as basic knowledge about the Party, history of the Communist Party, Party policies, and rules. After successfully passing an examination, these candidates would be considered for party membership. Then they would be able to take intermediate or advanced political courses of the Communist Party (IN.N.AL1). All of these comments indicate that political theory should be part of the compulsory training programs for potential successors.

The involvement of the Communist Party in succession planning was also considered to be a challenge. Participant I stated, “The Communist Party plays a key role in determining who is in the succession planning list. Therefore, the Party can assign staff to accept any particular post. We must obey the decision of the Communist Party”
Participant E said, “There have been some outsiders appointed to be library leaders although our own succession planning had already been conducted. This is the result of the policy of leadership rotation of the Communist Party” (IN.E.PL2). In addition, Participant L reported, “Together with the members of board directors and personnel officers, the Communist Party discussed and made the list of potential successors based on qualifications of candidates. I think this decision is not appropriate” (IN.L.AL4). These comments all indicate that the role of the Communist Party is important for library succession planning of these libraries and is not always considered positively.

The next section presents other findings related to the role of the Communist Party, as indicated in Table 6.1.

Table 6.1  *The role of the Communist Party in library succession planning*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Descriptors</th>
<th>Public Libraries (N = 14)</th>
<th>Academic Libraries (N = 9)</th>
<th>Total (N = 23)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Important</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Top leaders CP members</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chairperson CP member</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involved in SP</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orient library political activities</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educate for political ideology</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborate with library leader</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comment on candidates</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approve the list</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make final decision</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CP: Communist Party
SP: Succession planning

Data from the interviews (see Table 6.1) shows that seventeen of the twenty-three participants considered the role of the Communist Party in library succession planning...
to be important. This role includes being involved in succession planning, orienting library activities, making decisions, or approving the succession planning list. Interview participants recognised that library succession planning was under Communist Party guidance and control. These interviewees stated that the Communist Party led the process and decision-making. For example, Participant C stated, “It is true that we are living in a political regime led by the Communist Party. All civil servants must abide by Communist Party policies in doing their tasks and duties. So, succession planning is also under the Communist Party’s control” (IN.C.PL1). Participant E explained, “The Party is representative of workers, farmers and intellectuals. The Communist Party is a decisive factor in guiding all activities in society. I think the Communist Party is also important in influencing succession planning” (IN.E.PL2). Participant B reported:

I do not know the role of the parties in Western countries, but the Communist Party is very important in all socio-economic and political aspects in Vietnam. Why do I say so? All succession planning processes must get approval from the Communist Party Committee and the Communist Party Cell. In the library, the Party therefore has a great influence on succession planning (IN.B.AL4).

Participant S stated, “The Communist Party is the key factor in library leadership. Through daily work, the Party members understand what the staff are concerned about and how they work towards their professional development” (IN.S.PL1). Participant R revealed:

The Communist Party guides library leadership. The library administrators are in charge of professional tasks, moral practices and behaviour, keeping staff focussed on their work, and maintaining enthusiasm for the library profession. The Communist Party is in charge of staff political ideology. Therefore, the Secretary of the Communist Party Cell is also the director of the library (IN.R.PL6).

In particular, Participant M stated:
In my university, the Communist Party plays a key role. All university activities, including succession planning, should get approval from the Communist Party Committee. When the university board of trustees plans to nominate a library director, they must get approval from the Communist Party Committee. Two-thirds of votes from the Communist Party are the minimum requirement for the university board of trustees to nominate a leader (IN.M.AL3).

All of these comments indicate that the Communist Party performs the roles of guiding, controlling, and decision-making in succession planning and nomination of candidates. With regard to library activities, twelve of the twenty-three interview participants reported that the Communist Party guided library development. For example, Participant E said, “The Communist Party is viewed as the decisive factor of the social activities in the library” (IN.E.PL2). Participant U said, “In a monthly library meeting, the Communist Party sets up what the organization should do politically, but not in detail. Library leaders must put these duties in practice” (IN.U.PL2). Participant O stated, “The Communist Party sets the right vision for library development and helps the library get good results” (IN.O.AL3). Participant F explained, “The Communist Party plays an important role in succession planning because it sets up policies and development trends for libraries” (IN.F.PL6). Participant J believed, “The Party plays an important role in succession planning; therefore, it is obvious that any organization led by the Party can function better than other organizations” (IN.J.AL4). All of these comments indicate that the Communist Party plays the role of directing library political duties, including succession planning, while the library leaders are the executives who fulfil these duties.

Eight of the twenty-three participants stated that the Communist Party makes the succession planning list. Six participants reported that the list is built by general staff. Six participants indicated that the Communist Party is not involved in library succession planning. Only three participants mentioned collaboration between the Communist Party Committee and library leaders in succession planning, in terms of creating the initial list of potential candidates. For example, Participant U said, “The Communist Party Committee and the board of director members sit in the meeting to make the initial succession planning list” (IN.U.PL2). Similarly, Participant A indicated, “Library leaders and the Communist Party Committee set up the succession planning list and
submit it to the parent organization” (IN.A.AL2). Participant G reported, “Library leaders discuss with the Communist Party Committee about the succession planning list before collecting all staff opinions about it” (IN.G.PL5).

Two participants reported that the Communist Party performed the role of organising and training staff. They also confirmed that the Communist Party Committee made decisions on succession planning, training, and providing further education. Participant U said, “The Communist Party Committee makes final decisions in succession planning and training staff” (IN.U.PL2). In addition, six participants agreed that the succession planning list should be approved by the Communist Party Committee. Participant C said, “The succession planning list should be accepted among the Communist Party Cell and the Communist Party Committee” (IN.C.PL1). Participant W stated, “Although library leaders collected all staff opinions, intended candidates could not be added to the succession planning list if the Communist Party Committee did not consent” (IN.W.AL2). All of these comments indicate the important role of the Communist Party in library succession planning.

Six of the twenty-three participants, however, believed that the Communist Party was not involved in library succession planning. For example, Participant N said, “Library succession planning is conducted at two levels: the board and department managers. The Party has almost no idea about this process” (IN.N.AL1). Participant G thought, “The succession planning process is decided by library leaders. The Party cannot impose their will on the list of candidates. Rather, the Party only leads and facilitates it” (IN.G.PL5). Moreover, Participant T explained, “The Communist Party Cell will view the succession planning list and express opinions about the candidates, then ask library leaders to re-consider any particular candidate. The Communist Party does not decide who is on or off the list” (IN.T.PL4). Comments such as these from Participants N, G, and T show that in these libraries the Communist Party played a role in succession planning but had no decisive involvement with it. Responsibility for and decisions on succession planning would be derived from library leaders.

The second aspect of the role of the Communist Party in succession planning relates to perceptions about the role of the Communist Party Secretary and Communist Party members (of the cell) in library succession planning.
Firstly, eighteen of the twenty-three interview participants mentioned the role of the Communist Party Secretary in library succession planning. Participant K said, “The Secretary of the Communist Party Committee is the most important person in the succession planning decision” (IN.K.PL2). Participant U stated, “The Communist Party Secretary can influence potential successors”. In addition, “The Communist Party Secretary’s opinion is important because it influences Communist Party members’ thought. The Communist Party Secretary’s opinion is as important as secret ballots” (IN.U.PL2). Participant R noted that “The Secretary of the Communist Party Cell and the board of director members can exchange ideas and mentor their intended candidates. Potential candidates will listen to them” (IN.R.PL6). All of these comments indicate that the Communist Party Secretary influences Communist Party members and potential candidates in terms of political ideology. The Communist Party Secretary was also an important person in succession planning decision-making.

Eleven of the twenty-three interview participants from both public and academic libraries also mentioned the role of Communist Party members in succession planning. Participant T from a public library said, “Party members can raise their ideas and opinions about succession planning candidates” (IN.T.PL4). Participant K noted, “Communist Party members from library divisions will assess and select the candidates” (IN.K.PL2). Participant H stated, “Communist Party members can participate, recognize, introduce, consult, observe and prevent mistakes and illegal actions in personnel management” (IN.H.PL3). Participant R said, “It is only Communist Party members or board of director members who can help general staff recognize their responsibilities and try to perform better” (IN.R.PL6). Notably, Participant I from an academic library said, “Party members tell the truth about what they think is correct in relation to succession planning. The Party listens and can make modifications to library activities” (IN.I.AL1). Participant J emphasised the role of the Communist Party members as representatives of the Party in succession planning meetings: “It is not required to get the Communist Party Committee’s acceptance to be on the succession planning list because Communist Party members have already been present in succession planning meetings” (IN.J.AL4). All of these comments suggest that Communist Party members can play the role of advisors or representatives of the Party in conducting library succession planning.
6.3 Impacts of the role of the Communist Party on library succession planning

This section indicates how the Communist Party influences the succession planning process and considers the impacts of these influences.

The impacts of the role of the Communist Party in succession planning emerged from the in-depth interview data. They consist of perceptions about the Communist Party role in maintaining fairness and equity in succession planning, and concerns about whether potential candidates are Communist Party members. Table 6.2 displays perceptions of the role of the Communist Party: that the Communist Party plays the role of maintaining fairness and equity in succession planning, the Communist Party does not take this role at all, succession planning criteria are themselves fair and equitable, and it is the library leaders who are responsible for maintaining fairness and equity in conducting succession planning. The following sections of this chapter present each of the four categories in detail.

Table 6.2 Perceptions about the Communist Party in maintaining fairness and equity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Descriptors</th>
<th>Public Libraries (N = 14)</th>
<th>Academic Libraries (N = 9)</th>
<th>Total (N = 23)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fair and equitable</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not fair and equitable</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SP criteria themselves</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role of library leaders</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Firstly, fourteen of the twenty-three interview participants indicated the role that the Communist Party played maintained fairness and equity in succession planning. Participant H believed, “The Communist Party is always fair and equitable because it collects the comments and assessments from all general staff and the Communist Party members” (IN.H.PL3). Participant O said, “As the Party is seen to be fair and equitable, it helps us to select the most enthusiastic, capable and dedicated leaders (IN.O.AL3). Participant K reported, “The Communist Party issued documents to guide succession
planning. Following the guidelines in these documents will help to maintain fairness and equity” (IN.K.PL2). Furthermore, the Communist Party supports library leaders in staying away from bias. Participant G said:

The Communist Party helps library leaders reduce bias. Through observing and inspecting, the Communist Party determines whether library leaders are dictatorial, nepotistic and authoritarian. Then, the Communist Party will reorient them (IN.G.PL5).

Data from the interviews also show that the Communist Party affects every stage of the library succession planning process. In some libraries, the Communist Party Committee and library leaders initially make up a succession planning list. For instance, Participant W reported, “Our University came up with an innovation in succession planning this year. General staff can vote for successors through secret ballots. In the past, only the Communist Party Committee and library leaders set a succession planning list” (IN.W.AL2). During the library succession planning procedure, the Communist Party Committee approves potential candidates for participation in a higher education training program. Participant U said, “The Communist Party plays the role of organizing and training. The Communist Party Secretary is the chairman and makes decisions about succession planning, training and providing further education” (IN.U.PL2). At the end of the succession planning journey, the Communist Party makes the final decision on the list of successors. Participant L indicated that “The final decision on succession planning is from the university board of trustees and the Communist Party Committee” (IN.L.AL4). All of these comments help to show that through documents and policies, as well as direct or indirect involvement, the Communist Party has played a role in making succession planning fair and equitable.

In contrast to the above comments, three participants thought that succession planning was not fair and equitable. Participant I said, “Those with high managerial positions and good relationships might have more priority in succession planning than others” (IN.I.AL1). In addition, Participant F considered that “The Communist Party’s role to be fair and equitable is limited in succession planning. It is biased sometimes in the decision-making processes” (IN.F.PL6). Participant Q believed, “Of two candidates with equal capacities, only the person who is a party member will be selected for
succession planning” (IN.Q.PL6). In addition, Participant R thought, “In principle, the Party tries to ensure its equity, objectivity, and honesty in succession planning. However, in reality, as human beings, Party members may not do this as well as possible and can have biased views and personal opinions” (IN.R.PL6). All of the comments stated above indicate that the Communist Party might not ensure fairness and equity in library succession planning.

The third and fourth categories show the participants’ different views about whose role it is to maintain fairness and equity, if not the Communist Party. Three participants stated that the nature of succession planning criteria plays this role. Participant C stated, “It is succession planning criteria that shows its fair and equitable nature. Candidates must demonstrate their efforts in performing work, improving professionally and increasing knowledge and receiving secret ballots from all colleagues” (IN.C.PL1). Participant E reported, “We follow four selection criteria and the succession planning process. There is no worry about fairness and equity at all” (IN.E.PL2). Meanwhile, another three participants stated that library leaders take on this role instead of the Communist Party or succession planning criteria. Participant G said, “Library leaders are in charge of being fair and equitable. The Communist Party does not interfere” (IN.G.PL5). These comments indicate that succession planning criteria themselves and library leaders are two factors, other than the involvement of the Communist Party, which can help to maintain fairness and equity in library succession planning.

The second aspect of the impact of the role of the Communist Party is related to concerns about potential candidates being Communist Party members.

Table 6.3 displays three categories that the interviewees focused on when asked whether it is necessary to be a Communist Party member to be a candidate for succession planning. The categories are ‘should be Communist Party members’, ‘not be Communist Party members’ and ‘requirement of political ideology if not Communist Party members’.
Table 6.3  Concerns about Communist Party membership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Descriptors</th>
<th>Public Libraries (N = 14)</th>
<th>Academic Libraries (N = 9)</th>
<th>Total (N = 23)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communist Party membership</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>necessary</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communist Party membership</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unnecessary</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political ideology of potential candidates important</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ten of the twenty-three interview participants from both public and academic libraries determined that potential successors must be Communist Party members in their libraries. Communist Party membership was considered a succession planning criterion that affected the potential of successors. For instance, Participant B said, “The greatest challenge is that the intended successors are not Communist Party members” (IN.B.AL4); and “In order to become a manager, it is required to be a Communist Party member. Thus, we [library leaders and the Communist Party Cell] should pay attention to help them to become Communist Party members” (IN.N.AL1). Participant V reported, “Being a member of the Communist Party is a necessary condition to be a successor because it will be very hard for general staff to lead the Communist Party members” (IN.V.PL4). Comments such as those of Participant B, N and V indicate that being a member of the Communist Party is a requirement to be included on the library succession planning list.

In contrast, five of the twenty-three interview participants stated that it was not a requirement to be a Communist Party member. Participant J from an academic library indicated, “It is not necessary to be a Communist Party member. In some cases, a non-Communist Party member can also lead the organization successfully” (IN.J.AL4). Participant T from a public library explained that in documents or policies related to succession planning, there was no criterion about Communist Party membership. She said:

There is no single document that states the role of the Party in succession planning. However, leaders have to take it for granted in the decision-making
processes. Therefore, before becoming leaders, qualified staff are usually selected and trained to become Party members (IN.T.PL4).

Participant H held the same view, that being a Communist Party member was not a requirement for succession planning but Communist Party members were preferable. She reported:

It is not necessary to be a Communist Party member to become a candidate on the succession planning list. However, there are some exceptions. If the leader is a Party member, then he or she may take higher responsibilities than general staff do (IN.H.PL3).

Participant N explained:

Even though the potential candidate has not been a Communist Party member when succession occurs, this is acceptable. However, an action that must be taken immediately is sending this candidate to Communist Party courses. If there is no course at the parent organisation, it is arranged for the candidate to study outside the parent organisation. This must be done so that the candidate is accepted to be a Communist Party member when she is appointed as a library leader (IN.N.PL1).

Simply stated, being a member of the Communist Party is not a requirement to be included on the succession planning list. However, some of the above comments indicate that Communist Party membership is preferable and being a Communist Party member is necessary at the time of promotion.

As noted in Chapter Five, suitable political ideology is a compulsory criterion in selecting potential successors. In this chapter, political ideology is again indicated as a necessary requirement if the candidate has not been a member of the Communist Party. Five participants from public libraries noted that a staff member’s political ideology shaped by the Communist Party was necessary. Participant F said, “According to me, first the candidates should have professional librarianship [qualifications] and have worked at the library for many years. In addition, they should have good behaviour,
moral practice and political ideology” (IN.F.PL6). Participant V noted that “Political ideology is necessary because an unstable viewpoint is a challenge for potential successors” (IN.V.PL4). In particular, Participant C added, “Political ideology is very important. If the candidate’s personal records show that their family and relations have not met government policies, the candidate may be rejected” (IN.C.PL1). He also explained, “In the state and the Communist Party rules, they list what kind of family background cannot be considered to introduce employees to be the party members. These rules are applied into succession planning, too” (IN.C.PL1). Participant C’s comments indicate that not only the successors themselves, but also their immediate family members and relatives, must have good political ideology to be selected for the succession planning list. This taken-for-granted view often results in a small talent pool in library succession planning.

6.4 Summary

This chapter presents the role of the Communist Party of Vietnam in library succession planning in the Mekong Delta. The Party has clearly been involved in guiding and orienting library operations and leadership. In particular, the Communist Party appears to play an important role in library succession planning. In the succession planning process, the Communist Party often takes the role of initiating, guiding, observing, checking, assessing, and decision-making. The Party performs these roles through policies, guidance, and collaboration with the Communist Party Cell at each organisation. The members of the Communist Party Cell potentially perform unique roles in succession planning. The Secretary of the Communist Party Cell is often the chairperson in conducting and making decisions related to this process. The Secretary also appears to play the role of mentor for potential successors in terms of political ideology. Additionally, the Communist Party members might comment on potential candidates or be the representatives of the Party in conducting succession planning. Finally, more interview participants than not (ten out of fifteen) supported the criterion of being a Communist Party member to become a successor in library and information settings. If candidates are not Communist Party members, they might study Communist Party courses to become Communist Party members in order to be promoted.
The following chapter discusses in more detail why succession planning is desirable in Mekong Delta libraries, how library leaders implement it, the role of general staff in participating succession planning, and what potential challenges there are in library succession planning.
Chapter Seven DISCUSSION

7.1 Introduction

This study explores how succession planning has been undertaken within the context of academic and public libraries in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam. As noted in Chapter One, although the Vietnamese government has paid much attention to succession planning and enacted several policies and guidelines for instruction of all industries in the country, issues remain in conducting succession planning in the library and information sector. Increasing awareness of the potential of succession planning and insights into the implementation of library succession planning are crucial to fulfil the Vietnamese government’s policies on succession planning, and are important for library management generally. This chapter and the following chapter discuss important aspects of the research findings. They include why succession planning is desirable in Mekong Delta libraries, criteria for selecting potential candidates, the succession planning process, the role of the Communist Party in succession planning, required elements for a successful succession plan, and factors impacting on library succession planning.

7.2 Desirability of succession planning in Mekong Delta libraries

This section highlights the extent to which succession planning is desirable in libraries in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam. Data from the online survey and in-depth interviews indicates that library succession planning in the Mekong Delta needs to be developed further to deal with changes in library workforce and leadership. Several reasons are given for why succession planning is desirable: the impending retirement of board of director members, dual benefits to employees and the library, keeping qualified staff, opportunities for professional and skills training, encouragement of general employees and potential successors to aim for better work performance, and potential contribution to library strategic planning. Each of these reasons is discussed in more detail following.
7.2.1 Impending retirement

The online survey data of this research show that half of the research participants categorised as general staff in Mekong Delta libraries will reach retirement age within fifteen years. Nearly forty-eight per cent of members of boards of directors (47.6%) and half of this again of senior managers (23.8%) will also retire in the next decade. More urgently, up to a quarter of board of director members (23.8%) will retire after they finish their current managerial term (2010-2015). As noted in Chapter Two, the retirement age in Vietnam is fifty-five for women and sixty for men. No information related to change in the workforce as a result of retirement and leadership in Vietnamese libraries has been found in the literature. In Western countries the literature shows that imminent retirements are a significant challenge in library succession planning. In particular, several research studies indicate that the exodus of Baby Boomers as they reach retirement age is having a high impact (Bedard 2009; Galbraith, Smith & Walker 2012; Lyon, Dunn & Sinn 2011; Singer, PM & Griffith 2010; Topper 2008). In research into how to develop a strong and diverse workforce, Lyon, Dunn and Sinn (2011) indicate that “A significant number of Baby Boomer librarians will leave the workforce in 2016” (p. 232) and that their retirement will be a great loss. Their skills and knowledge of the library profession will go with them, and this may be costly. More urgently, Singer, PM and Griffith (2010) assert that “Retirements are likely to peak between 2015 and 2020 when more than forty-five per cent of librarians will reach retirement age” (p. 4). The percentage of library leaders who will retire is even higher than general staff. Topper (2008) and Galbraith, Smith and Walker (2012) claim that fifty per cent of public library directors and twenty per cent of research library directors will retire in the next five years in the United States. Bedard (2009) warned that half of the leaders of the American Association of Health Sciences Libraries and the American National Library of Medicine planned to retire in the near future. No further research on the prediction has been located.

In Australia, many researchers have indicated concern about the aging workforce of the library profession (Hallam 2007; Hicks 2011; McCarthy 2005; Romaniuk & Haycock 2011). In her article about planning a future workforce, Jenny McCarthy (2005) from Queensland University of Technology library reported the age profile of the library profession in large-sized university libraries. She noted that eighty per cent of senior
managers in her library were over fifty. Fifty-two per cent of library staff at Curtin University Library were over forty-five years old, and 49% at the University of Technology Sydney libraries. McCarthy (2005) predicted that a significant number of library staff, including senior managers, would retire in the following five to ten years. Consequently, library leaders should provide staff with opportunities to learn leadership skills for the future. These numbers are a warning regarding the urgency of succession planning in order to prepare well for the next generation of leaders. As Galbraith, Smith and Walker (2012) state, “Because library leaders are aging, there is a need to identify and train their successors” (p. 221). In addition, Whitmell (2002) and Rothwell (2010) suggest that it may be wise for library succession planning to provide the next generation of library leaders with the relevant skills and knowledge they will require. Moreover, Pennell (2010) asserts that it is also the right time to transfer the knowledge and experience that the Baby Boomer generation have accumulated throughout their careers to their potential successors before retirement.

7.2.2 Dual benefits of succession planning

Data from the online survey and in-depth interviews show that succession planning in Mekong Delta libraries is desirable for both the library and employees. The findings from the online survey showed that succession planning is considered ‘important’ or ‘very important’ for libraries: 157 in total of the 172 participants (91.3%) responded that it was important and very important, with 34.3% and 57% respectively. Both public library and academic general staff had a positive view (i.e. ‘important’ or ‘very important’) of the role of library succession planning. Specifically, eighty of the eighty-three public general staff (96.4%) and seventy-seven of the eighty-nine academic general staff (86.5%) stated that library succession planning was ‘important’ or ‘very important’.

In the interviews, eleven of the twenty-three respondents indicated that succession planning provides benefits to both the library and employees. It maintains and develops leadership, and enhances library services through employees’ work performance. For example, Participant J stated her view on succession planning benefits: “I have learned so much at work and from the former leaders about management and how to deal with leadership situations” (IN.J.PL5). Participant C said “Succession planning is very
important because it has a great effect on the quality of library operations” (IN.C.PL1). Succession planning also creates the appropriate environment to improve managerial skills for qualified staff. For instance, Participant H said, “The right succession planning will help to nominate and use staff right. Then, it can help to develop staff capacities and their strong points” (IN.H.PL3). Comments such as those of Participants J, C, and H indicate that succession planning is helpful for libraries and employees themselves.

This finding supports other studies on the role of succession planning (Arnold, Nickel & Williams 2008; Bridgland 1999; Galbraith, Smith & Walker 2012; Holcomb 2006; Kleinsorge 2010; Kundanis 2014; Nixon 2008; Shen & Cannella 2003; Singer, PM & Griffith 2010; Topper 2008; Whitmell 2002, 2005b). In research on how to prepare future library leaders, Galbraith, Smith and Walker (2012) indicate that without succession planning, libraries will find themselves in difficulty when key positions become vacant. Library leaders are the soul of the organisation and they can make things in the library happen. Galbraith, Smith and Walker (2012) also explain that succession planning helps to train potential candidates in leadership skills needed for their current and future positions. Succession training programs can help potential candidates gain additional skills such as managerial, supervisory and leadership skills. Through training, coaching and mentoring during the succession planning process, leadership for the future can be cultivated and professionalism therefore protected (Rolfe 2010). Succession planning also accumulates and maintains leadership knowledge whenever previous leaders can mentor or transfer their experience to the next generation of leaders.

In the social context, Arnold, Nickel and Williams (2008) indicate that effective succession planning can also meet the desire of employees to advance in career and external relationships. This sentiment is shared by Whitmell (2002) who confirms that succession planning not only aims at attracting and retaining people, but also creates good opportunities to train those individuals in the skills that they need to further their growth. Simply stated, succession planning is a starting point for the career ladder (Kundanis 2014). Importantly, Bridgland (1999) argues that succession planning not only provides employees with education and development opportunities, but also improves their morale and ability to respond to changing organisational and environmental demands. Sharing Bridgland’s view, Kundanis (2014) emphasises that a
succession plan is a good way to deal with some changes in library staffing, such as the aging workforce caused by the Baby Boomer population nearing retirement, a shallow talent pool, and loss of skills when staff leave. Their research and the research reported here demonstrate the link between succession planning and ‘inspirational motivation’ – one of the four components of transformational leadership theory (the others are idealized influence, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration), as highlighted by Bass (1985). Through the succession planning process, library leaders can inspire and motivate their employees to study, work well, and improve themselves so as to be considered for promotion. This role is supported in the literature in discussions of transformational leadership theory by Lippstreu (2010), Eli Konorti (2008) and Givens (2008). This perspective may raise library leaders’ awareness of the need for motivating and training successors. The findings of this study contribute to our understanding of how succession planning in this context may be enhanced by library leaders’ and general staff awareness of the role they play in the implementation process.

Importantly, the online survey data demonstrated a relationship between age and awareness of the importance of succession planning. In other words, older general staff are likely to have an increased awareness of the importance of succession planning. Data from the online survey also displayed a correlation between years of experience and awareness of the important role of succession planning. The more years of working general staff had experienced, the more understanding of succession planning they were likely to have. Furthermore, awareness of the importance of succession planning most likely increased when general staff held a higher professional qualification.

7.2.3 Retention of qualified staff

The relationship between succession planning and retention of qualified staff was a major concern of research participants. Nineteen of the twenty-three participants interviewed argued that succession planning was a good way to retain qualified employees. For instance, Participant I stated, “Succession planning has been considered as a good way to keep qualified staff” (IN.I.AL1). Likewise, Participant V explained this relationship: “If qualified staff are not satisfactorily acknowledged, then they will think of working for other organizations” (IN.V.PL4). Adding to this, Participant F said, “Succession planning is considered as a way to keep qualified staff. If not, they may
leave the library because salaries in the other organizations are much more than those in the library” (IN.F.PL6). The relationship between succession planning and retention of qualified staff has been documented in many studies (Bridgland 1999; Deards & Springs 2014; McLean, Scale & Rouse-Jones 2014; Nixon 2008; Rothwell 2010; Simpson & West 2014; Singer, PM & Griffith 2010; Strothmann & Ohler 2011; Stueart & Sullivan 2010; Whitmell 2002; Williams 2010). Rothwell (2010) states that succession planning aims to continue key managerial positions, retain qualified staff, and maintain the tacit knowledge of the organization. Similarly, a study by Williams (2010) highlights that succession planning can attract external talent as well as influence the retention of existing employees. As noted by Whitmell (2002), succession planning also assists in retention of staff by sending a clear message to those looking for upward movement that they will receive the encouragement and support they need within the organisation. Furthermore, Stueart and Sullivan (2010) indicate that succession planning provides several benefits, including improving retention and preparing staff for leadership roles. This finding suggests the opportunity to develop through succession planning is one of the strategies to attract and keep potential talent, as noted by Simpson and West (2014).

7.2.4 Training opportunities

As far as training opportunities are concerned, all of the twenty-three respondents argued that succession planning created opportunities for professional and skills training for library employees in general, and for potential successors in particular. Library employees benefit from succession training programs because some library leaders want to share their leadership experience and provide training for all library employees. These library leaders do so because they believe that all employees may have opportunities for promotion in the future, not just the current potential candidates.

Training programs provide positive conditions for job development and moving up the career ladder. For example, Participant A stated, “Staff will have more opportunities to study to get ready for future positions and for the succession planning pool” (IN.A.AL2). Participant K recognised that “General staff can benefit from training programs such as professional work, managerial skills, ideology and state-run management” (IN.K.PL2). As a library director, Participant T said, “General staff and
potential successors can benefit much when I share my leadership experience and expertise” (IN.T.PL4). Participant T’s understanding of sharing indicates why succession planning can benefit everyone in the library. This finding related to the benefits of training opportunities in succession planning is supported by Whitmell’s recommendation: “Consider succession and workforce planning in every aspect of the recruitment, retention, training and career planning of all staff in libraries” (Whitmell 2005b, p. 158). Moreover, McMurray et al. (2012) indicate in their pilot succession planning program that succession planning can provide training opportunities for participants. McMurray and colleagues further stress the advantages of training programs which address leadership skills, the need for a career path, and decision-making processes. This research also illustrates the link between succession planning and ‘individualised consideration’ in transformational leadership theory. By taking individuals' needs and interests into consideration, leaders can bring staff together, provide them with opportunities to learn and contribute to their professional growth.

7.2.5 Encouragement and motivation

Another benefit of succession planning found in this study was that it encourages general staff to seek more opportunities in their working lives and motivates potential candidates to perform their tasks well. Evidence of improved work performance as a result of succession planning was provided. Sixteen of the twenty-three interviewed participants recognised this benefit. For instance, Participant F reported, “General staff can have more opportunities to be in the succession planning list … Non-successors who work well are also reconsidered to be on the list” (IN.F.PL6). Participant F’s view of succession planning is that it encourages staff to be motivated in their work. Participant D said, “Potential successors are not automatically the next leaders or managers. Successors should continue to develop and they would be taken off the list if they no longer satisfied the required criteria” (IN.K.PL2). This finding was supported by research considering motivation in succession planning (Fitsimmons 2013; Singer, P, Goodrich & Goldberg 2004; Singer, PM & Griffith 2010; Whitmell 2002). Singer, PM and Griffith (2010) point out that succession planning motivates potential candidates to do more than is expected. In a similar study, Fitsimmons (2013) stresses that it is hard to motivate general staff to do a good job or represent the library well if they have no ambition and lack the desire to contribute to the library’s development. Fitsimmons’
view is that succession planning has positive impacts on general staff and potential candidates for improved productivity. The finding of this study concurs with ‘inspirational motivation’ - one of the four components of transformational leadership theory as affirmed by Bass (1985). This theory claims that through inspirational motivation, transformational leaders can motivate their employees to engage with job requirements, career development, or promotion opportunities.

7.2.6 Relevance of succession planning

Fourteen of the twenty-three interview participants recognised the relevance of succession planning for their particular libraries. For instance, Participant K from a public library stated, “Succession planning is suitable for my library. The library has already implemented succession planning and has good preparations for successors who are showing progress” (IN.K.PL2). This comment indicates that library leaders should be prepared for their future positions. Participant J said, “I realise that succession planning fits into my library as leaders find it relevant” (IN.J.PL5). Although most of the participants indicated that the existing succession planning is relevant to libraries, five participants raised differing views. For example, Participant U said, “Library succession planning is not as good as I expected” (IN.U.PL2). Participant O stated that “Because succession planning is considered irrelevant to my library, professional development programs should be provided to potential successors” (IN.O.AL3). It appears that professional training may increase the quality of candidates and contribute to the effectiveness of succession planning. Participant M of the same academic library stated, “My library does not possess a full succession planning model because it is a small library. As a result of this, my library only has succession planning for the board of director members” (IN.M.AL3). The assessment that a library need not have a full succession planning model because of size is not supported by the literature (Singer, P, Goodrich & Goldberg 2004; Singer, PM & Griffith 2010; Topper 2008). In particular, Singer, P, Goodrich and Goldberg (2004) state that succession planning is important for small and large libraries. Similarly, Topper (2008) emphasises that succession planning is not only for large libraries. In addition, Singer, PM and Griffith (2010) indicate that succession planning is for libraries of all sizes, from small rural to large urban.
7.2.7 Contributions to library strategic planning

All twenty-three interview participants believed that both short-term and long-term succession planning contributed to library strategic planning. As noted in Chapter Two, long-term succession planning in the Vietnamese setting is considered to be ten years and short-term is five years. Participant G said, “We build long-term and then short-term succession planning. In the long-term succession plan, we follow our national criteria to build the list of successors. After that, we build succession planning in a shorter period” (IN.G.PL6). Participant H explained, “We build short and long-term succession planning that meet the short and long-term strategies of the library” (IN.H.PL3). Both Participants G and H believed that if succession is planned ahead, it can contribute to the progress and success of the library strategic plan. Participant R reported, “We conduct long-term succession planning to the year 2020 or 2030, pay attention to required ages and education level so that staff can look for and introduce qualified candidates from their departments” (IN.R.PL6). Deviating from these views, Participant T indicated, “We do not conduct long-term succession planning. Whenever the library is in need of a position, we will conduct short-term succession planning only for that position” (IN.T.PL4). Thus it can be seen that libraries in the Mekong Delta conduct differing type of succession planning due to their own library strategies and situations.

The finding that succession planning contributes to library strategic planning was identified in prior studies (Holcomb 2006; Singer, PM & Griffith 2010; Strunk, Auston & Buttera 2011; Topper 2008; Whitmell 2002). Kundanis (2014) indicates that succession planning is a part of library strategic planning. In advocating for succession planning in Australian and New Zealand university libraries, Whitmell (2002) argues that succession planning must be long-term so as to meet the needs of the library, the institution, and its users. Similarly, Topper (2008) asserts that libraries need long-term succession plans for choosing the right person for the right position. Holcomb (2006) states that succession planning should be integrated as part of overall strategic planning. Singer, PM and Griffith (2010) indicate that library succession planning for leadership and other key positions is needed for both short and long-term plans. These authors also maintain that short-term and long-term succession plans aim at aligning staff and leadership with the library’s strategic goals and objectives. Given the need for long-term
and short term succession planning for their own workplace, leaders will be more likely to succeed in accomplishing their strategic plans and missions.

Findings discussed above answer the first research question “To what extent is succession planning desirable in Mekong Delta libraries?” Succession planning is desirable because for a large number of staff and board of director members retirement is imminent. Succession planning brings benefits to both employees and the library. Succession planning is considered as a way to keep qualified staff by creating more opportunities for professional and skills training. In addition, the succession planning process paves the way for encouraging general employees and potential successors to aim for better work performance. Furthermore, the contributions of existing succession planning to library strategic planning also indicate its desirability.

7.3 Desired selection criteria

In this section, discussion now turns to the desired selection criteria suggested by research participants. The research findings show that the four criteria considered imperative for selecting potential candidates, in both library sectors, were: professional knowledge, leadership skills including moral practices, and political ideology. In addition to these criteria suggested by the research participants, other features such as enthusiasm, years of experience, work commitment, age, and external relationships and professional networking were also identified. Each of the criteria considered mandatory is discussed in detail below.

7.3.1 Professional knowledge

Professional knowledge is defined by Haruki et al. (2006) as the knowledge required to respond effectively to the demands of a professional job. In this study, professional knowledge specifically involves required knowledge of library and information science. Twenty-two of the twenty-three participants indicated that professional knowledge was the most important criterion in selecting potential successors. For instance, Participant J stated, “We select candidates who have good professional knowledge” (IN.J.PL5). This comment suggests that potential candidates must be more knowledgeable of library and
information science than others. Similarly, Participant L said, “The first thing intended successors should have is library expertise” (IN.L.AL4). In this comment, professional knowledge is considered as the first priority in selecting candidates for succession. Participant J reported, “Candidates must graduate from library and information schools. If not, they must work at the library for many years to gain on-the-job knowledge” (IN.J.PL5). Participant O said, “Intended successors must know library work although they did not graduate from library schools” (IN.O.AL3). Comments like those of Participant J and O indicate that potential successors should have professional knowledge even if not gained from formal study in the discipline; they believed that professional knowledge could be developed on the job.

Interviewees from academic libraries provided several reasons why professional knowledge was deemed essential. For example, Participant I from an academic library said, “Potential successors should have library expertise in order to allocate tasks and manage employees well” (IN.I.AL1). This comment suggests that, in this library, professional knowledge played an important role in human resource management and in management of task performance. Similarly, Participant N of the same library stated, “It is hard for the potential leaders to manage their employees if they do not possess professional knowledge” (IN.N.AL1). While participants of academic libraries recognised the importance of professional knowledge in relation to human resource management and task supervision, those who were from public libraries acknowledged that professional knowledge can help potential successors solve problems and better perform library services for users. For instance, Participant H said, “With professional knowledge, successors can know how to deal with library work” (IN.H.PL3). Participant O added, “With professional knowledge, they can meet the users’ inquiries immediately” (IN.O.AL3). The finding of professional knowledge as a highly desired criterion for selecting potential successors is supported in previous studies (Hernon, Powell & Young 2001, 2002, 2003; Stueart & Sullivan 2010). As confirmed by Hernon, Powell and Young (2001, 2002, 2003) when they conducted a series of research studies into attributes of current university and public library directors looking towards the next ten years, professional knowledge was required. In regard to developing library directors, Stueart and Sullivan (2010) further indicate that professional knowledge is one of the necessary leadership attributes and it can be acquired through a series of on-the-job and off-the-job training programs. Moreover, in Vietnam, Decision No. 428/QĐ
(June 2, 1993) by the Minister of Culture and Information indicated that the required professional standard for public and academic library leaders is at least a bachelor’s degree in library and information science. If they had graduated with a degree in another discipline, they must register to study an equivalent bachelor’s program in library and information science (Organising Committee 1993). Therefore, professional knowledge is considered to be a necessary criterion in selecting potential leaders for the library.

7.3.2 Leadership skills

As noted in Chapter Two, leadership skills include, among others, interpersonal skills and rapport, skills in conflict resolution, assertiveness skills, and time management skills (Sutton & Booth 2012). In this study, leadership skills are another highly desirable criterion that public and academic library interviewees determined to be essential for successors. All of the twenty-three public and academic library participants recognised that leadership skills led to positive development in libraries and in employees’ performance. For instance, Participant P in a public library stated, “Successors must have leadership skills. These skills are important because they will pilot, guide and direct library leaders to succeed” (IN.P.PL3). Participant W in an academic library emphasised, “Candidates must have leadership experiences in order to run the library activities and push library employees to move forward” (IN.W.AL2).

The findings in this study related to leadership skills as a selection criterion are well supported in the literature (Coatney 2010; Kumaran 2012b; Martin 2009; McElrath 2009; Roberts & Rowley 2008; Sutton & Booth 2012). In research into leadership skills for the next generation of academic library leaders, Martin (2009) indicates that they are required for library leaders to make and manage changes, advocate for their libraries, and create strong libraries. Moreover, Coatney (2010) asserts leadership skills are needed because they help leaders to “maintain self-confidence, create a vision, be a risk taker, remain flexible, encourage others, inspire a sense of trust, develop communication skills through friendly interpersonal relationships, and display personal passion and exhibiting patience” (p. 59). Likewise, Roberts and Rowley (2008) also indicate the role that visionary leaders play in the 21st century with regard to the relationship between people within an organisation. In particular, Kumaran (2012b) determines that using leadership skills at the right time in the right place and at the right
level will help library leaders in their path to success. Leadership skills are also addressed by other authors who discuss personal attributes and leadership qualities of library leaders (Ammons-Stephens et al. 2009; Hernon 2010, 2011; Hernon, Powell & Young 2001, 2002, 2003; McCarthy 2005). In research into developing core leadership competencies for the library profession, Ammons-Stephens et al. (2009) argue that without leadership skills, library leaders are unable to initiate, facilitate, and deliver successful services. Furthermore, in research involving ten libraries, Hernon (2011) concludes that “Leadership is a key component that these institutions are seeking in a new director because it helps to establish direction and influence others to not only follow that direction but also strive to achieve the vision” (p. 281).

The ability to provide feedback is seen as the most appropriate method for staff to encourage good managers. Feedback not only measures the competencies of employers and employees but also addresses skills such as listening, planning and goal setting in an organisation (Lepsinger & Lucia 2009). Employee feedback can therefore be a useful tool for evaluating the effectiveness of leadership in an organisation.

In discussion of leadership qualities, moral practices was paid much attention by research participants. As defined in Chapter Five, moral practices are understood in Vietnamese settings as right and acceptable behaviours such as politeness, gratefulness, honesty, modesty, virtue, and being able to distinguish between right and wrong. Confucian thoughts impact on the roles of personal morality, correctness of social relationships, and interactions. Fourteen of the twenty-three participants in this study viewed morality as a compulsory criterion in selecting successors. Both public and academic library participants recognised the role of this criterion when they indicated that library leaders are role models for their staff. For example, Participant E from a public library said, “Leaders are able to convince employees to follow them to complete organizational tasks if they are personally involved in library work” (IN.E.PL2). He added, “Leaders with a good sense of morality find it easy to influence other staff to work effectively” (IN.E.PL2). Furthermore, Participant B from an academic library stated, “When a leader is accused of corruption and abuse of power over his or her employees, these employees will leave their workplace” (IN.B.AL4). These comments suggest that library leaders can enhance leadership through moral behaviour. It would
be difficult to develop staff loyalty if leaders were known to gain benefits only for themselves and to show no sense of morality.

In the literature, morality is prominently discussed in relation to leadership matters (Barsh & Lisewski 1997; Kalwies 1988; Sendjaya 2005). Sendjaya (2005) indicates that morality is a crucial component of leadership because lack of a sense of morality may have a disastrous outcome, such as harming the leader-follower relationship. In addition, Barsh and Lisewski (1997) state that morality helps library leaders to shape the ethical climate in an organisation and to avoid conflict of interest in staff management. Furthermore, moral aspects of leadership are considered as the foundation for organisational and individual growth as well as changes from within the employees (Kalwies 1988). The findings of the study with regard to moral practice in succession planning fit well with the planned behaviour concept of Sharma, Chrisman and Chua (2003).

Importantly, the findings related to moral practices in this study fit into the concept of ‘idealised influence’, one of the four components in transformational leadership theory. ‘Idealised influence’ is where followers identify with the leaders and want to emulate them; transformational leaders behave in ways that allow them to serve as role models (Bass & Avolio 1994; Bass & Bass 2008). The research findings within the Vietnamese context also fit well with moral aspects as emphasised in Bass’s discussion of transformational leadership (Bass 1985; Bass & Bass 2008). Bass indicated that leaders’ sense of morality is crucial because it can earn trust from followers and can foster followers’ moral maturity (Bass 1985). In research into moral aspects of executive leadership, Ryan, LV (2000) also identifies that trust can be earned by leaders if they demonstrate integrity, fairness and justice for followers. This finding in the current research also indicates that through a succession planning process, library leaders can use ‘inspirational motivation’ (another component of transformational leadership theory) to inspire their successors to commit themselves to contributing to the benefits of the organization and community, and to build trust and loyalty within employees.
7.3.3 Political ideology

Fourteen of the twenty-three participants indicated that political ideology was one of the prerequisites for candidates in succession planning, as it reflects the views of the Communist Party which controls social and economic practices in Vietnam. For example, Participant F said, “Potential candidates should have good behaviour, moral values and political ideology” (IN.F.PL6). Participant W added, “If candidates are not good at political ideology, they cannot be added on the succession planning list” (IN.W.AL2). Importantly, participants reported this criterion was important for different reasons. For instance, Participant V stated, “If staff political ideology is inconsistent, then a would-be leader may face many managerial problems” (IN.V.PL4). Participant P said, “If we do not consider staff political ideology, we may select the wrong candidates for successors” (IN.P.PL3). These comments suggest that potential leaders need to be oriented towards Communist Party directions.

Political ideology can be transferred from library leaders or the secretary of the Party to their employees, including potential candidates for succession. For example, Participant U stated, “The Communist Party Secretary is responsible for supervising potential successors” (IN.U.PL2). Participant R said, “The Secretary of the Communist Party Cell and the board of director members can exchange ideas and mentor their intended candidates. Potential candidates will listen to them” (IN.R.PL6). These comments indicate that the Communist Party Secretary influences Communist Party members and potential candidates in terms of political ideology. The followers and potential candidates must understand the direction of the parent organisation and the Party, as well as how the library will support this direction in the future. This finding also fits well with one of the key values of transformational leadership theory, that is, ‘idealised influence’, transferring the vision of the organization to followers. As indicated by Bass and Riggio (2006) transferring the vision of the organisation or even that of the nation to followers is one of the duties of a transformational leader.
7.3.4 Enthusiasm

In addition to the required criteria noted above, fourteen of the twenty-three interview participants indicated that demonstration of enthusiasm for the library profession is also an important consideration in selecting potential candidates. For instance, Participant G said, “Love for a career, work enthusiasm, activeness and transparent viewpoint on career path are important because other succession criteria can be trained and improved on the job” (IN.G.PL5). In this comment, demonstration of enthusiasm is necessary and believed not to be able to be learned in the same way as other criteria can be.

Enthusiasm is a requirement that the individual should naturally have to be selected as a potential candidate. Participant F stated, “Potential candidates must have enthusiasm for the library profession. From this enthusiasm, they will try their best to fulfil their tasks and develop their professional work” (IN.F.PL6). This comment suggests that enthusiasm is an element which influences success at work.

Enthusiasm can be a decisive factor in an individual’s success. In library leadership, the leaders’ enthusiasm tends to inspire the followers’ enthusiasm in fulfilling their tasks within the library (Adair 2009; Wilson, K & Corrall 2008). In research into developing leadership competencies for librarians, Jordan (2012) concludes that enthusiasm is one of the nineteen important attributes required for future positions. Enthusiasm is an important criterion because it can be infectious by nature (Williamson 2013). Schmidt (2007) states that in order to become an effective library leader, “unbridled enthusiasm” is one of the required characteristics. In a study of the job advertisements for public library director positions, Henricks and Henricks-Lepp (2014) report that desired characteristics of a new library director were that they should be dynamic, energetic and enthusiastic so that they can respond to challenges in the library.

7.3.5 Experience

Fifteen of the twenty-three interviewees reported that length of experience is another criterion that potential successors must possess. Participant M stated, “Years of experience must be included in succession planning criteria” (IN.M.AL3). Participant N was more specific: “The candidates must work at the library for at least three or four
years so that we can consider how they manage their work” (IN.N.AL1). This comment suggests that experience provides evidence of managerial and skills attributes. Participant J said, “Candidates must work at a library for a long time to gain real experience” (IN.J.PL5). Participant J’s comment indicates that work experience is important because it helps potential candidates attain practical understanding instead of just theory. Participant K reported, “I have gained a lot of management skills and knowledge in seven years of working at the library and three years in the role of manager. I know how to bring people together to fulfil the common goal of the library division” (IN.K.PL2). Participant K’s statement suggests that experience enhances successors’ confidence in dealing with leadership challenges.

In the Vietnamese context, experience is measured by length of working time and is considered to be a compulsory criterion to select successors. Similarly, with regard to recruiting and selecting library directors, the American Association of Academic Health Sciences Libraries (2012) indicates that the combination of leadership skills and experience is a requirement of director positions in an academic health sciences library. In this situation, potential candidates with management and leadership skills cannot succeed without also possessing significant working experience. Also, the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (2013) indicates that three years of professional library experience after getting the Master of Library Science (MLS) or six years of experience prior to the MLS is one of the requirements for a library director position. In this situation, experience is a compulsory criterion, in addition to professional qualifications.

7.3.6 Work commitment

Eleven of the twenty-three interviewees said that commitment to work is a necessary criterion for selecting successors. Work commitment has a strong link with enthusiasm and experience. The more years general staff work at the library, the more commitment they are likely to have. For instance, Participant U said, “Potential candidates must desire to work at the library for a long time” (IN.U.PL2). Similarly, Participant E added, “We choose the candidates who have capacity and tend to work at the library for a long time” (IN.E.PL2). Participant E explained, “If the employees often raise ideas or
suggestions to develop the library, we can believe that they will be with us longer than others” (IN.E.PL2).

The finding of work commitment as a criterion for selecting potential candidates in this research is supported in prior studies (Iyer 2012; Lifer 2000; Markgren et al. 2007). Work commitment needs to be considered in selecting potential candidates because effort and expenses for training them will gain nothing if these candidates depart from the library. Markgren et al. (2007) claim that it is likely that librarians purposefully switch jobs or roles at least once within their first five years as a professional, and half of 464 surveyed librarians were currently thinking of leaving the profession. Iyer (2012) reports that there are two main reasons why employees leave their jobs. One is low income and the other is lack of job promotion. The Wall Street Journal Almanac indicates that librarianship is one of the low income jobs (Lifer 2000). The Wall Street Journal ranks librarianship 245th out of 250 jobs (based on several factors including salary, promotions and employment) and the Wall Street Journal Interactive Edition’s Jobs Rated Almanac places librarianship 108th out of 250 jobs in salary (Lifer 2000). In particular, librarian salaries for job postings in the United States are sixteen per cent in average lower than salaries for all job postings of the country (Indeed 2015). If the salary staff earn cannot support them, the less possibility there is that commitment to their work in the long run will occur.

7.3.7 Age

Twelve of the twenty-three participants mentioned age as a required criterion for selecting successors. For example, Participant H said, “The number of potential candidates must be in the range of three groups of age assigned by the government guidelines” (IN.H.PL3). As noted in Chapter One, the government guidelines require that employees must fit proportionally into three age groups: under forty (20-25%), from forty to fifty (50-60%) and over fifty (20-25%). The aim of this government policy is to retain knowledge and pass it on. The percentage of forty to fifty in the age group is higher so that older employees with more leadership experience can coach and mentor younger ones. However, participants in this research preferred younger candidates, possibly because they may have new ideas and be more innovative. For example, Participant V claimed, “We should select young (under 40 years old) and capable
candidates for succession planning” (IN.V.PL4). Participant G also stated, “Attention should be paid to gender and young age” (IN.G.PL5).

Age as a criterion is much discussed in the literature and provides differing viewpoints (Central Personnel Committee 2012; Kind 2012; Kumaran 2012a). For instance, Kumaran (2012a) states, “Age does not factor in the US, the UK, Germany, France, and Poland when leadership is considered, but it is very important in Japan, Vietnam, and China. In Asia, it is generally believed that the older one is the wiser” (p. 46). Kumaran’s viewpoint about age in Asian leadership is somewhat different from the finding of this research which indicates that young candidates were preferred. In contrast to Kumaran’s point of view, Kind (2012) suggests that age should never be a barrier for potential successors and explains that getting to a position of seniority in any organisation should not be based on age; it should be based on ability. Kind’s viewpoint is completely different from the current finding because the age criterion is a ‘must’ in the Vietnamese context. In particular, Vietnamese government rules that successors must be able to meet two leadership terms (each term lasts five years) before retirement. In other words, female successors must be younger than forty-five, and fifty for males. This is because retirement age in Vietnam is fifty-five for females and sixty for males. This rule is applied to any new candidate for the required positions. The age of incumbent leaders must allow them to complete a full or two-thirds of the leadership term (Central Personnel Committee 2012). This implies that young candidates are preferable to appoint to managerial positions.

7.3.8 External relationships

Eleven of the twenty-three participants indicated that external relationships – relationships outside the library such as social relations (with friends), community relations (with governors and other citizens) and professional networking (with other librarians) – are important for a potential leader to have. For example, Participant B stated, “The fifth criterion to select potential candidates is good external relationships so that they are able to collaborate with other units and organisations” (IN.B.AL4). Participant U noted, “Potential leaders must have an external relationship because it helps to advocate for library activities and increases library networking” (IN.U.PL2). Comments like those of Participants B and U indicate that external relationships convey
the same meaning as political savvy and skills as discussed in the literature (Crismond & Leisner 1988; Estabrook 1997; Goulding, Walton & Stephens 2012; Henricks & Henricks-Lepp 2014; Mullins & Linehan 2006; Singer, P, Goodrich & Goldberg 2004).

In their research into leaders’ attributes, Goulding, Walton and Stephens (2012) argue that political acumen and skills are needed by today’s library leaders. In their study, political skills are understood as a range of attributes which include communication, advocacy, influencing, political sensitivity, and knowledge of the wider organisation. These skills can help library leaders to build alliances across the organisation with local authorities and with partners, so as to secure funding or defend their current positions (Goulding, Walton & Stephens 2012; Henricks & Henricks-Lepp 2014).

The finding of this research with regard to external relationships is supported in the literature which indicates that external relationships bring several advantages to leadership (Calcagno 2013; Davis & Macauley 2011; Farrell 2013; Kumaran 2012b; McCarten 2011; Schreiber & Shannon 2001). For instance, Davis and Macauley (2011) suggest that leadership literacies in the knowledge era are commonly understood to be relationship-based, so leaders share views on leadership and changes happening in libraries. Schreiber and Shannon (2001) state that library leaders should have major external relationships so as to build community relations and coalitions. This characteristic is important because it can benefit libraries in regard to receiving support from the library budget’s decision makers. McCarten (2011) and Farrell (2013) both indicate that relationship building also helps potential leaders embrace challenges and develop opportunities for their libraries. This sentiment is shared by Calcagno (2013) who suggests various ways to build relationships with decision-makers so as to lead, support, defend, and cement the public library as vital to its community.

As discussed above, the research indicated that several criteria are required to select potential candidates for succession planning. Professional knowledge, leadership skills, enthusiasm, years of experience, work commitment, age, and external relationships as determined by this research are supported by relevant literature. Moral practices and political ideology are two new criteria to be added to library succession planning knowledge. These criteria are required in Vietnamese libraries because they originate from Vietnamese culture and politics. Library leaders must be moral and self-controlled so as to conform to community standards. This concept is from Vietnamese culture.
which is shaped and influenced by Confucian thought. Confucian thought influences the roles of personal morality, correctness of social relationships, and interactions. Library leaders must be moral so that they can be role models for their employees. Political ideology needs to fit with the ideal of the Communist Party which is the only political party in Vietnam. This criterion may not be needed in other countries where there is more than one political party and more freedom of political choice. In the Vietnamese setting, all nine criteria are significant because the Department of Library in Vietnam does not specify selection criteria for library leaders and managers (Nguyen, TT 2012). Desired, clearly stated criteria help library leaders and staff select the right person in the second step of the suggested model of succession planning process, increase transparency in leadership, and avoid bias in conducting succession planning.

### 7.4 The succession planning process

Research findings indicate that libraries in the Mekong Delta followed two different succession planning models: bottom-up and top-down. Importantly, three out of four responding academic libraries reported a bottom-up model in their libraries. In this model, general staff suggest the list of potential successors and the authorities consider them and make decisions from this list. In contrast, half each of the participants from public libraries reported bottom-up and top-down models. That is, three public libraries followed a bottom-up model and three followed a top-down model. Library leaders and/or Communist Party Committee members that favour a top-down model generally write an initial list of intended successors. Other general staff then evaluate possible successors from this initial list and select the best ones to be on the final list of successors. There is no official policy for how the succession planning process should be conducted, therefore each library has their own way of doing it. There appears to be a trend towards a bottom-up model in academic libraries, offering more democracy and openness in the process. The leaders of parent organisations sometimes recognise that the top-down model is not appropriate; therefore, they chose to apply a bottom-up model. For example, Participant L reported,

> Learning from experience and succession planning problems, our university board of trustees changed the succession planning process by following the
bottom up model. The bottom-up model enhanced succession planning and attracted contributions from the general staff. Building succession planning from the bottom up is a factor for sustainability. Library leaders should create opportunities for staff to develop their capacities and show their progress in order to be on the succession planning list. It also shows democracy and openness in succession planning (IN.L.AL4).

Similarly, Participant W said,

Last year, our university had some changes in conducting succession planning which starts from the bottom. General staff at the library can assess, evaluate and vote for their candidates through evaluating slips and trust ballots. This helps to prevent bias from implementing succession planning (IN.W.AL2).

The findings related to the application of a bottom-up model for the succession planning process are consistent with several described in business studies (Burke 2002; Helton & Jackson 2007; Leskiw & Singh 2007; Rothwell 2010; Stadler 2011) and in a health context (Brunero, Kerr & Jastrzab 2009; Shirey 2008) as well as in the library environment (Holcomb 2006; Murray 2007; Nixon 2008; Singer, PM & Griffith 2010; Stueart & Sullivan 2010). In a major book on succession planning for various organisational settings, Rothwell (2010) suggests a seven-pointed star model with seven steps. In this model, Rothwell illustrates that the succession planning process starts from the requirements of an organizational and human resource strategic plan (step 1), assessment and appraisal of the current work and performance of individuals are the next steps (step 2 and 3), assessment of future individual potential and future work requirements are then considered (step 4 and 5), selecting and training candidates to fill the development gap (step 6) and evaluation of the succession planning program are the final steps. According to Rothwell, step 7 is not the end of the process because the results of evaluation will contribute to continuous program improvements.

With regard to library succession planning, Nixon (2008) describes a ‘growing your own leaders’ model with four basic phases: analysing the demographics of your key positions, identifying potential employees for lead positions, assessing candidates’
strengths and weaknesses, and developing a training program to build competencies. In this process, Nixon considers ‘establishing a formal mentoring system’ as part of the last step. However, evaluation of the training program seems to be absent in Nixon’s model. More recently, Singer, PM and Griffith (2010) present a six-step plan for determining the position of library director. These steps are: assessing the risk, assessing staff for leadership potential, developing an up-to-date job description, appointing a selection committee, planning the search and searching, and identifying an interim library director and transition. In this model, Singer and Griffith consider the development of an up-to-date job description as the third step. This is a significant step because a job description is not only the official document for job activities, but also the grounds for evaluating and promoting an employee. Similar to Nixon, Singer and Griffith’s model also does not articulate an evaluation phase to benefit further succession programs as noted in Rothwell’s model. Interestingly, the current research is significant because it concurs with the studies by Nixon (2008), Stueart and Sullivan (2010) and Rothwell (2010) with regard to the process of succession planning. This current study displays a combination of the elements in previous studies with six phases. These phases were indicated by the research participants: (1) identifying potential employees for managerial positions, (2) assessing candidates’ strengths and weaknesses, (3) getting approval from authorities, (4) developing a training program to build competencies, (5) ascertaining the success of the program or review, and (6) selection of successors.

Findings from this study also show how these steps are conducted in libraries in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam. The matter of who creates the initial list of potential successors in the first phase affects the second step of the process. If general staff compile this list, the second step, ‘assessing candidates’ strengths and weaknesses’, is carried out by the top library leaders, or vice versa. This also affects who decides the final list of potential successors to submit to higher authority. If the first step is done by general staff, the top leaders are the deciders of the final list, and vice versa. Where the research model differs from prior models in the literature is in step three, ‘getting approval from authorities’. In this step, the final list of potential successors is approved by the parent organisation and/or the Communist Party before the next step, ‘developing the training program for competencies’, occurs. This affirms the role of the Communist Party in succession planning in Vietnam, which is a unique finding of the research.
Findings on the library succession planning process in the Mekong Delta answer the second research question: “In what ways do leaders implement library succession planning?” These findings help to form a theoretical model of a library succession planning process which is presented in Chapter Nine. A significant finding making this model unique when compared with others in the literature is the role of the Communist Party, discussed in more detail in the following section.

7.5 The role of the Communist Party in library succession planning in Vietnam

As noted in Chapter Six, the role of the Communist Party in library succession planning in Vietnam was an important emergent theme in the research data. The Communist Party is important in the process of succession planning and, additionally, being a member of the Party plays a role for individuals wishing to have a leadership position. An understanding of the role of the Communist Party in succession planning was part of this research.

Online survey respondents acknowledged the role of the Communist Party when answering the open-ended question. In the interviews, this theme was focused on in greater depth. Seventeen of the twenty-three interviewees stated that the Communist Party plays an important role in library succession planning in Vietnam. This role includes the Party being involved in succession planning, making decisions about library management and leadership, and approving the succession planning list as well as promotion. Furthermore, the Communist Party plays a role in maintaining fair and equitable succession planning.

In terms of understanding the role of the Communist Party in succession planning, seventeen of the twenty-three interviewees stated that the Communist Party led the process and decision-making. For example, Participant C stated, “It is true that we are living in a political regime led by the Communist Party. All civil servants must abide by Communist Party policies in doing their tasks and duties. So, succession planning is also under the Communist Party’s control” (IN.C.PL1). This comment showed that the
Communist Party’s guidance and control of library succession planning was understood. Adding to this comment, Participant E explained, “The Party is representative of workers, farmers and intellectuals. The Communist Party is a decisive factor in guiding all activities in society. I think the Communist Party is also important in influencing succession planning” (IN.E.PL2). Participant W stated, “Although library leaders collected all staff opinions, intended candidates could not be added to the succession planning list if the Communist Party Committee did not consent” (IN.W.AL2). Comments like those of Participants C, E and W indicate that the Communist Party performs the roles of guiding, controlling, and decision-making in succession planning.

In the United States, the Librarian of the Library of Congress are appointed by the President of the country (Gates 1976; Library of Congress 2014) and is therefore a political appointment. However, no other information about how politics influence library succession planning was located for other countries, including in other Communist countries such as China, Cuba, and Laos. Only information about business enterprises and state succession planning in China has been described in the literature. For example, Manion (1985) indicated that at the early stage of the economic reform in 1978 the selection and appointment of the Party leadership team influenced both governmental and enterprise levels. Another view, stated by Brødsgaard (2012), was that “The Party controls the appointment of the CEOs and presidents of the most important of these enterprises and manages a cadre transfer system” (p. 624). Sullivan (2014) noted that “The Party of China remains the source of all political power as set out in the Constitution and reinforced through formal and informal institutional structures, which allow control over the executive and legislative branches of government” (p. 11). From these three comments on leadership, it can be inferred that the Communist Party in China has a very important role in government, and in formal and informal institutions which may include the library sector. Similar situations in relation to leadership can be seen in Laos and Cuba. In Laos, Lintner (2008) stated, “The ruling Party remains in control of most aspects of life and society” (p.172). In Cuba, Ritter (1998) reported, “Small-scale entrepreneurs lack a political voice. They have no organization to promote their concerns or defend their interests. This perhaps should not be surprising, in that the labour unions or professional associations established for other groups in society are intended to incorporate people into organizational structures so that they can be controlled more effectively by the party”
Duharte Díaz (2010) stated, “Cuba’s political system continually expands the political role of workplace organizations as basic components of the participatory democratic system” (p. 66). From these three examples it can be surmised that the Communist Party in Laos and Cuba influence the governance of every organization of the nation, which includes the library and information sector. The findings of this research similarly indicate that the Communist Party in Vietnam has a significant influence on library leadership and library succession planning.

A further role of the Communist Party in Vietnam is the function of maintaining fairness and equity in library succession planning. Fourteen of the twenty-three interview participants indicated that the Communist Party had played this role in succession planning. For example, Participant H believed that “The Communist Party is always fair and equitable because it collects the comments and assessments from all general staff and the Communist Party members” (IN.H.PL3). More importantly, Participant K reported, “The Communist Party issued documents to guide succession planning. Following the guidelines in these documents will help to maintain fairness and equity” (IN.K.PL2). This comment indicates that it is believed that the Communist Party knows how to use policies and guidelines to maintain fairness and equity in succession planning. This comment also displays the participants’ knowledge of the documents issued by the Communist Party and the state on succession planning, as noted in Chapter One.

The Communist Party performs the function of supporting library leaders to avoid bias in conducting succession planning. For instance, Participant G said:

The Communist Party helps library leaders reduce bias. Through observing and inspecting, the Communist Party determines whether library leaders are dictatorial, nepotistic and authoritarian. Then, the Communist Party will reorient them (IN.G.PL5).

Comments like those of Participant G, H and K present the view that the Communist Party maintains fairness and equity in succession planning. The understanding of the role of the Communist Party in maintaining fairness and equity in library succession planning is also a significant finding of this research, with no similar findings located in the literature.
This section now turns to discuss whether being a Communist Party member is a criterion in selection of candidates. Ten of the twenty-three interview participants said that potential candidates must be Communist Party members at the time of succession planning. Another five participants reported that candidates may not be Communist Party members at the time of succession planning; however, in order to be promoted as an official leader they must be Communist Party members. The timeframe from being on a succession planning list to being promoted can be one, two, three or more than three years - long enough for candidates to improve as Communist Party members.

Only six participants stated that it is not necessary to be Communist Party members to be included on the succession list. Participant N said, “In order to become a manager, it is required to be a Communist Party member” (IN.N.AL1). Participant V reported, “Being a member of the Communist Party is a necessary condition to be a successor because it will be very hard for general staff to lead the Communist Party members” (IN.V.PL4). Participant Q believed, “Of two candidates with equal capacities, only the person who is a party member will be selected for succession planning” (IN.Q.PL6).

All of these comments show that being a Communist Party member is required, or at least preferable, in selection of potential successors in these libraries. If candidates are not Communist Party members at succession time, they might study Communist Party courses to become Communist Party members in order to be promoted. The findings related to the role of the Communist Party in library succession planning are significant since they contribute to the succession planning literature, which has not so far included such discussion.

Findings on the role of the Communist Party in library succession planning contribute to answering the second research question: “In what ways do leaders implement library succession planning?” The approval of the Communist Party of the list of successors is the third step in the suggested model of library succession planning process.
7.6 Required elements of and the impacting factors of succession planning

Research data show that there are several elements of and impacting factors on library succession planning and the succession planning process. Figure 7 illustrates the relationships between the required elements of and impacting factors in leading and conducting library succession planning in Vietnam. These relationships were formed through data analysis in NVivo. The relationship indicated by $\rightarrow$ means ‘affect’ and $\leftarrow$ means ‘mutual relation’. The required elements of succession planning (illustrated by purple ovals) are succession planning criteria, recruitment, work performance assessment, talent pool, and staff retention. Each of these required elements is influenced by other components (illustrated by red ovals). For example, recruitment is affected by recruitment sources and recruitment opportunities. Impacting factors in determinating quality of successors are training programs and various challenges (illustrated by yellow ovals). Impacting factors in leading and conducting succession planning are library leaders, general staff, parent organization leaders, and the Communist Party (illustrated by blue rectangles). Among the impacting factors, the Communist Party plays the key impacting role in the library succession planning process. The Communist Party is vital because it approves the final list of potential candidates for library succession planning as well as deciding who is promoted to be the official library leader. The required elements of and impacting factors were interrelated and influenced the library succession planning processes and successor quality.
As presented in Chapter Four and Five, discussions about relationships between age, qualification, position or years of experience of employees, and succession planning have not been located so far in the library literature. In this study, data from the online survey reveal these correlations (see Figure 8). On the one hand, age, qualification, position, and years of experience of employees (variable A) have relationships with awareness of job description, training program upgrading, work performance assessment, and training program evaluation (variable B) respectively. This correlation forms the pattern that the more variable A is/has, the more variable B has.

This is shown by two arrows and an isosceles triangle which indicates that more variation in the left side of the symbol leads to more variation in the right side of the symbol. For example, ‘Age Job description’ means that the older the general staff were, the more awareness of job descriptions they were likely to have.
On the other hand, age, qualification, position and years of experience of employees each also have a mutual relationship with matters related to succession planning, such as awareness of the existence of succession planning, awareness of the important role of succession planning in the library, selection of potential candidates, and promotion (variable C). In particular, an employee’s age has a relationship not only with an employee’s awareness of the existence of succession planning, but also with awareness of the role of succession planning. Importantly, an employee’s qualification has triple correlations with an employee’s awareness of the existence of succession planning, awareness of the importance of succession planning, and awareness of selection of potential candidates. Similar to the previous pattern, these correlations also form other patterns, such as the more variation A is/has, the more variable C is. For example, the higher the qualification (bachelor’s and master’s degrees) the general staff had, the more awareness of the existence of library succession planning they were likely to have.
The higher the qualification employees held, the more their awareness was likely to be about the list of potential candidates. The higher the managerial positions employees held, the more they were likely to know about who was selected for succession planning. Staff who have been working at the library for many years are more likely to be aware of the important role of succession planning and the existence of succession planning. Understanding these correlations, library leaders are able to find ways to attract their employees to be more involved in and contribute more to the succession planning process.

Library leaders should consider these elements and factors because they affect the quality of successors. In addition, library leaders should pay attention to the correlations among age, qualification, position, and years of experience of employees with awareness of job description, training program upgrading, work performance assessment, and training program evaluation. These correlations are significant findings of this research that add to our knowledge of library succession. These correlations help library leaders know how to involve their employees in making and upgrading job descriptions, upgrading and evaluating training programs, and conducting work performance assessment effectively. These correlations should be considered because they also affect the quality of successors.

7.7 Summary

This chapter presents discussion of the existence of succession planning in public and academic libraries in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam. Employees in public libraries showed more awareness of the benefits of library succession planning than those in academic libraries. The data show that succession planning is not only necessary for library leadership preparation, but also good for qualified employees with regard to promotion. Succession planning is also a good way to retain qualified staff and encourage all employees to perform their tasks better so as to be on the list of potential successors. Both public and academic libraries in the Mekong Delta have succession planning in place, mostly conducted by library leaders and the Communist Party. In particular, the Communist Party has a great influence on the selection and promotion of potential candidates for managerial positions in Vietnamese libraries. The role of the Communist
Party in the library succession planning process is the most significant finding of this study. Political ideology and moral practices as relevant criteria noted by research participants for selecting potential candidates are the other two significant findings. The research data also show that selection criteria, the succession planning process, and the role of the Communist Party in succession planning are the three most important aspects for library leaders to take into consideration in conducting succession planning in the Mekong Delta. This was true in both of the library sectors - public and academic - considered in this research.

This chapter also presents the required elements of and impacting factors on library succession planning, and offers guidance to library leaders in conducting this task. In addition, the summary of correlations of variables in succession planning can inform library leaders about the relationships among employee’s age, qualification, and position as well as years of experience and succession planning related matters. Knowledge of these relationships can help library leaders know what should be done to maximise employees’ participation in the succession planning process so as to prevent bias. The following chapter (Chapter Eight) discusses in detail the last two research questions of this study.
Chapter Eight  DISCUSSION (Continued)

8.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter discussion of the first two research questions, relating to desirability of succession planning and how to implement it in the library, is presented. In this chapter the third and fourth research questions, about staff awareness of their involvement in the succession planning process, and possible challenges in conducting succession planning, are discussed. This chapter also presents some solutions to these challenges drawn from suggestions of the research participants.

8.2 Staff involvement in succession planning

This section examines the third research question: How can library staff be involved in succession planning? The findings from the online survey show that general staff are aware of the existence and importance of succession plans in libraries. In the in-depth interviews, the participants addressed their perception of the purposes of succession planning and the role of staff in the succession planning process. However, general staff still face restrictions in being involved in succession planning. Each of these aspects are discussed further in detail.

8.2.1 Awareness of the existence and the importance of succession planning

As defined in Chapter Two, succession planning is a process of identifying and preparing individuals for future managerial positions. Whether this process involved general staff is one of the foci of this study. Data from the online survey show that general staff of both academic and public libraries in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam acknowledge the existence of succession planning in their libraries. Of 172 respondents, 115 informants (70.1%) indicated their libraries already had a succession planning process in place, and twelve libraries (7.3%) were in the process of implementing one. Prior studies (McKenna 2007; McMahan, Jennifer & Masias, Michele 2009; Whitmell 2005b) have investigated whether general staff cared or knew about succession planning. In research about workforce and succession planning, Whitmell (2005b)
indicates that no library of the Australian Technology Network universities had a written succession planning in place, and therefore it was not something that library staff knew about. In research into Canadian library human resources, Mckenna (2007) states, “Only nine per cent of the organizations have a succession plan in place” (p. 125). Although McKenna did not note the exact number of libraries participating in this research, this figure suggests that few libraries in Canada implement succession planning. McKenna stated that sample representatives were from the Canadian Association of Research Libraries, the Canadian Urban Libraries Council, and the Alberta Association of Library Technicians. With regard to the U.S. Department of Justice’s litigating division libraries, McMahan, Jennifer and Masias, Michele (2009) claim, “No one on the panel knew what a succession plan looked like” (p. 28). It is possible that succession planning may exist in US Department of Justice and Canadian libraries: however, their general staff do not appear to understand that such a process exists. Discussion of knowledge and understanding of succession planning in libraries in the Western world appears to be very limited. This is surprising and limited the researcher’s ability to discuss the existence of library succession planning globally.

Data from the online survey also show that the awareness of general staff of library succession planning varied between library types, according to qualifications, and by years of experience. General staff in public libraries are more aware of succession planning than those in academic libraries. Seventy of the eighty-three respondents (84%) from public libraries indicated that succession planning is in place or in process in their organisations. In contrast, responses from academic libraries indicate that only sixty-five of the eighty-nine participants (73%) reported the existence of succession planning. These results show that not all libraries have succession planning in place or succession planning may be well entrenched but the staff responding to the survey were unaware of it. In addition, this finding suggests that academic library leaders should consider how to increase staff awareness of succession planning.

Several studies have been conducted on library succession planning (Deards & Springs 2014; Galbraith, Smith & Walker 2012; Kundanis 2014; McMahan, Jennifer & Masias, Michele 2009; Onwubiko, Onu & Ossai-Onah 2010; Singer, PM & Griffith 2010; Topper 2008). Although these authors discussed the needs and challenges of succession
With regard to qualifications, qualified staff who hold bachelor’s and master’s degrees had greater knowledge of library succession planning than those with lower levels of qualifications (i.e. community college degrees, vocational training, high school and secondary school certificates). Data from the online survey illustrate this with 25%, 46.7%, 78.7% and 75% of those with vocational training certificates, community college degrees, bachelor’s and masters’ degrees respectively indicating knowledge of succession planning. Within the higher level of qualification there appeared to be little difference between master’s and bachelor’s degree holders. For example, ninety-six of the 122 staff with a bachelor’s degree (78.7%) and fifteen of the twenty staff who held master’s degrees (75%) stated their libraries had succession planning in place ($p = .000$).

As noted above there are several studies on library succession planning in the relevant literature, but there is no study discussing the link between qualifications and staff awareness of succession planning. Thus, the finding of this research that staff with higher levels of qualifications (bachelor and master degrees) were more aware of library succession planning than those with lower qualifications adds to our knowledge of succession planning. It is also true staff with higher qualifications are more likely to be employed at senior levels and thus more likely to be aware of the succession planning processes. Based on this finding, library leaders could pay more attention to increasing the awareness of their staff of succession planning, especially staff with lower level qualifications. With more general staff awareness, succession planning may be more successful because they can contribute to assessment and support of candidates and, as a result, the quality of potential candidates may be increased.

With respect to years of experience, the online survey data show that the longer the period staff had worked in the library, the greater awareness of succession planning they possessed. The percentage of staff in libraries which have succession planning in place, or in process, is increased from 70.6% to 96.7% to 100% for staff with less than ten years, eleven to twenty years and more than twenty years of working at the library.
respectively. The finding of the link between years of experience and staff awareness of library succession planning contributes significantly to the literature because it has not been identified previously. Based on this finding, library leaders could plan what to do to increase staff awareness of succession planning, with greater focus on staff who have less than ten years of working experience at the library. More staff awareness can play an important role in the success of succession planning by helping library leaders avoid bias (as discussed later in this chapter).

In relation to awareness of the importance of library succession planning, general staff varied in their level of understanding. For example, 157 of the 172 online survey respondents (91.3%) said that library succession planning was important or very important. The remaining respondents (8.7%) had a neutral view or viewed it as unimportant or very unimportant. These figures indicate that most general staff were aware of the important role of library succession planning. Data from the online survey show that opinion was varied according to age. There is a strong relationship between age and awareness of the importance of succession planning. In other words, as the age of general staff increased, their opinion of the importance of succession planning also increased. Older staff are likely to be more senior and also more interested in, and involved with, promotion and succession processes.

8.2.2 Perception of the purposes of succession planning

Data from both the online survey and in-depth interviews show differing views of library staff about the purposes of succession planning. In the online survey, 111 of the 172 respondents (64.5%) stated that succession planning should be used for the positions of future board of director members and senior managers. Forty-one (23.8%) responded that succession planning was for future board of director positions only. These figures indicate that most staff perceived succession planning as being for all managerial positions. In the in-depth interviews, participants also acknowledged differing concepts of the purposes of succession planning. For example, Participant C said, “Succession planning is a preparation for library leaders” (IN.C.PL1). However, Participant A stated, “Succession planning prepares for not only library leaders but also others including administration and support staff [general staff, cleaners, security
guards] to be appointed to the appropriate roles” (IN.A.AL2). These two comments suggest that succession planning was conducted for both managerial and non-managerial positions in some libraries. The finding of this research supports the idea that succession planning is not only for boards of director members, but also for library department managers (Bridgland 1999; Holcomb 2006). Importantly, this finding provides more evidence for Singer and Griffith’s viewpoint about succession planning being not just for top managerial positions, but also for all professional and managerial positions (Singer, PM & Griffith 2010). However, support staff have not been considered in succession planning processes in previous studies.

8.2.3 Staff involvement in succession planning

Data from the online survey illustrate that nearly seventy per cent of general staff (69.7%) were not personally involved in a succession planning process. Half of senior managers (50%) were not either: however, ninety per cent of members of board of directors participated in the process. It appears that succession planning was conducted by top leaders and managers, and general staff have not usually been involved. Significantly, 136 of the 172 respondents (79.1%) stated that general staff should participate in library succession planning. More specifically, 81.9% of public library and 76.4% of academic library participants responded that general staff should be involved in succession planning. In the Vietnamese context, general staff were not encouraged to be involved in the succession planning process because of highly centralized policy and practices in regards to management (McCargo 2004).

The findings that general staff are not personally involved in current succession planning, and their high desire for participation in this process, indicate that they are highly aware of the possibilities for their role in succession planning. Succession planning has drawn much attention from general staff because they believe it is the duty, and right, of all members of library staff to be involved, not only the top leaders. The finding that general staff should be involved in succession planning is supported by literature (McMahan, Jennifer & Masias, Michele 2009; Ostrowski 1968; Saporito 2012; Singer, P, Goodrich & Goldberg 2004; Singer, PM & Griffith 2010; Whitmell 2002). In particular, Whitmell (2002) states, “The succession planning process should
involve a wide range of staff to ensure that a variety of concerns and issues are addressed and will engender organisation wide commitment to its success” (p. 150), and Singer, PM and Griffith (2010) indicate that general staff involvement helps to make succession planning more important in an organisation.

The online survey data also show that academic general staff had less involvement in library succession planning than those in public libraries. Among eighty-nine academic general staff, there were fifty-nine respondents (66.3%) who were not directly involved in developing succession planning. Meanwhile, there were only forty of the eighty-three public general staff (48.2%) who were not involved ($p = .016$). This finding suggests that academic library leaders could create more opportunities for staff participation in succession planning.

The online survey data also show that general staff have the lowest understanding of the promotion of library leaders as a result of succession planning. In particular, only 61.5% general staff indicated knowing that library leaders were promoted based on succession planning, while the percentage of senior managers and board of director members knowing this was 73.8% and 95.2% respectively. These figures also suggest the reason why general staff are less involved in succession planning or know the final list of successors. Their awareness of this matter is the lowest compared to other groups of library staff. The finding of this research regarding general staff knowing that the library leaders are promoted from a succession planning list adds to the literature of library succession planning. It would be hoped that general staff given the opportunity to observe and evaluate potential candidates would be honest in their assessments.

Data from the in-depth interviews indicate that general staff in Mekong Delta libraries are involved in different activities in the succession planning process. The interviewees were library leaders and managers, while participants from the online survey included general staff. Library leaders and managers believed that general staff are involved in succession planning, but general staff in the online survey indicated that this was not always the case.

Twenty-two of the twenty-three interview participants reported that general staff could contribute to evaluating and commenting on succession planning candidates. For
example, Participant Q from a public library reported, “Library leaders will organize a meeting so that general staff can evaluate strengths and weaknesses of each succession planning candidate” (IN.Q.PL6). Similarly, Participant E from another public library said, “General staff will comment on the list of candidates who may be involved in the succession planning” (IN.E.PL2). Comments such as those from Participants Q and E indicate that general staff contribute to succession planning by commenting on individual candidates’ strengths and weaknesses. In the literature, several studies indicate that general staff should be involved in succession planning, but these studies do not identify the specific activities that general staff could be involved in. The in-depth interview data also show that staff could be involved in observing and evaluating the candidates for succession to see whether these candidates were worthy of inclusion on the succession planning list. For example, Participant Q said, “General staff can observe potential successors to ensure they deserve the position” (IN.Q.PL6). In addition, Participant T added, “General staff can keep on evaluating the candidates to see if they are still worthy or not” (IN.T.PL4). Such comments indicate that staff involvement in succession planning is taking place at various stages of the process. Staff could keep on observing and evaluating potential candidates until they are promoted. This finding adds to the knowledge of library succession planning, as no discussion like this was identified in the literature.

Data from the in-depth interviews also suggest why general staff should participate in the succession planning process. Ten of the twenty-three participants indicated that general staff involvement helps to avoid bias and demonstrates democracy and openness in succession planning. For instance, Participant H stated, “General staff need to observe the selection process to make sure succession planning is conducted in an open and transparent process” (IN.H.PL3). Participant K said, “Library leaders ask for general staff comments before nominations. This will help to prevent library leaders from bias in succession planning” (IN.K.PL2). In addition, Participant N believed, “In the succession planning process, collecting secret ballots from all library staff is one way to avoid bias” (IN.N.AL1). These three quotes indicate that general staff might recognize their responsibility to participate in succession planning to help library leaders avoid bias. Furthermore, one online survey respondent stated, “General staff should participate in succession planning in order to avoid bias which is the result of acquaintance or seniority. This helps to prevent succession planning from unqualified
and incapable candidates” (ON.C4). This comment indicates that general staff participation could prevent library leaders from conducting succession planning based on relationships rather than ability to perform the job. Moreover, their involvement could negate the perception that staff working for a long time at the library would automatically become leaders. Their participation also helps library leaders to select suitable candidates for succession planning. The finding that general staff involvement helps to prevent library leaders from bias and demonstrate democracy and openness in succession planning is a new contribution to the literature. Staff participation to ensure that there is no bias was aligned with the role of the Communist Party (see section 6.3).

8.2.4 Succession planning restrictions

Data from both the online survey and in-depth interviews show that there were some restrictions to general staff participating in succession planning. These restrictions are discussed under three categories: the role of staff comments and opinions, the disclosure of short-term and long-term succession planning, and the publication of the final succession planning list.

Staff comments and opinions

Within one public library, three participants showed two opposing views regarding the role of general staff comments and opinions. Participants E and K (Vice-Director and Manager) believed that all staff comments and opinions were one step in the succession planning process and these were considered in order to select qualified candidates.

When the library leader presents the succession planning list in the library meeting, all staff will comment and express their opinions about these candidates (IN.E.PL2).

Based on all staff comments and library leaders’ opinions, potential successors are considered for suitable positions and then the list of the successors is built (IN.K.PL2).
In contrast, Participant U (Director) said that staff opinions were collected but these opinions were just for reference because the decisive opinions were from the authorities, including the Communist Party Cell and the parent organisation:

The library collects all staff opinions during the succession planning process. After that, staff opinions are considered but the key opinions are from the Communist Party Cell and the administrators (IN.U.PL2).

These comments indicate that the director of this library had a different view from the vice-director and the manager about the ability of general staff to comment on succession planning candidates. According to the director, general staff comments are only for reference. The finding of this research on restriction of staff involvement is also a new finding, with no similar discussion found in the literature.

**Disclosure of short-term and long-term successors**

As discussed earlier, general staff are not personally involved in succession planning. Therefore, an additional aspect of restrictions was staff knowledge of short-term and long-term successors. Participants from one public library showed their differing views about disclosure of short-term and long-term succession planning candidates. The director of this public library stated that general staff could only have the right to know about the long-term (i.e. within the next ten years) succession planning list because short-term (i.e. up to five years) succession planning was a sensitive issue and its non-disclosure helped to avoid problems before nominating the candidates. Such problems may include gossip, disclosed personal information, or rumours. In contrast, the vice-director of this library said that general staff only knew about short-term succession planning: “Currently, I [vice-director] am conducting succession planning for the years 2015-2020, but general staff cannot know. They can know only about short-term succession planning” (IN.E.PL2). Once again, within the same public library the director and vice-director showed their differing views about the time taken for long-term succession planning. In this context, the vice-director was mistaken in determining that 2015-2020 was a long-term period. If this vice-director inferred five years was short-term, he would have the same view with the director that that general staff have limited access to the list of short-term successors. This seems unfair to general staff
because they believe they have the right to know. Knowing they are on a succession planning list may be motivation for staff to work harder so as to be promoted. Staff who are not on the list may also be positively motivated so that they will try harder for the next opportunity. Discussion like this has not been found in prior studies, and the finding of this restriction contributes to the knowledge of library succession planning.

**Revealing the final succession planning list**

Another restriction to general staff participating in the succession planning process is not making public the final succession planning list. Half of the 172 participants (50%) ‘did not’ know or were ‘unsure’ of the list of successors \( p = .027 \). Similarly, sixty-four of the 109 general staff (59.3%) did not know or were ‘not sure’ who was being considered for succession. More top leaders (76.2%) and managers (59.5%) knew who was on the succession planning list than general staff (41.3%). From these figures, it can be inferred that many general staff do not know the final list of possible successors, which is only known by library leaders. The finding of the research on this restriction contributes to the literature since it has not been discussed previously.

Findings related to the involvement of general staff in succession planning help answer the third research question: “How can general staff be involved in succession planning?” There are three significant findings in this section. First, general staff can discuss, comment, and observe and evaluate potential candidates. This staff involvement helps to enhance the quality of successors. Second, general staff involvement helps to prevent library leaders from bias and demonstrate democracy and openness in succession planning. However, in Vietnamese libraries, staff do not generally know the final list of successors. In a large library, it may well be that general staff will have no idea how ‘good’ or ‘bad’ a nominee for the list may be – they may have never worked with them. These may affect both successors and general employees: successors should know their names are on the list so that they will be more motivated to work harder to be promoted, and general staff should also know the final list so that they can keep on observing and evaluating the successors’ progress. In addition, general staff may be encouraged to try harder to be on the list of successors in the future.
8.3 Succession planning challenges and possible solutions

This section discusses the challenges in library succession planning and possible solutions. The research findings show that there are several challenges that library leaders encounter in conducting succession planning. In addition, general staff and potential candidates also face their own difficulties in the process. These challenges are related to a small talent pool, leadership expectations, staff departures, lack of job descriptions, work performance assessment, and weak links between succession planning and promotion. Possible solutions include implementing a recruitment policy, training programs, work performance assessment, mentoring, challenging work assignments, and providing supplemental income. Each of these challenges and possible solutions is discussed further in detail.

8.3.1 Challenges in library succession planning

Succession planning is a long-term process that can involve every library staff member, and it is a process with challenges. Data from the online surveys and in-depth interviews show that a small talent pool, leadership expectations, staff departures, lack of job descriptions, insufficient work performance assessment, and lack of linking succession planning with promotion are the most significant challenges in conducting succession planning.

Small talent pool

The biggest challenge for library succession planning in the Mekong Delta, as indicated by the research data, is lack of talent. Twenty of the twenty-three interview participants indicated that their libraries have only a small talent pool. For example, Participant I said, “At department level, we lack qualified staff. We cannot find a candidate for the position of department head when the current one studies abroad” (IN.I.AL1). Similarly, Participant E stated, “As per regulation, our library can have another vice-director. However, we cannot find the right person for this position” (IN.E.PL2). Participant V claimed, “Most of our staff hold vocational training degrees and their professional level is low. Therefore, we have a lack of qualified staff for managerial positions”
These quotes suggest that a small talent pool is a great challenge in their libraries. This could lead to difficulties in selecting qualified candidates for succession planning. Furthermore, time and money would need to be spent to train candidates from a small talent pool to be potential successors.

The finding of this study is supported by literature (Hanoi Moi 2010; Ministry of Culture and Information 2007; Ministry of Culture Sports and Tourism 2010; Nguyen, TTM 2009; Vu, DTN, Pham & Le 2013). According to the master library development plan in Vietnam up to 2010, there was a strategy for 100% of the provincial and urban libraries to have internet connection to the National Library, 20% of rare materials to be digitised, and 40% of the district libraries to apply information technology to their activities (Ministry of Culture and Information 2007). However, this strategy has not been achieved. One of the causes, especially in the public libraries, is that there are insufficient staff who are properly trained. (Hanoi Moi 2010). The average number of staff in provincial and urban libraries is twenty-five employees. However, many libraries are lower than this average and this average rate fell dramatically to 1.6 staff in one district library (Ministry of Culture Sports and Tourism 2010). These figures indicate that public library staff numbers are insufficient for the needs of library services.

Low staffing numbers can also be a great challenge for succession planning. In terms of qualifications, Ms Thanh Mai, the Head of the Department of Library which manages all library systems in Vietnam, reported that provincial library staff had master’s degrees (6%), bachelor’s degrees (72%) and vocational training certificates (22%). In a lower level of library structure – district libraries – 40% of staff had bachelor’s degrees and the remainder held vocational training certificates. These library staff were primarily trained in traditional library skills and, with the rapid development of information technology, are not fully able to meet the requirements of the modern services that their libraries are currently developing (Nguyen, TTM 2009). In academic libraries, the quantity and quality of library staff are still low and poor. Some academic libraries are under pressure to deploy teaching staff without library knowledge, and some academic library leaders are educated in disciplines other than librarianship. These circumstances impede the delivery of library services and the application of library standards (Vu, DTN, Pham & Le 2013). The small talent pool of educated library staff
and leaders is a great concern in both public and academic libraries, not only in the Mekong Delta but also nationwide.

**Leadership expectation**

Data from the in-depth interviews show that there is a general understanding that staff who work for the longest time in both public and academic libraries will become the library leaders. However, Participant O from an academic library stated that library staff should pay attention to qualified staff in succession planning. They should avoid thinking “Live long to be the village leader” (IN.O.AL3). In this comment, Participant O was worried that general staff may choose the oldest as the potential candidates because of this stereotype about leadership. Consequently, this would affect the quality of potential candidates. Similarly, Participant V from a public library reported that the idea of “Living long time will move up to leaders” still existed (IN.V.PL4). However, Participant G from a public library said, “Among the staff who have similar qualifications, only the better and more competent are on the shortlist. Therefore, it is not the case that working for a long time means being promoted to a leader” (IN.G.PL5). These comments indicate that participants believe that seniority should not be considered as the principle criterion in succession planning, although there is a long-established belief that “Seniority is always preferred in the group”. This research finding is therefore to some extent against Kumaran’s idea that leadership in Asian countries is for the wise and the elderly, and not for those who climb the organisational ladder quickly (Kumaran 2012a). This finding also adds to the base of knowledge, particularly for those in the Asian world where seniority was often prioritised in library succession planning.

**Staff departure**

Data from the in-depth interviews also indicate that staff departure was considered a challenge in succession planning. Staff departure might result in a small talent pool and difficulty in selecting potential candidates. Twelve of the twenty-three interviewees reported that it is common for employees to quit their jobs in the library environment. Participant P said, “Library staff quit their job because salary is so low and not enough for their living and for their family” (IN.P.PL3). Participant E added, “Most of the IT
staff in my library have quit their job because other organisations agree to pay them a high salary while the library cannot. In addition, the library does not have conditions for them to upgrade their professional knowledge” (IN.E.PL2). This comment illustrates one reason for a lack of talent pool. In particular, Participant A claimed, “Qualified staff turnover may cause shortage of talent for succession planning because we have no more quotas to recruit new ones” (IN.A.AL2).

Some literature addressing retention has talked about the challenges of staff departure to succession planning (McMahan, Jennifer & Masias, Michele 2009; Nixon 2008; Strothmann & Ohler 2011). Nixon (2008) describes how many librarians are leaving their career in the United States resulting in a lack of qualified staff, especially for middle and upper-level positions. This is alarming, as Strothmann and Ohler (2011) affirm: “Libraries may cause themselves additional staffing shortages unnecessarily by neglecting retention of the remaining employees” (p. 192). While Nixon indicated that staff turnover is a challenge to succession planning, McMahan, Jennifer and Masias, Michele (2009) determined that succession planning is good preparation to ensure leadership continuity, linking succession planning and staff retention.

In addition to staff departure as a challenge in succession planning, potential successors have their own challenges. These challenges, appearing in responses from both public and academic library participants, are related to family and economic issues. For example, Participant B from an academic library thought, “Library leaders should focus on their leadership tasks and could not have part-time jobs for extra-money. Therefore, many general staff do not want to be leaders” (IN.B.AL4). In addition, they might not manage to participate in training programs because of family commitments. Participant C from a public library said, “Potential successors who are busy with their families have to postpone their training” (IN.C.PL1). Sometimes, staff leave the library even though they were on the succession planning list because they recognised that “Salaries in the other organizations are much more than their library salary” (IN.F.PL6). The finding that potential successors may leave libraries because of their low salaries is supported in literature (Iyer 2012; Strothmann & Ohler 2011; Usherwood 2001; Whitmell 2002; Woo 2007). In research into how to retain academic librarians, Strothmann and Ohler (2011) indicate that inadequate salary is the major reason of four (salary, working conditions, job enrichment, and education) that make employees quit their jobs.
Meanwhile, Iyer (2012) claims that income is one of two reasons why employees change their workplace, the other being career progression. Better salaries from other companies entice qualified staff to other jobs resulting in a smaller talent pool for library succession planning.

**Lack of job descriptions**

Data from the online survey show that job descriptions are generally lacking in Mekong Delta libraries. Sixty-seven of the 172 participants (39%) responded that they did not have a job description. Job descriptions were more common in academic libraries (56.2%) than in public libraries (44.6%). In addition, about one quarter of respondents (25.3%) reported that they did not participate in updating their own job descriptions. Comparing library sectors, academic library staff (77.6%) were more involved in updating position descriptions than public library staff (70.3%). The data also show that older staff had more involvement in updating position descriptions than those who are younger (Spearman’s rho .303).

The findings related to job descriptions are supported by the literature (Pennell 2010; Sanders 2004). Sanders (2004) states that a job description provides a summary of duties and responsibilities that the person performing the job will be doing. They also say that job descriptions help to evaluate and determine the appropriate classification level for staff salary and position. Pennell (2010) indicates that job descriptions are necessary to support various library strategies such as job rotations, stretch assignments, and training to build competencies for succession planning. Pennell further states that flexible and up-to-date job descriptions can encourage staff to grow within their positions and make more significant contributions to the organisation. These comments suggest that job descriptions are important and help to evaluate and select qualified staff for succession planning.

**Insufficient work performance assessment**

Another challenge to a successful succession plan is work performance assessment, which was not commonly used in the succession planning process in the Mekong Delta, especially in academic libraries. In the online survey, only thirty-two of the sixty-one
academic library staff (52.5%) reported that the results of work performance assessment were used for succession planning. In addition, academic library staff (34.4%) were more confused about whether work performance assessments of general staff were used for succession planning than public library staff (18.2%). There are correlations between position, and awareness of work performance assessment being used for succession planning. Research data show that the higher the position library staff held, the higher levels of understanding of performance assessment to recruit potential candidates for succession planning. In addition, there are correlations between position, and satisfaction with the work performance assessment process. The higher the position the library staff held, the more satisfied they were with the process of assessing work performance. Conversely, general staff were not satisfied with the assessment process.

The finding that work performance assessment is not used for succession planning in Vietnam is contrary to the literature (Kim, S 2003). Kim (2003) claims that there is a connection between work performance assessments and succession planning. She explains that work performance assessment procedures help to facilitate succession planning management decisions that comply with organizational objectives as well as strategic workforce plans. Similarly, Nguyen (Nguyen, TH 2012) indicates that work performance assessment is useful information to select potential candidates for succession planning, rotation and promotion. These comments imply that insufficient work performance assessment may result in poor selections for the next generation of library leaders.

**Poor relationship between succession planning and promotion**

Data from the online survey show that promotion of library leaders is not always a result of succession planning. Only 118 of the 172 participants (68.6%) believed that the current board of director members were recruited as the result of succession planning by taking a confidential vote. More than thirty-one per cent were not sure or confirmed that current library leaders were not always selected from a succession planning list. Similarly, only 103 of the 172 participants (59.9%) reported that senior managers were selected from a succession planning list. These figures indicate that there is a poor connection between succession planning and promotion. This finding adds to the knowledge of library succession planning. The connection between succession planning
and promotion is very important because “Individuals who have received a great deal of training in succession planning might move if they do not get a promotion at their institution” (González 2013, p. 413). It is very likely that promotion other than from succession planning can cause frustration in qualified staff, discouragement in general employees, and increase ‘brain drain’ in the organisation.

8.3.2 Possible solutions

Recruitment policy, training programs, work performance assessment, mentoring, challenging work assignments, and supplemental income are indicated as possible solutions for the challenges identified by the research participants.

Recruitment policy

Data from both the online survey and in-depth interviews show that recruitment of qualified staff was a possible solution for a shallow pool of talent. Qualified staff can be recruited from inside and/or outside libraries. In the survey, fifty per cent of academic libraries and forty-one per cent of public libraries preferred to use advertisements for their recruitment to attract qualified staff ($p = .012$). However, the more in-depth interviews suggest that potential successors of these libraries are suggested from within. Fifteen of the twenty-three participants stated that libraries should promote candidates from inside the library for managerial positions. For example, Participant I said, “We can trust library candidates within the organization because these people know the personalities and capacities of each library staff member and what they are doing for the benefit of the library” (IN.I.AL1). Participant J thought, “Potential candidates within the library can work well because they understand what should be done for the library and face less challenges” (IN.J.PL5). These comments indicate that research participants preferred internal candidates because of their knowledge of how their library works and their understanding of the people in the libraries.

Seven participants reported that their libraries had never recruited from outside for managerial positions. Participant E said, “My library has never recruited staff for managerial positions” (IN.E.PL2). Participant N reported, “Since I worked here, the
library has not recruited anyone outside for the library director position” (IN.N.AL1). She also added, “There was a vice-director recruited from outside. However, he only worked at the library for a short time because he could not fulfil his duty without understanding the library” (IN.N.AL1). These comments indicate that recruiting qualified staff from the outside seldom happens. The finding that potential successors are mainly from within is supported by literature (Brady, Fulmer & Helmich 1982; Ernest & Barr 2003; González 2013; Jantti & Greenhalgh 2012; Rothwell 2010; Rust 2007; Scott 2008). Rust (2007) claims that developing existing employees is less risky and less expensive than recruiting new staff. Ernest and Barr (2003) note that promoting from within the organisation aims to encourage employees to be excellent at work and to develop professionally in order to become successors. Similarly, in research into leadership competencies, Jantti and Greenhalgh (2012) indicate that growing library leaders from within is a way to develop an individual’s potential. These findings are also prevalent in the business world (Brady, Fulmer & Helmich 1982; González 2013; Scott 2008). Highest position leaders (i.e. directors) within the organizations are preferable to insiders because the outsiders are likely to work only temporarily for a company (Brady, Fulmer & Helmich 1982). DHL Express hires 83% of senior managers internally and considers promoting from inside the organisation as the number one strategic priority to keep people and keep client relationships strong (Scott 2008). Similar to this, a library can primarily consider insiders in managerial positions to encourage its employees to perform better. It can be reasoned that if there was no talent pool, outsiders could be an option for these top positions in an organization. This is indicated in research conducted by González (2013): “The best companies groomed employees with leadership potential so that they can aspire to higher level positions” (p. 113).

Training programs

Training programs should be developed for potential candidates. This is suggested because more than half of the survey population (51.5%) responded that training programs are not organised for successors, but in the in-depth interviews, fourteen of the twenty-three participants (60.9%) indicated that successors should be trained properly. For example, Participant C explained, “We send our staff to training courses to get ready for succession planning” (IN.C.PL1). Participant J said, “Potential
candidates should be trained in various skills and knowledge based on the requirements of their future positions” (IN.J.PL5). Participant W reported, “Training programs will include both library management and leadership” (IN.W.AL2). The finding of this study, that training programs are necessary for successors, is supported by the literature (American Library Association 2014; Hicks & Given 2013; Romaniuk & Haycock 2011; Simmons College 2014).

In the United States, there are many institutes and universities facilitating leadership programs, such as the American Library Association Emerging Leaders program, the Illinois Library Leadership Initiative, the Michigan Library Association’s Leadership Academy, the New York Library Association’s Library Leadership and Management Academy (American Library Association 2014), and the “Managerial Leadership in the Information Professions” (MLIP) doctoral program for leadership competency development and original research (Simmons College 2014). These programs help to fill the current gaps by providing skills and confidence in the pool of emergent library leaders (Romaniuk & Haycock 2011). Furthermore, Hicks and Given (2013) indicate that LIS programs should pay more attention to leadership in their curricula to prepare students to deal with professional change. Leadership training programs such as the International Network of Emerging Library Innovators (INELI), sponsored by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, and the Kotuku program developed by the Library and Information Association of New Zealand Aotearoa (LIANZA) have gained much attention from global library leaders. However, Vietnamese library leaders have little change of benefitting from them since access in Vietnam, a developing country, is limited and the library network with local communities is not well connected (Arabella Advisors 2015).

While leadership training programs are operated and developed in most Western countries, library leadership programs are non-existent in Vietnam except for a short training program sponsored by the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) with Institutions for Leaders of Vietnamese Association (Pham 2013). As noted in Chapter One, in Vietnam there are eight universities providing bachelor’s library programs, three universities are in charge of educating master’s degree librarians, and one university offers a doctoral library program. However, there is no university or institution offering a formal training program specially for library leadership positions.
(Le, VV 2013). Fortunately, beside academic and short training programs for library leaders conducted by Australian universities and state libraries, the Australian government has annually provided an Australian awards leadership program for 200 recipients globally since 2007 (Australian Government 2014). As a result of this, the Australian program has educated many cohorts of experts, academics and leaders in various industries, including library and information science, for Vietnam.

In addition to leadership training for successors, knowledge of financial matters should be paid attention to. In Vietnam only a director can decide on library finances and no one else can be involved, but they may not have the training required to perform this satisfactorily. For example, Participant U reported, “I have never been trained for budgeting issues. Former training programs did not focus on library budget, either” (IN.U.PL2). Becoming a library director without good budget knowledge means a leader might face difficulties in managing financial issues. Participant P explained, “If leaders do not know accounting, accountants may cause problems for them” (IN.P.PL3).

In Western countries, financial knowledge is sometimes included in librarianship education (Boock 2008; Kumaran 2012b; Singer, P, Goodrich & Goldberg 2004). Singer, P, Goodrich and Goldberg (2004) indicate that budgeting is something successors must learn to prepare for their own future positions: however, Boock (2008) claims that education on budgeting may not be adequate. In addition, experience of library financial issues can be shared through mentoring (Hernon 2010; Mavrinac 2005). Kumaran (2012b) advises library leaders to take a course in financial accounting in order to manage library budgets.

**Work performance assessment**

Twenty of the twenty-three in-depth interviewees indicated that the result of work performance assessment should be used to select qualified candidates for succession planning. For instance, participant J reported, “Choosing candidates for succession planning based on the result of work performance is a good way to avoid bias in conducting succession planning” (IN.J.PL5). Participant E explained, “Through a work performance assessment process, library staff can know their colleagues’ task achievements which are used for selecting succession candidates and transparency in succession planning process” (IN.E.PL2). The finding that results of work performance
assessment could be used for succession planning is supported by the literature (Holcomb 2006; Kundanis 2014; Singer, PM & Griffith 2010). Singer, PM and Griffith (2010) state that job-related assessment provides important feedback and input for succession planning. Similarly, Holcomb (2006) suggests that a library should have a plan for individual performance review so as to provide on-going education for staff to meet current and future managerial goals. In a book chapter, Kundanis (2014) indicates that annual staff assessment is considered as one of the two components (together with staff use of organisational support for career development) for leadership development and succession planning.

**Mentoring**

Sixteen out of the twenty-three interviewees considered informal mentoring an effective way to train potential candidates. Sharing experience and expertise are important in mentoring. For example, Participant T said, “As a library leader, I share my experience and expertise with potential successors” (IN.T.PL4). Similarly, Participant S stated, “In succession planning, I will be promoted manager of a library division. Through daily work, my director aims to train and transfer to me his experience. I feel more confident in taking this position” (IN.S.PL1). The finding of this research on informal mentoring is prominently discussed in literature related to succession planning (Arnold, Nickel & Williams 2008; Hartman & Delaney 2010; Hicks 2011; Holcomb 2006; Macpherson 2010; Mavrinac 2005; McMahan, Jennifer & Masias, Michele 2009; Mosley 2005; Nixon 2008; Novara, Brown & Williams 2010; Osif 2006, 2007; Sears 2014; Shirey 2008; Stueart & Sullivan 2010; Todaro 2011).

In a four stage library succession planning model, Nixon (2008) considers “establishing a formal mentoring system” as a part of the last step to “grow your own leaders.” Similarly, Sears (2014) indicates that “Effective mentoring programs can help develop the potential of current employees and increase the size of the pool of candidates for promotion” (p. 129). Mentoring is one way to groom potential internal candidates’ managerial skills and knowledge so that they can be prepared and feel more confident to perform their future job, as indicated by Williams’ and Currie and Grundy’s models (Currie & Grundy 2011; Williams 2010). As Arnold, Nickel and Williams (2008) confirm, mentoring can be an extremely important aspect of librarians’ careers because
it can inspire them to leadership. Mentoring ensures that the expertise of current library leaders is passed on to those who will follow. Similarly, Hartman and Delaney (2010) indicate that mentoring is an effective way to pass on the valuable skills and knowledge of experienced librarians before they retire. Mentoring helps potential leaders learn quickly about leadership, avoid possible mistakes, acquire intellectual heritage and feel more confident in their future positions and increases the talent pool.

**Challenging work assignments**

Assigning challenging tasks for employees is considered as a way to help them gain experience in library management and leadership. For instance, Director B from an academic library said library leaders should assign tasks for potential successors and create opportunities for them to show their capacities for organizing and managing. In addition, it was also a way to challenge them in relation to responsibility and other necessary qualities of a leader (IN.B.AL4). According to the research participants, there are various ways to assign challenging tasks to potential candidates. First, more tasks can be assigned to improve potential candidates’ knowledge and skills. Director U from a public library reported, “Potential successors will develop gradually through practice. This will make them know how to deal with leadership tasks because nobody is perfect at the beginning” (IN.U.PL2). Second, potential candidates have trained themselves on probation at some social and political organisations to gain experience. Director T from a public library believed that library leaders should introduce potential successors to the Trade Union, Communist Party, and the Youth Union Committee. Practising Union leadership was a good way for them to develop as leaders (IN.T.PL4).

Challenging staff can also be achieved through job rotation. Vice-Director C from a public library thought intended successors should be rotated through every library department so that they could understand all library work. This would be beneficial for them whenever they moved up to managerial positions (IN.C.PL1). Many prior studies discuss job rotation - moving from job to job - within the same employment environment to gain thorough knowledge of the organisation (Hill 2014; Levoy 2014; Malinski 2002; Onwubiko, Onu & Ossai-Onah 2010). According to Onwubiko, Onu and Ossai-Onah (2010), job rotation within library departments is necessary for employees seeking to learn and extend competencies by changing speciality streams and thereby enhancing their employability. Malinski (2002) states that job rotation can
increase innovation, production and loyalty in employees. Levoy (2014) indicates that job rotation is a way to gain job enrichment that can give capable staff an opportunity to grow on the job. However, job rotation does bring with it costs and other downsides.

The finding of the current research also supports the idea that leadership and management skills are formed through practice (German et al. 1997; Hartman & Delaney 2010; Singer, P, Goodrich & Goldberg 2004). Singer, P, Goodrich and Goldberg (2004) indicate that library leaders can provide specific opportunities for potential candidates to practice skills in order to bridge gaps in their knowledge relevant to future leadership positions. Singer and his colleagues also claim that library leaders can provide challenging assignments for their candidates to learn. Hartman and Delaney (2010) suggest that library employees could be involved in a variety of short-term projects, not only to hone their skills but also to be involved with many people in the organisation. The finding of assigning challenging work for employees fits well with the ‘intellectual stimulation’ component of transformational leadership theory. Library leaders should assign employees challenging work in order to stimulate their intellectual capacities. By doing this leaders are able to know what their employees can do and identify capacities matched against intended managerial positions.

**Supplemental income**

In order to deal with the challenge of low salaries that may lead library employees to quit their job, library leaders could look for a way to bring in supplemental income for their staff. Nineteen of the twenty-three interviewed participants advised that getting extra money for employees is a good way to retain qualified staff and encourage all employees to perform their tasks better. For example, Participant A said, “Library leaders should create more opportunities for them to get extra income” (IN.A.AL2). Participant L pointed out, “Libraries were expected to bring in supplemental income in order to improve their staff living standards” (IN.L.AL4). Participant F suggested, “Library leaders should find ways to support their employees financially so that they can stay at their jobs” (IN.F.PL6). For example, Participant Q said, “Information technology staff in the library are allowed to develop computer programs for other companies to get extra money to take care of the family. It is a way to keep qualified staff” (IN.Q.PL6).
To clarify this point in the Vietnamese context: library leaders in Vietnam can be flexible in allowing their employees to do part-time jobs outside the library, such as teaching English, training for computer skills, or software development for other companies or organisations to get extra money besides their monthly library salary. However, these employees have to contribute a certain amount of their extra income (maybe 30%-50%, the amount decided by all library members) to a monthly library staff fund so that their colleagues are willing to cover their tasks when they are busy with outside jobs. In addition, library leaders can bring in extra income for their employees from a coffee shop, canteen, photocopying, conference room rental, bicycle shed, and similar sources. With this type of supplemental income, library leaders make a policy for a certain amount of income to be used for overtime payment in the library and another sum of money to be shared among their employees monthly, quarterly or yearly. Library leaders who are successful in bringing in supplemental income for their employees can be encouraged to share their experience with leaders of other libraries.

Findings on the challenges and possible solutions in library succession planning complete responses to the fourth research question: “What factors challenge succession planning?” Of several findings noted, two dominant findings can be added to our knowledge of library succession planning. First, in the Vietnamese library and information sector, there is a disconnection between succession planning and promotion. This may cause frustration in qualified staff, negatively affect general employees’ motivation, and increase “brain drain” in the library. Second, library leaders in Vietnam are expected to look for a way to bring in supplemental income for their staff. This is not documented in library policy, but happens in reality. Library leaders who are good at bringing more supplemental income can be encouraged to share experience with leaders of other libraries in Vietnam.

8.4 Summary

This chapter discusses the involvement of general staff in the library succession planning process, and possible challenges and suggested solutions. Online survey data showed that nearly seventy per cent of general staff did not personally participate in
their library succession planning process, while in-depth interview data addressed the possibilities for general staff to be involved in this process through various activities. Of particular note is that fewer academic library staff were involved in this process than public library employees. Research participants expressed their desire to be involved in the succession planning process because staff involvement can help library leaders to avoid bias in conducting the process. Furthermore, staff involvement in the succession planning process helps to enhance awareness of general staff that they can be on the list of potential successors if they perform well.

In the succession planning process, library leaders may face several challenges. They include a small talent pool, leadership expectation, staff departure, lack of job descriptions, insufficient work performance assessment, and poor links between succession planning and promotion. Together with library leaders, general staff and potential successors also face their own challenges. The most significant challenge for general staff is a restriction on distribution of the list of potential candidates. This restriction may prevent general staff from observing and evaluating the candidates, as well as reduce encouragement to perform their work better so as to be on the list. Potential candidates face the challenges of financial issues and family commitments. These challenges may prevent them from participating in the training programs and reduce their desire to be promoted.

This chapter also discusses some possible solutions based on the participants’ suggestions. They include having a recruitment policy, training programs, work performance assessment, mentoring, challenging work assignments, and supplemental income. Most importantly, the research findings related to solutions such as work performance assessment, mentoring, challenging work assignments, and supplemental income support ‘individual consideration’ – one of the four components of transformational leadership theory. Whenever the individuals are well taken care of and supported, they will have long-term commitment and devote their time as well as energy to the organisation’s development.

The following chapter (Chapter Nine) proposes a theoretical model of library succession planning process for public and academic libraries in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam.
Chapter Nine  A PROPOSED MODEL FOR A LIBRARY SUCCESSION PLANNING PROCESS

9.1  Introduction

In the previous two chapters, responses to the four research questions are discussed. In this chapter, major outcomes from the research lead to the development of a model for the library succession planning process in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam. First, a detailed description of the six-step succession planning process is reported. This section is then followed by a presentation of the elements required for successful library succession planning. An explanation of why and how the Communist Party of Vietnam is a decisive factor in library succession planning is a focus. Finally, this chapter concludes with an interpretation of why the proposed model is important, not only for libraries in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam, but also globally.

9.2  Library succession planning process

Data from the interviews informed the development of a library succession planning process with six steps (see Figure 9). These steps are (1) identifying potential employees for leadership positions, (2) assessing candidates’ strengths and weaknesses, (3) getting approval from authorities, (4) developing a training program to build leadership competencies, (5) ascertaining the success of the training program or review of the candidates, and (6) selection of successors. Through responding to the questions related to the succession planning process, research interviewees shared their experience on who is in charge of each step and what has to be done to result in a successful succession process.
Step 1: Identify potential leaders

In this first step, current library leaders should identify the key positions in the organization to be considered in succession planning, and an initial list of potential candidates needs to be developed. Government guidelines for succession planning that apply to every industry need to be viewed, even though they only address top leaders or high positions (director and vice-directors). However, data from this study indicate that the managerial positions in the library and information sector have to include heads and vice-heads of library departments as well as the top leaders. Research participants considered that all of these managerial positions need to be considered in succession planning for good results, for both long-term planning and for more immediate requirements.

The ideal number of candidates for each managerial position identified by research participants is the same as the government guidelines. That is, not more than four candidates for a managerial position, one candidate being capable of filling one to three
different positions, and trying to avoid only one candidate for a position (Central Personnel Committee 2012). The initial list of candidates can be determined either by general staff or library leaders, together with the secretary of the Communist Party of the library, depending on the model applied. Two thirds of interviewees indicated that their libraries applied a bottom-up model. This means that general staff in their libraries suggest the initial list of potential candidates for succession planning. In addition, this initial list may include candidates recommended by the Communist Party Committee of the library. In the top-down model, the initial list is completely built by the Communist Party, as occurs in three of the six public libraries in the study. Allowing general staff to make suggestions for the initial list aims to make the process more democratic and avoid bias in the succession planning process.

In this stage, self-nomination and external candidates are also welcome. External candidates may also be added at this stage but they are not included in training, as illustrated in Step 4 of the model. Although these external candidates do not participate in training programs hosted by the employing library, they may be trained in their own organisation. Selection criteria such as professional knowledge, leadership skills including good moral practices, approved political ideology, enthusiasm, experience, work commitment, age, and external relationships are considered so as to choose qualified candidates for the initial list.

**Step 2: Assessment**

The second step relates to actual assessment of potential candidates’ strengths and weaknesses by library leaders and staff, including the Communist Party, in order to select qualified personnel for leadership positions. According to the research participants, assessment can be performed at both library department level and library level. At library department level, general staff can evaluate potential candidates based on selection criteria such as professional knowledge, leadership skills including moral practices, political ideology, and outstanding achievements. Assessment in this step is more in depth than in the first step and comes direct from candidates’ co-workers. General staff can also comment on the candidates and vote for people for the list. At library level, recommended candidates are assessed by colleagues from other departments in the library who focus on the candidates’ ability to encourage co-
operation and general staff relationships. The assessment ends with a confidential vote for people to be included on the final list.

**Step 3: Authority approval**

In the Vietnamese library and information sector, the roles played by the Communist Party are entrenched through government policies. These roles include positioning library activities, making decisions about library management and leadership, and maintaining the process of succession planning. In particular, the Communist Party plays its role in approving the final succession planning list. In the ‘Authority approval’ step, a list of potential candidates for succession planning is approved by parent organisation leaders first, and then the Communist Party Committee of that parent organisation. In other words, the Communist Party Committee of the parent organisation makes the final decision about the library succession planning list of candidates. This decisive step is conducted through a meeting where each candidate is carefully considered with regard to their political ideology and that of their families. In addition, their capacity to bring people together to achieve a common goal and follow the direction of the party is also evaluated in this step. Candidates from the original list who are not approved at this stage will be held back for further improvement and re-considered at another time.

**Step 4: Training**

Training programs play a role in preparing potential candidates for future tasks. After getting approval from the parent organisation leaders and the Communist Party, potential candidates (excluding external candidates) are sent to training programs. As noted above, the Communist Party Committee of the parent organisation will decide which training program is appropriate for each candidate. Importantly, advanced political theory of the Communist Party is a compulsory course which every potential candidate has to attend. Other training programs, including higher education study, leadership skills, and professional knowledge, may be assigned to particular candidates based on the requirements of their future positions and individual needs. Candidates are trained in professional and leadership skills and assigned challenging tasks to gain experience through practice.
**Step 5: Review**

Review is the next step in the selection process. On the one hand, this procedure helps the leaders and general staff to determine if the candidates are now of a standard for their potential positions, or if they should receive further training. On the other hand, this phase also helps training organisers determine what they should upgrade in their training programs to satisfy the needs of candidates. This step also includes reflection on what has been done, or what needs to be modified in the process for the next round of succession planning. The list of potential successors and external candidates is finalised.

**Step 6: Selection**

In this step, these potential successors are ready for promotion and selection is made. In the following year, some candidates may be taken off the list after consideration and new ones may be suggested. The cycle of selection is repeated. As a result, both general staff and potential successors continue to develop and improve in order to enhance their career. In this phase, potential candidates have to receive the approval of the Communist Party through a meeting of the Communist Party Committee of the parent organisation to be promoted. This is only needed if the candidates under consideration are external candidates.

Compared to other models in the relevant literature, as discussed in Chapter Seven, section 7.4, this model is a combination of the phases suggested by Nixon (2008), Stueart and Sullivan (2010) and Rothwell (2010). A major difference is addressed in the third step of the process - ‘Authority approval’. This step demonstrates the decisive role of the Communist Party of Vietnam where all issues related to leadership are managed by the only political party in that country. In particular, the party approves the final list of potential candidates for library succession planning.

In terms of time taken for each step, there is no requirement identified by either the participants or government documents. Therefore, the time taken by library leaders to complete this process is based on individual library needs. The cycle of this process is
repeated annually so library staff must have time to improve themselves to be on the list in the next cycle of succession planning.

### 9.3 Required elements of library succession planning

The next important part of the proposed model for a library succession planning in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam, is its required elements. An adequate talent pool, staff involvement, job descriptions, work performance assessments, and selection criteria are the required elements of library succession planning identified in this research (see Figure 10) in order for it to work well. Each of these elements is described in more detail.

![Figure 10](image)

**Figure 10** Required elements of library succession planning

#### 9.3.1 Talent pool

In the library, the talent pool is considered to be qualified staff who are effective enough at their jobs to be considered for succession planning in the organisation. There are two key elements to be considered: staff qualification and staff retention.
**Staff qualification**

Interviewees state that recruitment for library leadership positions is mainly from within the organisation, but the talent pools in the Mekong Delta libraries in Vietnam are insufficient. As discussed in Chapter Eight, section 8.3.1, a large number of general staff and leaders are going to retire soon. This contributes to both a small talent pool for succession planning and an increased need. Candidates may also be recruited from outside the organisation; however, interviewees claim anecdotally that these outside people seem not to stay long in their positions, often departing after one or two years of leadership. The explanation for their departure is that they are not suitable for the library. According to the interviewees, although these people may have leadership skills, they are not sufficient for a successful library leader who should also have knowledge of the library to build trust among employees.

**Staff retention**

A required element of an adequate library talent pool is staff retention. It will cost time and money to train new candidates if suitable candidates depart from the library. Staff retention brings stability into the library talent pool which is pivotal for succession planning. A sufficient talent pool will provide enough qualified candidates and save time and money for training others in professional and leadership skills. In the study, participants reported that library leaders should select candidates who appear to have the intention to remain at the library. Research participants also noted that an indication that suggests employees will stay with the organisation for a long time is their willingness to raise ideas or provide input into library development. In reality, staff retention relies on differing factors, of which salary was considered the most important by several participants. However, succession planning itself may be a good way to keep qualified employees who would like to be promoted. For those employees attracted by high salaries rather than future managerial positions, supplemental income is believed to be a possible solution.
9.3.2 Staff involvement

Another element for successful library succession planning is staff involvement. In the study, online respondents indicated that general staff are often not personally involved in the library succession planning process. They also expressed their desire and perceived right to participate in the process of suggesting, selecting, commenting on, evaluating, and observing the potential candidates until they are promoted. In addition, online respondents also wished to know the final list of potential candidates, so that they can observe and evaluate candidates who may then keep on improving themselves to receive positive comments from general staff, and therefore continue to qualify to be on the list. Also, knowledge of the list may motivate general staff to perform their tasks well so as to be included on the next list.

Furthermore, interviewees indicated that staff involvement would help library leaders to avoid potential and perceived bias in conducting succession planning. Staff involvement and a bottom-up model are considered innovations in library succession planning in Vietnam by research participants. In 2012, the Communist Party released a new policy that general staff have to participate and vote for their favoured candidates for leadership roles in all industries of the nation. Therefore, staff involvement is mandated by government policy so as to practice democracy and transparency in leadership, as well as enhance the quality of the candidates and staff motivation. However, data from the online survey and interviews showed that some of the libraries are not following policy, with more general staff not involved in the succession planning process in their organisations. Nearly twenty-one per cent (20.7%) of library leaders and managers believed that general staff should not be involved in succession planning.

9.3.3 Job descriptions

A job description is a required element of succession planning because it helps to evaluate and select qualified staff for the list of candidates for particular positions. Together with other criteria for selection, a job description can be used to consider, compare and assess appropriate candidates. Job descriptions also help library leaders and staff to avoid bias in selection. Through job descriptions, they can assess
employees’ capacities, knowledge, and skills objectively. Flexible and up-to-date job descriptions can encourage staff to grow within their positions and make more significant contributions to the organisation. In the study, lack of job descriptions was identified as one of the challenges of library succession planning, as discussed in Chapter Eight, section 8.3.1. Moreover, online respondents state that staff participation in upgrading of job descriptions is necessary. It is likely that employees will try to fulfil their tasks if they themselves design and upgrade the requirements of the job descriptions.

9.3.4 Work performance assessment

Work performance assessment is another required element of library succession planning because the results of assessment are used for candidate selection. Through annual work performance assessment, employees are categorised into four groups: ‘Excellent’, ‘Good’, ‘Average’, and ‘Weak’. Employees who achieve ‘Excellent’ and ‘Good’ are generally included on the list of potential candidates for succession planning. However, the online data show that general staff are not satisfied with the results and the way in which work performance assessment is conducted. The interviewees also claim that work performance assessment is not completely successful because criteria to evaluate employees’ innovative ideas – one of the requirements to achieve a rating of ‘Excellent’ – are not clear. Work performance assessment is also reluctantly performed by general staff and consequently its quality is poor. Work performance assessment needs to be improved.

9.3.5 Selection criteria

As discussed in Chapter Seven, section 7.3, selection criteria are vital to select qualified candidates for succession planning. Desirable selection criteria include professional knowledge, leadership skills including good moral practices, approved political ideology, enthusiasm, experience, work commitment, age, and external relationships. Selection criteria help to build the initial list of candidates in the first step, provide the measurements to evaluate candidates in the second step, inform suggestions of further training programs for the candidates in the fourth step, and assist the deliberations to
promote a candidate in the last step. Furthermore, selection criteria help library leaders and staff avoid bias in conducting succession planning. Without selection criteria, it is hard for library leaders and staff to be objective in the process of selection.

9.4 The Communist Party of Vietnam

As discussed in Chapter Six and Chapter Seven, section 7.6, the impacting factors on the library succession planning process are acknowledged as the Communist Party, parent organisation leaders, library leaders, and general staff. Among these factors, the Communist Party of Vietnam plays the most decisive role in the process, as illustrated at the centre of the model (see Figure 11). This role was the major emergent theme from the online survey data and was therefore intensively focused on during the in-depth interviews. In Vietnam the Communist Party, as the only political party and government, directs leadership in all industries of the nation, including in the library and information sector. In particular, the Communist Party issues leadership policies and guidelines in National Congresses every five years, as described in Chapter One. The Communist Party plays the decisive role in succession planning process because it aims to ensure that the next generation of library leaders will follow the socialist direction of the party. This includes selecting candidates approved by the party for library succession planning.
In Vietnam, every plan and development strategy of an organisation is conducted with Party consent or at their demand. This fits with the Vietnamese national mechanism of “Party is the leader – State is the manager – the people are the owners” (Socialist Republic of Vietnam 2013). Through official government documents, the Communist Party Committee of the parent organisation demands that succession planning must be conducted in every unit of the organisation, including the library.

In the first step of the succession planning process - ‘Identify potential leaders’ - in a top-down model the secretary of the Communist Party Committee of the library discusses the initial list of potential candidates for the library with the board of director
members. In a bottom-up model, the Communist Party Committee of the library also recommends potential candidates for library leadership.

In the ‘Assessment’ step, the secretary of the Communist Party of the library directly evaluates the candidates’ political ideology, which is considered as one of the desired criteria for selection. In the ‘Authority approval’ phase, after the parent organisation leaders’ consideration of the list of candidates, the Communist Party Committee of the parent organisation will approve this final list. In this step, candidates’ political ideology is considered by the Committee of the Communist Party to ensure that they will follow the direction of the Communist Party in their leadership role. The Communist Party Committee also decides what kind of training programs potential candidates should take part in. A compulsory course is advanced political theory of the Communist Party. Other programs such as higher education studies, leadership skills, and professional knowledge are also recommended by the Communist Party. External candidates are not required to participate in the training programs assigned by the Communist Party: however, they may be trained in their own organisations. External and internal candidates are evaluated by all library staff to ensure that they are qualified enough to hold future managerial positions. In the selection phase, the final candidates have to be approved by the Communist Party to be the next library leader. Potential candidates’ political viewpoint is re-checked in this step because external candidates are added. The approval is needed so that their future leadership will be relevant to the Communist Party’s ideal.

9.5 Proposed model for a library succession planning process

Figure 12 illustrates the completed proposed model for the library succession planning process in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam. This model not only shows the steps applied to conduct the process, but also includes required elements of library succession planning, and indicates the role of the Communist Party in library succession planning. The model aims to provide the information necessary for library leaders to implement this process successfully. It also helps to fill a gap in Vietnamese government documents, which do not include a model for succession planning in general and for library succession planning in particular.
In addition, this model illustrates what elements should be considered in the process so as to save time, optimize opportunities for further training and professional development, and maximize staff participation in leadership development.

Figure 12  Proposed model of library succession planning process

Note:
- The Communist Party of Vietnam
- Required elements of library succession planning
To sum up, this theoretical model is important because it aims to help library leaders know what should be considered in succession planning and suggests how it may be conducted in their organisations to save time and effort. Although Vietnamese culture, and social and political contexts are very different from those of western countries, the proposed model for a library succession planning process in Vietnamese contexts may be referenced for other library sectors in Vietnam, and also globally.

9.6 Summary

This chapter presents a theoretical six-step model of a succession planning process for libraries in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam. The role of the Communist Party of Vietnam as the decisive factor in preparing the final list of potential candidates is indicated. This succession planning model also includes the elements required for successful succession planning for Vietnamese public and academic libraries: a strong talent pool, staff involvement in the process, job descriptions, work performance assessment, and selection criteria. These elements should be carefully considered by library leaders so as to select the best-qualified candidates for library managerial positions.

The following chapter concludes the thesis.
Chapter Ten   CONCLUSIONS

10.1 Introduction

This chapter summarises the key findings from a multi-method research study that aimed to investigate how library succession planning is conducted in Vietnam. Following the summary, implications for theory and methodology are presented. Suggestions for future research are detailed, followed by discussion of the implications and recommendations for library leaders, parent organisation leaders, and policy makers. Finally, the chapter concludes with the researcher’s reflection on the multi-method research journey.

10.2 Summary of key findings

The first key finding of this study is that most general staff in both academic and public libraries in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam were not personally involved in the succession planning process. As a result, they did not know if their current library managers and leaders were promoted as planned. The fact that general library employees were unaware of candidates for succession planning might affect their motivation to perform better and to improve in order to enhance their professional careers. In addition, participants in the research reported a lack of input into the succession planning process.

The research participants’ strong desire to take part in succession planning is the second key finding of the study. Library employees wish to assist leaders in order to avoid bias in conducting succession planning, and also to be involved in this process. Participants also indicated that general staff could be involved in different activities in the succession planning process: assessment, commenting, observing, assisting, and selecting potential candidates for managerial positions. In particular, participants mentioned the varying levels of their awareness of the role of succession planning in their libraries. Importantly, their heightened awareness could be a good way to sustain the succession planning process and enhance their professionalism.
Third, this study suggests criteria to select potential candidates for library succession planning. The criteria are professional knowledge, leadership skills including moral practices, political ideology, age, work commitment, enthusiasm, and years of work experience. In particular, political ideology and moral practices were found to be the most important finding with regard to selection criteria. These two criteria contribute to an understanding of factors in succession planning which has not been discussed in the literature so far.

Challenges and possible solutions for library succession planning are noted as the fourth key finding in this study. A small talent pool, leadership expectation, staff departures, lack of job descriptions, work performance assessment, and a weak link between succession planning and promotion are identified as challenges for library succession planning. Recruitment policies, training programs, work performance assessment, mentoring, challenging work assignments, and supplemental income were found to be possible solutions for these challenges, based on suggestions of the research participants. These solutions may useful be to some extent in supporting library leaders to deal with the difficulties in conducting the succession planning process.

Fifth, the results of this study reveal that the Communist Party played a vital role in library succession planning in Vietnam. In particular, the Communist Party influences planning of library activities, library and work management, screening or finalising the succession planning list, and maintaining fair and equitable succession planning. The influence of the Party, as indicated in the library succession planning model, is an essential component for a country with only one political party.

A model for library succession planning process, including the role of the Communist Party and required elements, is considered the most important outcome. This proposed model has six steps and five elements: a talent pool, staff participation, job description, work performance assessment, and selection criteria. The Communist Party plays the most decisive role in the library succession planning process. These findings provide library leaders with an opportunity to understand what to do and how to conduct a successful succession plan for their libraries.
Another noteworthy finding is the correlations among variables in the quantitive data. Age, qualification, position, and years of experience of employees have mutual relations with job descriptions, training programs, work performance assessment, and training program evaluation respectively. Age, qualification, position, and years of experience of employees each also have relationships with other matters related to succession planning, such as awareness of the existence of succession planning, awareness of the important role of succession planning in libraries, selection of potential candidates, and promotion. Although these correlations are modest and moderate in magnitude, they provide a basis for library leaders to find ways to maximise the role of general staff in library succession planning.

10.3 Implications for methodology

A multi-method case study approach was applied in this study to investigate how library succession planning was conducted in the Vietnamese context. The methodological implication is that the multi-method case study provided a sufficient approach. This research methodology also helped the researcher to collect general staff’s opinions on their knowledge of library succession planning and how it motivated them in work performance. If potential candidates know their names are on the list, they will improve and work effectively to be qualified for managerial positions in the future. If general staff know the list of potential candidates, they will try their best at workplaces to be considered in the next round of the succession planning process.

This research methodology also helped library leaders and staff to be aware of the role the Party plays in the implementation of library succession planning processes over time. Their awareness of the Party’s role could motivate them to follow and meet the growing needs required by Vietnam's government policies with regard to the comprehensive process of implementing changes in library leadership. The anonymous online survey and pseudonyms used in interview transcripts created opportunities for library staff to express their ideas about and experience with, or even concerns on sensitive issues in, library succession planning. This might help library leaders to be aware of the need for equity and transparency in conducting the process.
The investigative tools used in this study motivated library leaders and general staff to express their concerns on how the succession planning process was conducted in their libraries, what challenges they could face, and how they would deal with these difficulties and enhance leadership strategies in their workplaces.

10.4 Implications for theory

This section presents the theoretical implications of the present study in relation to succession planning in the Vietnamese context.

This study deepens understanding of the purposes of succession planning. Succession planning can be valid not only for senior leaders but also for every managerial position in the organisation (Holcomb 2006). Research participants indicated their awareness of the role of succession planning in libraries and the fact that it provides dual benefits for both libraries and employees. Succession planning helps to reduce current library leadership gaps, maintain intellectual and managerial heritage, and avoid possible shortages in leadership through mentoring (Macpherson 2010). The efficient preparation of new library leaders saves valuable time and cost in library management (Brunero, Kerr & Jastrzab 2009). In addition, succession planning provides a good opportunity for professional and leadership skills training (Galbraith, Smith & Walker 2012). This assists employees to build confidence in their work and to better prepare them for future promotion.

Moreover, research participants showed their understanding of general staff roles in library succession planning. General staff could participate in assessing candidates, providing comments, observing, supporting and selecting qualified staff, or even self-nominating for library managerial positions. Discussion of these specific roles for general staff helps alleviate the dearth of literature about library succession planning in Vietnam. By understanding the important role of succession planning and general staff involvement, participants showed their interest in having a bottom-up model, which was not popular in Vietnam prior to 2012. This finding illustrates a great change in the development of Vietnamese librarianship and leadership, where library leaders are selected by their staff because staff have the skills and knowledge to make the best
choice. This establishes a closer connection between leaders and staff, thereby encouraging the likelihood of smooth management of the organization.

Another significant contribution of this study is discussion of the role of the Communist Party in library succession planning. Up until now there has been no discussion of this role in Vietnam or any other Communist country. In the succession planning process, the Communist Party often takes the role of initiating, guiding, observing, checking, assessing, and decision making. The Secretary of the Communist Party Cell is often the chairperson for conducting and making decisions related to this process. The Secretary also appears to play the role of mentor for the potential successors in terms of political ideology. In Communist countries such as Vietnam, the Communist Party is the only political party, and library succession planning to prepare the next generation of library leaders is under its control.

The model for a library succession planning process developed in this study provides a comprehensive summary of the steps and also the key factor impacting on the succession planning process - the Communist Party. Understanding the decisive role of the Communist Party and required elements in the model provides different perspectives on the nature of succession planning and succession planning processes.

10.5 Practical implications and recommendations

The following section provides implications and recommendations for library leaders, parent organisation leaders, and policy makers.

10.5.1 Implications and recommendations for library leaders

This study suggests that library leaders should maximise the role of general staff in succession planning. Their involvement not only reduces bias in succession planning, but also encourages them to work towards their own career development. In addition, the finding of the desire for compulsory evaluative criteria provides assistance for library leaders in selecting qualified staff for future managerial positions. These criteria can be used as a reference point for other similar contexts in Vietnam. Implementation
of the model also makes a practical contribution relevant to library leaders. The process with six steps and including elements and key impacting factors for library succession planning is illustrated. Although this model is rooted in public and academic library contexts, it can be referenced by leaders from other library sectors. An additional practical contribution is the finding of challenges to and possible solutions for successful succession planning. Based on the findings of this study, it is recommended that library leaders should:

1. Establish and upgrade job descriptions for every employee in libraries to create a basis for staff performance assessment
2. Carry out staff performance assessment annually or twice a year, and use the results as a standard to select qualified staff for succession planning
3. Determine ways to attract more general staff involvement in library succession planning.
4. Follow steps in the suggested model so as to maximise the role of general staff, avoid bias and achieve effective succession planning
5. Provide knowledge to library staff about succession planning to encourage more general staff to work hard to be on the succession planning list, and potential successors to perform better and improve to satisfy future position requirements
6. Discuss with parent organisation leaders matters related to staff promotion. Promotion has to be linked with succession planning to provide motivation for library employees

10.5.2 Implications and recommendations for parent organisation leaders

Parent organisation leaders are encouraged to direct and approve the implementation and operationalization of library succession planning. In addition, leaders can be the decision-makers for training programs for successors. It is therefore recommended that parent organisation leaders should:

1. Provide updated guidelines and instructions on library succession planning from the government so that library leaders can conduct succession planning appropriately
2. Design suitable training programs for potential successors and evaluate them for their usefulness
3. Release the list of potential successors to encourage other staff to be included and improve themselves for future positions
4. Conduct staff promotion from succession planning to make succession planning effective and motivated

10.5.3 Implications and recommendations for policy makers

The policy makers in the Vietnamese library and information sector are the Communist Party, the National Congress, and the head of the Department of Library of Vietnam in Hanoi. This study suggests that succession planning allows leaders to take greater responsibility in future leadership, and provides evidence for the need for a national policy on library and librarianship development. Furthermore, the operationalization of library succession planning should take into account government guidelines and policies. The study also provides greater understanding of how to retain and improve qualified staff and create a talent pool for succession planning in a broader context.

Based on these findings, it is recommended that policy makers should:

1. Consider the amendment of salary policy so that library employees can focus on professional and career development
2. Provide proper guidelines and clear instructions on succession planning for the library and information sector as well as setting standards for evaluation of its implementation
3. Design a suitable process of operating, monitoring, evaluating, and appraising the implementation of library succession planning nationwide

10.6 Recommendations for future research

This study has investigated the reality of succession planning in libraries in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam. In order to enhance understanding of this nationwide, the present findings suggest a need for future research.
The present study used multi-method quantitative and qualitative data sources from an online survey of library staff of all levels and in-depth interviews with library leaders and managers. It aimed to investigate how succession planning is conducted in public and academic libraries in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam. Future studies could include interviews with general staff to gain their detailed feedback on how succession planning is conducted in their libraries. This would provide a deeper understanding of library leadership and succession planning from the employees’ viewpoints.

This multi-method approach used quantitative and qualitative data from an online survey to develop questions for the in-depth interviews. In order to gain more in-depth knowledge about library leadership and succession planning, document analysis of existing succession planning material would produce rich data for analysis.

Further research is needed with a larger sample to enhance the validity of the findings. By conducting surveys in other regions of the country with other library sectors such as scientific and technological libraries and military libraries, different perspectives may be derived to shed light on how succession planning is conducted nationally.

10.7 Concluding comments

This thesis contributes to knowledge of library succession planning from various aspects. First, it is an evaluation of the existence of library succession planning in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam. Succession planning exists in both public and academic libraries of the region, but not all staff are involved in it. Second, the Vietnamese government has not issued any document related directly to library succession planning. So far, library succession planning has been conducted under the general resolutions and guidelines for every industry of the country. Criteria for selecting potential candidates are also general. This study suggests compulsory criteria that can help library leaders be more confident and save time in selecting qualified candidates. Third, this study determined that there is a weak relationship between staff promotion and succession planning. This provides evidence to convince parent organisation leaders and policy makers to reconsider their promotion policy and promotion decisions. Fourth, participants of the study showed their great awareness of the role of the Communist
Party in library succession planning. Potential candidates are not required to be members of the Communist Party when nominated for the process: however, they must be a member in order to be promoted. Fifth, one of the biggest challenges of succession planning is a small talent pool caused by high staff departures for better salaries and no official leadership training in Vietnam at present. Seventh, succession planning is a long process. It should be updated annually so as to motivate general staff and successors to improve for their future career development and the future of their libraries.

This thesis is aimed at helping library leaders to be aware of the important role of succession planning and the role of general staff in the succession planning process. Although the Vietnamese government has issued many resolutions and guidelines for staffing and succession planning, they are general documents for every industry of the nation. The library and information sector should have its own guidelines.

As a former library leader, the researcher has learned through this research that library leaders are interested in preparing the next generation of leaders with knowledge and skills to lead their libraries to success. In this process, library leaders play a key role in influencing, motivating, coaching, and mentoring them. Library leaders are role models to build trust and motivation for their staff. Moreover, library leaders should inspire their staff. Through challenging work, leaders can mentor their staff in how to deal with difficulties and share their experience. Real leadership experience is therefore valuable for potential candidates. Finally, library leaders should provide opportunities for staff to be trained and developed. This can be done through higher education or short training courses.

Identifying and preparing individuals for future managerial positions is particularly necessary with the impending exodus of library staff, including leaders and managers, as they head towards retirement, not only in Vietnam but also worldwide. Succession planning is a long journey and needs the involvement of not only the leaders, but also every member of the library. In addition, succession planning motivates all employees to improve work performance and develop their careers.
Leaders are made rather than born. And the way we become leaders is by learning about leadership through life and job experiences, not with university degrees.

(Bennis 1998, p. 163)
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### Appendices

#### Appendix 1 Library population in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Province / city</th>
<th>Library name</th>
<th>Leaders &amp; Managers</th>
<th>Employees</th>
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<td>2.</td>
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<td>Bac Lieu Public Library</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.</td>
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<td>Ben Tre Public Library</td>
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<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Ca Mau</td>
<td>Ca Mau Public Library</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>18</td>
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<td>6.</td>
<td>Can Tho</td>
<td>Can Tho LRC</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>33</td>
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<tr>
<td>7.</td>
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<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>8.</td>
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<td>04</td>
<td>11</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Long An</td>
<td>Long An Public Library</td>
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</table>

(Source: Library websites and personal emails)
Appendix 2  Online survey questionnaire

QUESTIONNAIRE (BÀNG CÂU HỎI)

This questionnaire aims at collecting information related to whether or not succession planning is suitable for academic and public libraries in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam. Your answers may play an important role in constructing the questions for subsequent interviews. Please read each item in the questionnaire and choose the most suitable answer for questions. It will take approximately 15 minutes to complete. Thank you very much for your co-operation!

(Bằng câu hỏi nhằm mục đích thu thập thông tin về công tác quy hoạch cán bộ lãnh đạo của thư viện trường đại học và thư viện công cộng ở khu vực ĐBSCL, Việt Nam. Câu trả lời của bạn rất cần cho việc xây dựng nội dung phỏng vấn sau này. Xin bạn vui lòng đọc kỹ từng câu hỏi và chọn câu trả lời mà bạn cho là phù hợp nhất. Bạn cần khoảng 15 phút để hoàn thành bằng câu hỏi. Xin cảm ơn sự hợp tác của bạn!)

1. What is your gender? (Giới tính của bạn?)
   a. Male (Nam)
   b. Female (Nữ)

2. What is your age? (Độ tuổi của bạn?)
   a. Less than 21 (dưới 21 tuổi)
   b. 21-25 (21-25 tuổi)
   c. 26-30 (26-30 tuổi)
   d. 31-35 (31-35 tuổi)
   e. 36-40 (36-40 tuổi)
   f. 41-45 (41-45 tuổi)
   g. 46-50 (46-50 tuổi)
   h. 51-55 (51-55 tuổi)
   i. 56-60 (56-60 tuổi)
   m. More than 60 (trên 60 tuổi)

3. What is your highest qualification? (Bằng cấp cao nhất của bạn?)
   a. Under Bachelor (Dưới đại học)
   b. Bachelor degree (Đại học)
   c. Master degree (Thạc sĩ)
   d. Doctoral degree (Tiến sĩ)

4. Where are you working now? (Bạn đang làm việc cho thư viện nào?)
   a. Public library (Thư viện công cộng)
   b. Academic library (Thư viện đại học)
5. How long have you been working at that library? (Bạn làm việc ở thư viện được bao lâu?)
   a. Less than 1 year (Dưới 1 năm)       b. 1-5 years (1-5 năm)
   c. 6-10 years (6-10 năm)              d. 11-15 years (11-15 năm)
   e. 16-20 years (16-20 năm)            f. 21-25 years (21-25 năm)
   g. 26-30 years (26-30 năm)            h. More than 30 years (trên 30 năm)

6. What is your current position in the library? (Vị trí hiện nay của bạn trong thư viện là?)
   a. General staff (Nhân viên)           b. Senior Manager (Trưởng phòng)
   c. Board Director (Ban Giám đốc)       d. If other - please specify (Vị trí khác – xin nêu rõ)…………

7. How long have you been in this current position? (Bạn đảm nhiệm vị trí này được bao lâu?)
   a. Less than 1 year (Dưới 1 năm)       b. 1-5 years (1-5 năm)
   c. 6-10 years (6-10 năm)              d. 11-15 years (11-15 năm)
   e. 16-20 years (16-20 năm)            f. 21-25 years (21-25 năm)
   g. 26-30 years (26-30 năm)            h. More than 30 years (Trên 30 năm)

8. Do you have a position description for your job? (Bạn có bảng mô tả công việc không?)
   a. No (Không)                          b. In process (Đang xây dựng)   c. Yes (Có)

9. If YES, has your position description ever been updated? (Nếu trả lời CÓ, bảng câu hỏi có được cập nhật không?)
   a. No (Không)                          b. Not sure (Không chắc chắn)   c. Yes (Có)

10. If YES, do you personally participate in updating your position description? (Nếu trả lời CÓ, bạn có trực tiếp tham gia cập nhật bảng mô tả công việc không?)
    a. No (Không)                          b. Not sure (Không chắc chắn)   c. Yes (Có)
11. How often is the work performance of general staff members assessed? (Định kỳ đánh giá cán bộ công chức là?)
   a. Every semester (Mỗi học kỳ)  
   b. Twice a year (Mỗi năm hai lần)  
   c. Every year (Mỗi năm một lần)  
   d. After finishing a project (Sau khi hết dự án)  
   e. Not sure (Không chắc chắn)  
   f. Not evaluated (Không đánh giá)

12. Are you satisfied with the results of general staff work assessment? (Bạn có hài lòng với kết quả đánh giá cán bộ công chức không?)
   a. Very satisfied (Rất hài lòng)  
   b. Satisfied (Hài lòng)  
   c. Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (Trung lập)  
   d. Dissatisfied (Không hài lòng)  
   e. Very dissatisfied (Rất bất bình)

13. Are you satisfied with the way general staff work performance is assessed? (Bạn có hài lòng với cách đánh giá cán bộ công chức không?)
   a. Very satisfied (Rất hài lòng)  
   b. Satisfied (Hài lòng)  
   c. Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (Trung lập)  
   d. Dissatisfied (Không hài lòng)  
   e. Very dissatisfied (Rất bất bình)

14. Succession planning is a process of identifying and preparing individuals for key roles in an organization. Does your library have succession planning? (Quy hoạch cán bộ là quy trình xác định và chuẩn bị cho các cá nhân vào các vị trí then chốt của cơ quan. Thư viện của bạn có bằng Quy hoạch cán bộ không?)
   a. No (Không)  
   b. Not sure (Không chắc chắn)  
   c. In process (Đang xây dựng)  
   d. Yes (Có)
   (If answer is No or Not sure, please go to Question 18 – Nếu trả lời Không hoặc Khỏng chắc chắn, xin vui lòng chuyển sang câu hỏi số 18)

15. Are the work performance assessments of general staff used for library succession planning? (Kết quả đánh giá cán bộ công chức có dùng làm cơ sở cho Quy hoạch cán bộ không?)
   a. No (Không)  
   b. Not sure (Không chắc chắn)  
   c. Yes (Có)
16. Is there any program to prepare successors for their new roles in your library? (Thư viện có chương trình đào tạo nào cho cán bộ trong diện quy hoạch không?)
a. No (Không)  b. Not sure (Không chắc chắn)  c. Yes (Có)
(If answer is No or Not sure, please go to Question 18 – Nếu trả lời Không hoặc Không chắc chắn, xin vui lòng chuyển sang câu hỏi số 18)

17. Has this program been evaluated? (Chương trình đào tạo này có được đánh giá không?)
a. No (Không)  b. Not sure (Không chắc chắn)  c. Yes (Có)

18. By whom has library succession planning been developed? (Ai tham gia xây dựng Quy hoạch cán bộ?)
a. Board of Director members - Director, Vice Director (Ban Giám đốc)
b. Senior Managers - Heads & Vice Heads of Divisions (Trưởng Phó phòng)
c. General staff (Nhân viên)
d. Both Board Directors & Senior Managers (Ban Giám đốc & Trưởng Phó phòng)
e. All of them (Tất cả mọi người)
f. Not sure (Không chắc chắn)

19. Should general staff be involved in library succession planning? (Nhân viên thư viện có nên tham gia Quy hoạch cán bộ không?)
a. No (Không)  b. Not sure (Không chắc chắn)  c. Yes (Có)

20. Have you personally participated in library succession planning? (Bạn có trực tiếp tham gia xây dựng Quy hoạch cán bộ không?)
a. No (Không)  b. Yes (Có)

21. How important do you think library succession planning is? (Tầm quan trọng của Quy hoạch cán bộ?)
a. Very important (Rất quan trọng)
b. Important (Quan trọng)
c. Neither important nor unimportant (Trung lập)
d. Unimportant (Không quan trọng)
22. For which level should library succession planning be developed? (Nên Quy hoạch cán bộ đến cấp nào?)
   a. Future Board Directors only (Ban Giám đốc tương lai)
   b. Future Board Directors & Senior Managers
      (Ban Giám đốc & Trường Phó phòng tương lai)
   c. Future Senior Managers (Trưởng Phó phòng tương lai)
   d. Future general staff (Nhân viên tương lai)
   e. Not sure (Không chắc chắn)

23. How often should libraries update succession planning? (Định kỳ cập nhật quy hoạch cán bộ là)
   a. Every year (Mỗi năm)                      b. Every two years (Sau hai năm)
   c. Whenever it is required (Khi cần)        d. Not sure (Không chắc chắn)

24. Should general staff know who is undertaking succession planning? (Nhân viên thư viện có biết đến bằng Quy hoạch cán bộ không?)
   a. No (Không)                           b. Not sure (Không chắc chắn)          c. Yes (Có)

25. How were the previous Board Directors recruited? (Ban giám đốc thư viện trước đây được tuyển chọn từ nguồn nào?)
   a. Within the library (Trong thư viện)
   b. From the parent organization (Từ nguồn nhân lực của cơ quan chủ quản)
   c. From the outside (Từ bên ngoài)
   d. Not sure (Không chắc chắn)

26. How were the previous Senior Managers recruited? (Các Trường Phó phòng trước đây được tuyển chọn từ nguồn nào?)
   a. Within the library (Trong thư viện)
   b. From the parent organization (Từ nguồn nhân lực của cơ quan chủ quản)
   c. From the outside (Từ bên ngoài)
   d. Not sure (Không chắc chắn)

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27. Were current library Board of Director members recruited as the result of succession planning? (Ban Giám đốc hiện nay của Thư viện có đúng như quy hoạch không?)
   a. No (Không)  b. Not sure (Không chắc chắn)  c. Yes (Có)

28. Were current library Senior Managers recruited as the result of succession planning? (Các Trưởng Phòng hiện nay của Thư viện có đúng như quy hoạch không?)
   a. No (Không)  b. Not sure (Không chắc chắn)  c. Yes (Có)

29. How do people know about recruitment opportunities for managerial positions? (Làm thế nào mọi người biết được nhu cầu tuyển các vị trí quản lý trong thư viện?)
   a. External notice (Thông báo ra bên ngoài)
   b. Internal notice (Thông báo trong nội bộ thư viện)
   c. Don't know (Không biết)
   d. None of these – Please specify (Không phải các cách trên – Xin ghi rõ) ……..

30. Please comment on any of the topics discussed in this questionnaire? (Xin bạn ghi ra những góp ý của bạn về bất kỳ vấn đề nào được đề cập trong bảng câu hỏi)

……………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………

If you are interested in being interviewed, please send me the email (Nếu bạn muốn tham gia phỏng vấn, xin email: thitrang.huynh@rmit.edu.au).

Thank you! (Xin cảm ơn bạn!)
## QUESTIONS FOR INTERVIEW

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Emerging themes from the online survey</th>
<th>Key questions</th>
<th>Sub questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. | Existing succession planning (SP)     | What do you perceive SP to be? | - What criteria have been considered in selecting successors in your library?  
- What steps are there in SP?  
- Can you describe how SP fits into your library?  
- How can general staff know about the final SP list?  

How important is SP in your library? | - What do you personally think about SP?  
- Is there any relationship between SP and qualified staff retention? Why?  
- What are other ways to keep qualified staff in the library? |
| 2. | Challenges in conducting SP           | What challenges are there with SP? | - What factors should be considered when conducting SP?  
- What can be done to strengthen democracy and openness in SP?  
- Are there any training programs for potential successors? What are they? |
| 3. | Solving the challenges                | How can libraries deal with these challenges? | - How can library leader deal with SP challenges?  
- What can we do to avoid bias in SP?  

How can libraries prepare for successors? | - How should libraries prepare for both board of director members and senior manager’s positions?  
- What training programs are run for [intended] successors? |
|   | The Communist Party | What is the role of Communist Party in SP? | - What do you think about the role of Communist Party in SP?  
|   |                   |                                | - How do you perceive the Party role to be fair and equitable?  
|   | Recruitment       | How can libraries recruit for managerial positions? | - In what ways can libraries recruit staff for managerial positions?  
|   |                   |                                | - How can general staff find out about recruitment opportunities for managerial positions?  
|   | Models of SP      | How do you create a successful SP model? | - What factors make a good SP model?  
|   |                   |                                | - What factors do you think you need to maintain/ sustain SP in your organization?  
|   |                   |                                | - Do you have any suggestions for my research?  

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INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT (English)
Date: June 15, 2013
Interviewee: Participant U, Director of a Public Library
Duration: 1 hour

First of all, I would like to thank you for your acceptance to participate in the interview for my research. In this interview, I want to learn from you about your experience on library succession planning. There are 7 key questions.

Q. What criteria have been considered in selecting successors in your library?
A. According to me, succession planning (SP) is very important because library development depends on strong key leaders who are considered as the soul of the organization. Therefore, SP is paid much attention recently. However, in reality, library succession planning is not as good as expected. The first criteria for SP are professional skills and spirits. Professional skills and spirits are shown in different elements. First, it is professional capacity. Second, it is the organizing capacity to conduct a duty. Third, it is the capacity to gather employees. The third one is important because convincing capacity can make employees believe in, follow and support the leaders. One of the most important criteria is responsibility in work. Maybe their professional knowledge is not good, but it can be improved through working life. The other criteria must be present. Potential candidates must desire to work at the library for a long time. In addition, successors must have awareness to strive for mastery. SP is only the starting point for their efforts. Furthermore, successors should be paid attention by library leaders, supported by colleagues, provided chances for practice, study from courses and from experience, and acquainted with leadership tasks for their future positions.

Q. Any other criterion?
A. Besides the criteria of hard skills, it requires soft skills to be good leaders. I think there are some such as skills and techniques. For example, it is writing skills to express their ideas, communication skills to convince others and social skills. Particularly, potential leaders must have a social relationship because it helps to advocate library activities and increases library networking. Normally, leaders should
own some characteristics. They are flexible in behaviour and know how to start a conversation. Capacity of starting a conversation is very important because it helps to understand the partner. These are soft skills that the successors should have.

Q. What can be done to strengthen democracy and openness in SP?
A. In reality, SP, training and education are written in democracy regulations of the library. State and the Communist Party also have detailed documents for it. Library is a non-productive organization. SP is conducted under the Communist Party Guidelines. Party leads on organizational task. Therefore, first of all, SP is opened in the Communist Party Cell. Of course, the Communist Party Committee is the chairman, the initiator for SP based on the flexible criteria and specific criteria from the library. According to the real situation of library, the Communist Party Committee is the initiator, discusses and comes to be unanimous in Committee, then it is discussed in the Communist Party Cell. Before discussing in the Communist Party Cell, it is discussed in Board of Director members. If the Communist Party committee is Board of Director members, it is very convenient. If not, it should be discussed within Board of Director members in order to analyse strengths and weaknesses and progress trend of the candidates. Progress trend of a person is very important. Recognizing progress trend of a person is important, too. It guarantees SP to be authentic. Then, it should go through the stage of collecting all staff’s trust ballots. Library conducts SP from Heads, vice-Heads of Departments to Deputy-Director and Director. It gets trust ballots from the Communist Party Cell and from all staff. Anyone who gets from 50% of trust ballots can be on the SP list. After that, the SP list is sent to the Communist Party Committee in the Department of Culture, Sports and Tourism. Director of Department approves and accepts the SP list. However, SP is very flexible. We can re-check the candidates in order to add more active ones and remove any unsatisfactory ones from the list in a year. SP should be conducted in period. Every year, SP should be changed and justified to meet the requirements.

Q. Do we change or modify any criterion when SP is upgrading?
A. Basically, the key criteria are the same. However, it depends on each situation or position, we can add more criteria. For example, Head of professional Department should be good at library skills. Head of networking should be keen on external relationship, high responsibility, active and particularly good health. Head of
bibliography information should be good at writing, propagandizing and event organizing capacity. Based on each title, we can have certain requirements. It is typical.

Q. What can be done to strengthen democracy and openness in SP?
A. Trust ballots are not the only way for staff expressing their opinions. They can comment and express their opinions in competition meetings and in annual work performance assessment. In these meetings, staff can remark for successors and assess their duty performance. The chairman of SP, the Communist Party Committee, should receive these comments. For example, through conversations and thought exchanges, the Communist Party secretary can influence on them. Through Communist Party meetings, Communist Party members can comment on successors. However, during the meetings, not all staff comment because saying good things for a candidate is easier than telling the shortages. In this library, there are more females than males. I am a female. Two years ago, I was the Deputy –Director and the Communist Party secretary. During my work, I used to exchange ideas with female staff. Through these conversations, female staff are easier to tell their thoughts than in the meetings. They usually raise objective opinions in the Communist Party meetings. They often raise their ideas and opinions about successors. This is their habit.

Q. What steps are there in SP?
A. First, board of director members and the Communist Party Committee organise the meeting to make the initial succession planning list. Then the Communist Party meeting will be organize to collect comments and assessments. The following step is library meeting to gather trust ballots. Next, we submit the SP list to the Department of Culture, Sports and Tourism. After getting approval, we organize meeting in order to disclose the official SP list to all staff in the library.

Q. What can library do if staff show their disagreement with nomination decision?
A. It depends on each case. Staff must have proper evidence to prove that the nominated person is not good. In reality, there are many cases happening like that. However, we should consider each case. For example, staff defines that successor is not worthy because she / he has problems outside the library or problems with his/her family. If this staff has enough evidence, the nomination decision must be postponed at once. Nevertheless, during SP process, library collects staff’s comments and opinions,
creates chances for them to raise ideas of supports or against, why they did not use this opportunity to express their ideas. In certain meetings, they also collect comments. It is no way to behave like that in the last minute. However, collecting opinions should be a central focus. We do not collect everybody’s opinions. Basically, successors must have certain number of supporting ballots because nobody can get 100% ayes. If any problem happens, the Communist Party supervisory committee will examine and verify it. If the problem has no evidence, it is not acceptable. I recognize that this only happens before SP. After SP, this seldom happens. However, after collecting opinions and verification, successors will actually be nominated.

Q. Would you pleased tell me more about central focus opinions?
A. The library collects all staff opinions during the SP process. After that, staff opinions are considered but the key opinions are from the Communist Party Cell and the key administrators. SP goes through many steps: collecting the Communist Party Cell’s opinions; if Communist Party member is Head or Vice-Head, library should collect Heads or Vice-Heads’ opinions; then library collects all staff’s opinions. I am not sure whether they base on all of staff’s opinions or not. Key staff’s trust ballots are decisive. In the Communist Party Cell, you are not trusted by Party members. As a Communist Party member, you should consider why you are not trusted. This shows that your work capacity, awareness and thoughts may have something wrong. Second, Heads and Vice-Heads are people who work directly with you. They know clearly about your capacity and their awareness is higher than general staff. We should consider staff on co-worker relationship. Co-worker relationship is important. You should wonder if you care about the other staff or not. Your professional knowledge is assessed properly by Head and Vice-Head of Department. Therefore, in SP Heads and Vice-Heads’ ballots are considered important, grading two or three in evaluation scale.

Q. What challenges are there with SP?
A. Challenges are the number of ballots. Ballots do not reflect reality because it depends on working position. Some working positions have fewer conflicts with other library departments, they will get more ayes. On the contrary, some working positions have more conflicts, they will get fewer ayes. For example, user services department is the place where conflicts often happen. Therefore, staff working in this department will get fewer ayes. Staff who have responsibilities of solving the conflicts and arguments,
monitoring and reminding the other staff of self-control also get fewer ayes. It is true because nobody likes criticism. The other departments only do professional work and have less conflict, less adjustment. Sometimes, it is library leaders’ reminding. Successors in this department get more ayes. So, I myself think that the most challenge is trust ballots that cannot tell the truth. Therefore, trust ballots are not decisive. Library should consider and assess staff’s capacity and work effectiveness instead of relying on trust ballots. People who do much will commit more mistakes; and straight person gets less ayes. Thus, trust ballots are not the good way. I usually witness some similar cases.

For example, I myself behave objectively. I recognize that a female staff has good managerial skills, works well, criticizes and self-criticizes well. However, these things make her get less ayes in trust ballots. Her trust ballots are under 50%, and she can not be on the list. Beside the trust ballots, the library leader’s opinion should be considered important. In the condition that library leader should give careful comments, no bias, and be objective in selecting the capable staff to develop library. Based on the trust ballots, she was not considered to be on the SP list. However, if parent organization consulted my opinion, I would select her. This showed objectiveness and comprehensiveness. Staff with less than 50% trust ballots will be left for the following year SP. I think it is hard to change because it is the official process set from parent organization. In the meeting, I also raised the idea, the Department asked me to add her to the SP process. At the end, she still got the same number of trust ballots. This process kept on going with all staff’s comments until she was on the SP list and then nominated.

In reality, some people are on the SP list, but they are not nominated. SP is a matter, and nomination is the other matter. It does not depend on our expectations. It depends on objective element or the successors cannot satisfy the nomination criteria at a certain time. Thus, sometimes successors cannot be nominated.

Q. Any other difficulties are there?
A. Another difficulty is not enough sources, and no outstanding candidate. In library major, it is hard to get deep knowledge and talent employees. Staff without library knowledge can only work at a department to develop their own major. For example, a staff whose major is literature, she/he cannot work at professional department. The number of professional staff is low and the number of outstanding staff is even lower. We want to add outstanding staff on SP list so that they can get high trust ballots. However, our source is not enough. In reality, some students who graduated
from library schools are like “industrial chicken”. Library staff in public library system may lack of self-study sense. Formerly, I did not have library knowledge. I graduated from General Literature. I worked very hard and learned library professional seriously in order to be good. Current staff may have no self-study sense as we did in the past. Public librarians perform low specialization and passive work. As a library leader, we cannot be passive. In short, we do not have enough sources for SP.

Q. How can library deal with shortage of source for SP?
A. I would like library leaders are from inside library. It has more advantages such as knowing library work, knowing staff, and knowing what to do. Thus, I would like successors are from inside library. However, as I told before, we do not have enough sources. I think it partly depends on staff, partly depends on our influence. The Department of Culture, Sports and Tourism indicates that SP is for young staff from 35 years old to meet the sustainable requirement for library leaders. We call it long-term SP. We should consider young staff who have capacities. We cannot seek perfection because human beings cannot be perfect. We should recognize them in long-term development. Thus, we should choose the responsible and aware candidates. They may have less working achievements, but they must have high responsibility. Responsibility will make them self-study for progress. There are leadership courses for library leaders organized by the Department of Culture, Sports and Tourism. These courses help them practice leadership tasks, assign duty and let them self-organize certain work so that they are familiar with leadership. Formerly, if we wanted to do any activity, we often set up plan, process and assign tasks for staff. They then report and fulfil. In the future, we assign work and they must think what to do to fulfil it. They must learn how to organize and assign tasks for the others. They will learn through experience. They report to library leaders and receive feedback and comments. Potential successors will develop gradually through practice. This will make them know how to deal with leadership tasks because nobody is perfect at the beginning. I myself think that I am not perfect, so I do not ask for perfect from the others. Public library has shortage of staff, particularly outstanding staff. We cannot rely on it and not conduct SP. We must find out certain staff to develop. Thus, we can have source for SP, especially long term source. I would like library leaders are from inside the library. This will benefit library a lot.

Q. What else can library do to prepare for SP source?
A. I just talked about work aspect. On the awareness and thought aspect, we should remind the long-term successors in the Communist Party meetings. The Communist Party Secretary meets and reminds them that SP is the necessary condition. Sufficient condition depends on them. We assign tasks for them in Youth Union activities and in inspection section so that they can develop their capacities. They are in long-term list, so they should try continuously. However, they should not so serious care about titles. This is so good, but they will be disappointed and frustrated. They should do good job if they are not on SP list; and they even work better if they are on the list. Doing that, they will get recognition from the others. When they are on SP list and no progress, we have nothing to do for them. They must be self-help. There are two ways: their awareness and thought influence. Currently, we have no other solution. On the aspect of library management, I recognize that materials about leadership are limited. We cannot learn from books, we learn from experience. We solve library conflicts mainly by experience. Formerly, I used to work at user services. When I solved the conflicts among users or between users and the librarians, I got certain experience. While the others have never solved conflicts, so they face many difficulties. I think that we should intensify materials for library staff. Although we have foreign materials, our staff have limited capacity to read English books. Foreign languages are barrier for public librarians. This is the reason why they cannot improve their knowledge. I think it is a difficulty.

Q. How can library avoid disappointment and frustration when staff are on SP list but they are not nominated?
A. This is a common issue. SP is conducted, but no valid. Therefore, my staff have a funny term “Hanging SP; SP for clearance”. It is partly because of mechanism from parent organization. Nomination is not from SP. This becomes a way of thinking, a thought of fun SP. Nomination or not is another matter. Therefore, successors have no good feelings because they think SP is for fun and nomination is another thing. This happens and they do not long for it. This makes them less stressful.

Q. Are there any relationship between SP and qualified staff retention?
A. This has not happened in this library. I do not know the other libraries but staff in my library love job. However, whenever they recognize that working environment is not suitable and library salary is not enough for their living, they will actually quit job. Successors are outstanding, capable, enthusiastic and love job staff. Formerly, we only
conducted SP for Director and Vice-Director. Heads and Vice-Heads of departments are not considered in SP. They are only in library plan. Next year, we have plan to strengthen the organization, integrate or split some departments. This is in our plan. We will discuss about department positions in the Communist Party Committee and Board of Director members. Then we will tell this in the Communist Party Cell to get approval. Our Department of Culture, Sports and Tourism has got stuck in SP for a long time. Therefore, Department issued a document requiring all units should have SP to Heads and Vice-Heads of library departments.

Q. What is the role of the Communist Party in SP?
A. The Communist Party plays the role of organizing and training. The Communist Party Secretary is the chairman and makes decisions about succession planning, training and providing further education. The Communist Party Secretary is responsible for supervising potential successors. The Communist Party Committee makes final decisions in SP and training staff. Although we collect all staff’s opinions, staff cannot be added on the SP list if the Communist Party Committee does not agree.

Q. Do you perceive the Party role to be fair and equitable?
A. The Communist Party regulations set Party duty on organization; the Communist Party Committee role is to educate political thought, personnel work, political duty, and Union activities. The Communist Party guides the task of educating political thought. The Communist Party does not distinguish kinds of candidates. The Communist Party guides to concentrate to monthly propaganda. Originating from four functions, the Communist Party must lead the organization. Then the Communist Party makes decisions on political duties. In a monthly library meeting, the Communist Party sets up what the organization should do politically, but not in detail. Library leaders must put these duties in practice. For example, the Communist Party guides to serve 10th anniversary of Can Tho City directly under the central government. Library leaders must deploy details to fulfil this duty. On political thought, library should propagandize current affairs that Communist Party members and library staff are interested in such as East Sea affairs, traffic accidents and environment. The Communist Party Cell must guide this propaganda. The Communist Party does not act as a Pooh-Pah, it is the Communist Party rules on activity organization principles.
Q. What can we do to avoid bias in SP?
A. It is wrong to say no bias in SP. As a human beings, like or dislike is always present. Therefore, the chairman of SP, particularly the Communist Party Secretary must have the sense of justice, and put library benefits up. Library leaders must consider what benefits library has if this candidate becomes leader. If library leaders do not consider this matter, it will become risk. The Communist Party Secretary’s opinion is important because it influences on Communist Party members’ thought. Whenever staff is recommended, the Communist Party Secretary must analyse that staff’s strengths and weaknesses. He/she must convince that recommended candidate deserve to be a leader so that everybody agrees. Library leaders know that candidate’s strengths, explain for everybody understanding and make them accept. Library leaders must view a candidate with mind and vision, objectiveness and dialectic manner. Human being is not perfect and we cannot require anybody perfect. The most important is that person is in progress.

Q. What factors make a good SP model?
A. First of all, SP must be regular. It is not annual; it must be done in six months. Library should have detailed criteria. Besides general criteria, we should have particular criteria in order to find out the right person. For example, library needs a Deputy-Director. We cannot say Deputy-Director generally. It should be Deputy-Director in charge of library professional, or user services or propaganda information… We should tell the title specifically. We should arrange SP in six months or whenever necessary. We should do it timely for training courses. Besides consulting opinions from Communist Party members, key staff, and all staff, the Communist Party Secretary’s opinion is important because it influences Communist Party members’ thought. The Communist Party Secretary’s opinion is as important as secret ballots. Trust ballots sometimes are not objective. SP should be more opened, more details, particularly in the short-term SP. We should tell them in short-term SP so that they can try better. We should not think that if telling them in short-term SP they will be self-satisfied. This may happen, but we should think that they will try better to fit into the intended positions. People who are taken out of the SP list should know about this so that they will get more efforts. Formerly, we did not let them know because we were afraid that they would be upset. However, we should let them know so that they could put more efforts to be on the SP list again. The most important is nomination must be from SP.
We only nominate the outside leader whenever urgent. We must explain the reason why to our staff. SP should be in periods: short-term and long-term like the Communist Party development. This will make a buffer for short-term successors and create more chances for them to practice leadership in reality. Training programs and further education are very important; particularly leadership knowledge because it is so difficult. Library professional can be studied for three or five months. Leadership is an art and a science. Therefore, we should have courses for library leaders to learn experience from experts and other units. I recognize that in training course organized by the Department of Culture, Sports and Culture, experience on Management and organization of Public Library in Ho Chi Minh City is better than the lecturer’s presentation. Experience has not mentioned in any books. We cannot copy exactly the other units’ experience. Another thing that makes me confused is managerial situations in library, financial management, and facilities management. Formerly, I only paid attention to library professional. Now, I am promoted to be a leader. Human resource management is OK for me, but I face so many difficulties in financial management. Financial management depends on leader regulations. Leader regulations mean only Director can decide on library finance and nobody can interfere this matter. Now, becoming Director, I must manage finance. I have never been trained for budgeting issues. Former training programs did not focus on library budget, either. Library leaders should deal with finance. Sometimes we do not know we have done it wrong because we are not trained. Library leaders should self-study. If the accountant is good minded, he /she will help the leaders. On the other hand, if the accountant is bad or would like to treat us badly, we cannot know either. Leader regulations cause troubles for successors. The Communist Party only guides political direction, not interfere into library finance. Only Directors can adjust or use library budget. We only conduct SP on professional and forget financial aspect. Therefore, beside training programs, the library director must mentor the potential candidates about financial management in the library so that they can avoid certain mistakes in financial decisions. They should be flexible in solving problems.

Q. Do you have any comments on my research?
A. Nothing.
Thank you!
Appendix 5  
Information sheet for library leaders

Library Leadership and Succession Planning in Vietnam

INFORMATION SHEET FOR THE LIBRARY LEADER

Dear Mr. / Mrs. ……………………………………...., Director of
………………………………………………………………………………………...…..
…………………………………………………………………………………………..

My name is Huynh Thi Trang. Currently, I am a full-time doctoral student at RMIT University, Melbourne, Australia. I am conducting multiple-case study research as part of the requirements of my PhD degree entitled Library Leadership and Success Planning in Vietnam. This research is supervised by Associate Professor Peter Macauley and Dr Sue Reynolds. I am writing this letter to seek your permission to carry out research in your library and invite your library staff to participate in my research.

Project Description

This multiple-case study research aims to evaluate the effectiveness of succession planning in academic and public libraries in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam; help to raise library staff awareness about the role of succession planning; support library leaders by creating a model that can minimize the risk of qualified staff turnover and intellectual loss; and recommend a theoretical based model of library succession planning based on transformational leadership theory. In this research, I would like to invite all of your library staff to participate in the online survey.

Participant Identification and Recruitment

All library staff who have been working at your library for at one year, regardless of nationality, age and sex are invited to participate.
Project Procedures

The research involves two phases. **Phase One** will be conducted online. All library staff who have been working at your library for at least one year, regardless of nationality, age, sex are invited to participate. The online survey is anonymous.

**Phase Two** will be in-depth interviews. I will conduct approximately twenty interviews and a minimum of two senior managers from each library will be invited to participate in order to deepen insights into library succession planning. If you agree, audio recording will be used to record the information that senior managers provide for data analysis. The interviews will take approximately an hour.

Data management

Data on the interview transcripts will be stored securely throughout the research process. Data will be kept in a securely locked filing cabinet at my workplace while in Vietnam and in the postgraduate room at RMIT University, Australia. Interview transcripts and data analysis will be kept on the researcher’s computer hard drive protected and retrieved by a password. The backup of data will also be saved using an external drive on which only code names will appear. Data and signed consent forms will be stored separately. Findings will be presented in my PhD thesis as well as other academic publications and presentations.

Participant’s rights

Your participation is voluntary. You, as a potential participant, are under no obligation to accept this invitation. Your name and that of the library will be kept anonymous and pseudonyms used in my thesis. If you decide to participate, you have the right to decline to answer any particular questions, and/or ask for the audio recorder to be turned off at any time during the interview.

If you agree to participate in my research, I invite you to keep the Information Sheet and sign and return the Consent Form that follows.

If you have any enquiries or if you need further information about my research, please feel free to contact me. You can also contact my supervisor.
I hope you will agree to be involved in this research.

Yours sincerely,

Huynh Thi Trang

Assoc. Prof. Peter Macauley

Thank you for your time considering participation in my research. Could you please complete the attached Consent Form, if you agree to participate in this research, and return this to me at the address provided above? It would be appreciated if you could do this within the next two weeks.
THƯ MỜI CỘNG TÁC THỰC HIỆN ĐỂ TÀI NGHIÊN CỨU SINH

Kính gửi: Ông/ Bà .................................................. Giám Đốc Thư viện
..............................................................................................................

Tôi tên là Huỳnh Thị Trang, hiện là Nghiên cứu sinh trường Đại học Công Nghệ Hoàng Gia Úc (RMIT), Melbourne. Tôi đã nhận được thư mời của ông/ bà với nội dung “Lập đội thư viện và công tác quy hoạch cán bộ thư viện Việt Nam” do Ông Peter Macauley và Bà Sue Reynolds hướng dẫn. Nhận thư thực hiện để tài, tôi viết thư này xin kí gửi ông/ bà Giám đốc cho phép tôi liên hệ và mời cán bộ thư viện của ông/ bà cung cấp tài nguyên cung cấp cho đề tài nghiên cứu dưới.

MÔ TÁ ĐỂ TÀI VÀ THƠ MỜI

Nghiên cứu đa trường hợp nhằm tìm hiểu hiệu quả của công tác quy hoạch cán bộ thư viện Công cộng và thư viện trường đại học ở ĐBSCL, Việt Nam; giúp nâng cao nhận thức của cán bộ thư viện về vai trò của công tác quy hoạch cán bộ; hỗ trợ lãnh đạo thư viện tạo ra môi trường làm việc của cán bộ và nguy cơ chán mệt; để xuất mô hình quy hoạch cán bộ thư viện theo lý thuyết lãnh đạo biên đội. Với ý nghĩa trên, tôi trân trọng kính mời tôi tham gia khảo sát trực tiếp.

TIÊU CHÍ CHỌN ĐOİ TƯƠNG THAM GIA

Tất cả cán bộ đã làm việc ở thư viện ít nhất 01 năm không phân biệt quốc tịch, tuổi, giới tính đều được mời tham gia khảo sát.

QUÁ TRÌNH THỰC HIỆN ĐỂ TÀI

Để tài này gồm có hai giai đoạn.

GIÁI ĐƠN THỨ NHẤT (tim hiểu thực trạng công tác quy hoạch cán bộ) bằng phương pháp khảo sát trực tuyến. Tất cả cán bộ đã làm việc ở thư viện ít nhất 01 năm không phân biệt quốc tịch, tuổi, giới tính đều được mời tham gia khảo sát.

GIÁI ĐƠN THỨ HAI là phần phỏng vấn trực tiếp. Tôi sẽ phỏng vấn khoảng 20 cán bộ quản lý. Mỗi thư viện sẽ có ít nhất 02 cán bộ quản lý được mời để tìm hiểu kỹ về công tác
quy hoạch cần bố thư viện. Tôi sẽ ghi âm cuộc phòng vấn để tiện cho việc phân tích dữ liệu sau này. Mỗi cuộc phòng vấn kéo dài khoảng 1 giờ đồng hồ.

**Quản lý dữ liệu**

Bạn ghi trả lời phòng vấn sẽ được cập nhật bảo mật và an toàn trong suốt quá trình thực hiện để tài nghiên cứu này. Toàn bộ dữ liệu sẽ được cập nhật kỳ trọng từ hồ sơ có khóa căncthân ta kiện lâm việc của tôi tại Trung tâm Học liệu, khi tôi về Việt Nam cũng như tài phòng làm việc đánh cho nghiên cứu sinh của Khoa Công Nghệ Thông tin Kinh tế và Cung ứng, trường đại học RMIT, Melbourne, Úc. Ngoài ra dữ liệu này còn được lưu giữ và truy cập bằng mật khẩu trong máy tính cá nhân của tôi. Các thông tin trong bản sao dữ liệu sẽ được mã hóa và lưu trong ổ ghi rời. Dữ liệu và giấy tờ xác nhận đồng ý tham gia để tài của giáo viên được lưu giữ riêng. Kết quả nghiên cứu sẽ được trình bày trong luận án tiến sĩ cũng như các tạp chí xuất bản và báo cáo khoa học.

**Quyền lợi của người tham gia để tài**

Việc tham gia để tài là tự nguyện. Để tài của tôi sẽ không sử dụng tên thật của Ông/Bà và tên thư viện. Nếu Ông/Bà đồng ý tham gia, Ông/Bà có quyền hỏi hay từ chối trả lời bất kỳ câu hỏi cụ thể, cũng như yêu cầu tắt máy khi âm bất cứ lúc nào khi dự phòng vấn.

Nếu Ông/Bà đồng ý tham gia, tôi mời Ông/Bà giữ Thông tin chung và ký vào giấy xác nhận đồng ý tham gia để tài kèm theo.

Nếu Ông/Bà có thắc mắc điều chi, xin vui lòng liên hệ với tôi hay giáo sư hướng dẫn tôi.

Rất mong sự sẵn lòng cung tác của Ông/Bà.

Trân trọng.

**Huỳnh Thị Trang**

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Xin chân thành cảm ơn Ông/ Bà đã dành thì giờ cho việc tham gia đề tài nghiên cứu này. Nếu Ông/ Bà chấp thuận, xin vui lòng ký tên vào thư chấp thuận tham gia đề tài nghiên cứu này và gửi theo địa chỉ cho sẵn. Tôi rất cảm kích nếu Ông/ Bà có thể phục đáp trong vòng hai tuần.
Appendix 6  

Participant consent form – library leaders

Library Leadership and Succession Planning in Vietnam

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM – LIBRARY LEADER

I have read the Information Sheet and have had the details of the study explained to me. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

I understand that I have the right to withdraw the library from the study at any time.

I agree to allow the employees at this library to collaborate with the researcher on the understanding that the name of the library, and of the employees who participate, will not be used without permission.

I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.

Signature: ____________________________ Date __________________

Full name: _____________________________________________________

Position in the Library: __________________________________________
THU CHẤP THUẬN CỦA GIÁM ĐỐC THỦ VIỆN

(v/v cán bộ thư viện công tác để tài nghiên cứu)

Tôi đã đọc thư xin phép thực hiện để tài nghiên cứu sinh của Bà.

Tôi biết rằng tôi có quyền tự quyết tham gia để tài trong bất cứ lúc nào.

Tôi đồng ý cho cán bộ của thư viện công tác với Bà, với điều kiện Bà không được sử dụng tên thư viện và tên cán bộ thư viện nếu chưa được chấp thuận.

Tôi đồng ý tham gia để tài nghiên cứu này.

Chữ ký: ____________________________________________

Ngày: ____________________________________________

Họ và tên: __________________________________________

Chức vụ: __________________________________________
Appendix 7 Invitation email

Part 1: (For library leader)

Dear Mr / Mrs…………………………………………………………………………………

My name is Huynh Thi Trang. Currently, I am a full-time doctoral student at RMIT University, Melbourne, Australia. I am conducting multiple-case study research as part of the requirements of my PhD degree entitled Library Leadership and Success Planning in Vietnam. This research is supervised by Associate Professor Peter Macauley and Dr Sue Reynolds. This multiple-case study research aims to develop a model of library succession planning process. I will conduct this research in all of 13 public libraries and 4 selected academic libraries in the Mekong Delta through 2 stages: online survey and in-depth interviews.

I am writing this letter to seek your permission to carry out research in your library and invite your library staff to participate in my research. If you agree with my inquiry, would you please response the online questionnaire by accessing to the following link and forward part 2 of this email and the information sheet (file attached) to your employees. Participation in the online survey is voluntary. It takes about 15 minutes to response the questionnaire. Would you please complete it before May 17, 2013.

https://rmit.asia.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_1HUGFaVAnIxj6t

I hope you will agree to be involved in this research.

Yours sincerely,

Huynh Thi Trang

Part 2: (For library staff)

Dear Mr / Mrs……………………………………………………………………………………………

I hope you will agree to be involved in this research.

Yours sincerely,

Huynh Thi Trang
My name is Huynh Thi Trang. Currently, I am a full-time doctoral student at RMIT University, Melbourne, Australia. I am conducting multiple-case study research as part of the requirements of my PhD degree entitled *Library Leadership and Success Planning in Vietnam*. This research is supervised by Associate Professor Peter Macauley and Dr Sue Reynolds. This multiple-case study research aims to develop a model of library succession planning process. I will conduct this research in all of 13 public libraries and 4 selected academic libraries in the Mekong Delta through 2 stages: online survey and in-depth interviews.

I am writing this letter to invite you to participate in my research. If you agree with my invitation, would you please response the online questionnaire by accessing to the following link. Participation in the online survey is voluntary. It takes about 15 minutes to response the questionnaire. Would you please complete it before May 17, 2013.  
https://rmit.asia.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_1HUGFaVAnIxzj6t

I hope you will agree to be involved in this research.

Yours sincerely,

Huynh Thi Trang

Phần 1: (Dành cho Giám đốc thư viện)

Kính gửi Ông (Bà) …………………………………………………………………

Tôi tên là Huỳnh Thị Trang. Hiện nay, tôi là nghiên cứu sinh toàn thời gian tại trường ĐH. Công Nghệ Hoàng Gia (RMIT), Melbourne, Úc. Tên đề tài nghiên cứu của tôi là "Lãnh đạo và quy hoạch cán bộ thư viện Việt Nam do Phó Giáo sư Peter Macauley và tiến sĩ Sue Reynolds hướng dẫn. Mục tiêu của tôi là xây dựng mô hình Quy hoạch cán bộ lãnh đạo cho Thư viện ở DBSCL. Tôi lập kế hoạch thực hiện nghiên cứu của tôi ở 13 Thư viện Công cộng và 4 Thư viện trường Đại học ở DBSCL qua 2 giai đoạn. Giai đoạn 1 là phần khảo sát trực tuyến và giai đoạn 2 là phỏng vấn trực tiếp.
Hôm nay, tôi viết thư này kính mong Ông (Bà) Giám đốc Thư viện cho phép tôi thực hiện khảo sát trực tuyến của tôi ở Thư viện của Ông (Bà). Nếu Ông (Bà) đồng ý, xin vui lòng **truy cập** vào đường dẫn dưới đây để trả lời bảng câu hỏi và **chuyển nội dung email Phần 2** và nội dung nghiên cứu (tập tin đính kèm) đến toàn thể cán bộ của Thư viện Ông (Bà). Nếu cán bộ thư viện đồng ý tham gia và đồng ý cho tôi sử dụng nội dung câu trả lời cho nghiên cứu, xin vui lòng truy cập vào đường dẫn dưới đây để trả lời bảng câu hỏi. Khảo sát này là hoàn toàn tự nguyện và dấu tên. Thời gian trả lời khoảng 15 phút. Tôi rất mong nhận được đầy đủ các câu trả lời trước ngày 17 tháng 05 năm 2013.

https://rmit.asia.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_1HUGFaVAnIxj6t

Tôi rất mong sự đồng ý và giúp đỡ của Ông (Bà). Tôi xin cảm ơn Ông (Bà).

Trân trọng,

Huỳnh Thị Trang

**Phần 2: (Dành cho cán bộ Thư Viện)**

Kính gửi Ông (Bà) …………………………………………………………………………………

Tôi tên là Huỳnh Thị Trang. Hiện nay, tôi là nghiên cứu sinh toàn thời gian tại trường ĐH. Công Nghệ Hoàng Gia (RMIT), Melbourne, Úc. Tên đề tài nghiên cứu của tôi là "Lãnh đạo và quy hoạch cán bộ thư viện Việt Nam do Phó Giáo sư Peter Macauley và tiến sĩ Sue Reynolds hướng dẫn. Mục tiêu của tôi là xây dựng mô hình Quy hoạch cán bộ lãnh đạo cho Thư viện ở ĐBSCL. Tời lập kế hoạch thực hiện nghiên cứu của tôi ở 13 Thư viện Công cộng và 4 Thư viện trường Đại học ở ĐBSCL qua 2 giai đoạn. Giai đoạn 1 là phân khảo sát trực tuyến và giai đoạn 2 là phỏng vấn trực tiếp.

Hôm nay, tôi viết thư này mong các cán bộ Thư viện giúp tôi trả lời bảng khảo sát trực tuyến. Nếu cán bộ thư viện đồng ý tham gia và đồng ý cho tôi sử dụng nội dung câu trả lời cho nghiên cứu, xin vui lòng **truy cập** vào đường dẫn dưới đây để trả lời bảng câu hỏi. Khảo sát này là hoàn toàn tự nguyện và dấu tên. Thời gian trả lời khoảng 15 phút.
Tôi rất mong nhận được đầy đủ các câu trả lời trước ngày 17 tháng 05 năm 2013.
https://rmit.asia.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_1HUGFaVAnlxzj6t

Tôi rất mong sự giúp đỡ của các cán bộ thư viện. Tôi xin cảm ơn.

Trân trọng,

Huỳnh Thị Trang
Appendix 8  Information sheet for interviewees

Library Leadership and Succession Planning in Vietnam

INFORMATION SHEET FOR INTERVIEWEES

Dear Mr. / Mrs. ……………………………………………………………………………………………

My name is Huynh Thi Trang. Currently, I am a full-time doctoral student at RMIT University, Melbourne, Australia. I am conducting multiple-case study research as part of the requirements of my PhD degree entitled Library Leadership and Success Planning in Vietnam. This research is supervised by Associate Professor Peter Macauley and Dr Sue Reynolds. I am writing this letter to seek your permission to carry out research in your library and invite your library staff to participate in my research.

Project Description

This multiple-case study research aims to evaluate the effectiveness of succession planning in academic and public libraries in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam; help to raise library staff awareness about the role of succession planning; support library leaders by creating a model that can minimize the risk of qualified staff turnover and intellectual loss; and recommend a theoretical based model of library succession planning based on transformational leadership theory. In this research, I would like to invite all of your library staff to participate in the online survey.

Participant Identification and Recruitment

All library staff who have been working at your library for at least one year, regardless of nationality, age and sex are invited to participate.

Project Procedures

The research involves two phases. Phase One will be conducted online. All library staff who have been working at your library for at least one year, regardless of nationality, age, sex are invited to participate. The online survey is anonymous.
Phase Two will be in-depth interviews. I will conduct approximately twenty interviews and a minimum of two senior managers from each library will be invited to participate in order to deepen insights into library succession planning. If you agree, audio recording will be used to record the information that senior managers provide for data analysis. The interviews will take approximately an hour.

Data management

Data on the interview transcripts will be stored securely throughout the research process. Data will be kept in a securely locked filing cabinet at my workplace while in Vietnam and in the postgraduate room at RMIT University, Australia. Interview transcripts and data analysis will be kept on the researcher’s computer hard drive protected and retrieved by a password. The backup of data will also be saved using an external drive on which only code names will appear. Data and signed consent forms will be stored separately. Findings will be presented in my PhD thesis as well as other academic publications and presentations.

Participant’s rights

Your participation is voluntary. You, as a potential participant, are under no obligation to accept this invitation. Your name and that of the library will be kept anonymous and pseudonyms used in my thesis. If you decide to participate, you have the right to decline to answer any particular questions, and/or ask for the audio recorder to be turned off at any time during the interview.

If you agree to participate in my research, I invite you to keep the Information Sheet and sign and return the Consent Form that follows.

If you have any enquiries or if you need further information about my research, please feel free to contact me. You can also contact my supervisor.

I hope you will agree to be involved in this research.

Yours sincerely,
Huynh Thi Trang

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Assoc. Prof. Peter Macauley

BA, MAppSc, PhD, MACS, AALIA
Senior Supervisor
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Australia
Phone: +61 3 9925 5583 Fax: +61 3 9925 5850
Email: peter.macauley@rmit.edu.au

Thank you for your time considering participation in my research. Could you please complete the attached Consent Form, if you agree to participate in this research, and return this to me at the address provided above? It would be appreciated if you could do this within the next two weeks.
THƯ MỜI CÔNG TÁC THỰC HIỆN ĐỂ TÀI NGHIÊN CỨU SINH

Kính gửi: Ông/ Bà ...........................................................

Tôi tên là Huỳnh Thị Trang, hiện là Nghiên cứu sinh trường Đại học Công Nghệ Hoàng Gia Úc (RMIT), Melbourne. Tên đề tài nghiên cứu của tôi là “Lãnh đạo thư viện và công tác quy hoạch cán bộ ở thư viện Việt Nam” do Ông Peter Macauley và Bà Sue Reynolds hướng dẫn. Nhâm thức hiện để tài, tôi viết thư này kính xin Ông/Bà Giám đốc cho phép tôi liên hệ và mời cán bộ thư viện của Ông / Bà công tác nghiên cứu đề tài nói trên.

Mô tả đề tài và thớ mở

Nghiên cứu đa trường hợp nhằm tìm hiểu hiệu quả của công tác quy hoạch cán bộ thư viện Công cộng và thư viện trường đại học ở DBSCL, Việt nam; giúp nâng cao nhận thức của cán bộ thư viện về vai trò của công tác quy hoạch cán bộ; hỗ trợ lãnh đạo thư viện tạo ra môi trường giống thiếu người cơ bản giỏi bảo vệ và người cơ chất man châm; đề xuất mô hình quy hoạch cán bộ thư viện theo lý thuyết lãnh đạo biến đổi. Với ý nghĩa trên, tôi.trân trọng kính mời tôi tham gia phần khảo sát trực tuyến.

Tiêu chí chọn đối tượng tham gia

Tất cả cán bộ đã làm việc ở thư viện ít nhất 01 năm không phân biệt quốc tịch, tuổi, giới tính đều được mời tham gia khảo sát.

Quá trình thực hiện đề tài

Để tài này gồm có hai giai đoạn.

Giai đoạn thứ nhất (tìm hiểu thực trạng công tác quy hoạch cán bộ) bằng phương pháp khảo sát trực tuyến. Tất cả cán bộ đã làm việc ở thư viên ít nhất 01 năm không phân biệt quốc tịch, tuổi, giới tính đều được mời tham gia khảo sát.

Giai đoạn thứ hai là phần phỏng vấn trực tiếp. Tôi sẽ phỏng vấn khoảng 20 cán bộ quản lý. Mỗi thư viện sẽ có ít nhất 02 cán bộ quản lý được mời để tìm hiểu kỹ về công tác
quy hoạch cá nhân tham gia. Tôi sẽ ghi âm cuộc phỏng vấn để tiện cho việc phân tích dữ liệu sau này. Mọi cuộc phỏng vấn kéo dài khoảng 1 giờ đồng hồ.

Quản lý dữ liệu


Quyền lợi của người tham gia để tài

Việc tham gia để tài là tự nguyện. Đề tài của tôi sẽ không sử dụng tên thật của Ông/Bà và tên thư viện. Nếu Ông/Bà đồng ý tham gia, Ông/Bà có quyền hỏi hay từ chối trả lời bất kỳ câu hỏi cụ thể, cũng như yêu cầu tất cả các lệnh gì tôi làm bất cứ lúc nào khi dự phỏng vấn.

Nếu Ông/Bà đồng ý tham gia, tôi mời Ông/Bà giữ Thông tin chung và ký vào giấy xác nhận đồng ý tham gia để tài kèm theo.

Nếu Ông/Bà có thắc mắc điều gì, xin vui lòng liên hệ với tôi hay báo sự hướng dẫn tôi.

Rất mong sự sẵn lòng cộng tác của Ông/Bà.

Trân trọng.

Huynh Thi Trang

Phó GS. Peter Macauley

BA, MSc, BA, MAppSc, PhD, MACS, AALIA

Giáo sư hướng dẫn

Khoa Công Nghệ Thông tin Kinh tế & Cung ứng,

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Email: thitrang.huynh@rmit.edu.au
Xin chân thành cảm ơn Ông/ Bà đã dành thời gian cho việc tham gia đề tài nghiên cứu này. Nếu Ông/ Bà chấp thuận, xin vui lòng ký tên vào thư chấp thuận tham gia đề tài nghiên cứu này và gửi theo địa chỉ cho sẵn. Tôi rất cảm kích nếu Ông/ Bà có thể phúc đáp trong vòng hai tuần.
Appendix 9  Participant consent form – interviewees

Library Leadership and Succession Planning in Vietnam

Semi-structured interview

I have read the Information Sheet and have had the details of the study explained to me. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

I understand that I have the right to withdraw from the study at any time.

I agree to provide information to the researcher on the understanding that my name will not be used without permission. (Please circle the correct response)

YES  NO

I understand that the interviews will be tape-recorded and know that I have the right to interrupt the recording process at any time.

I agree to the interview being tape-recorded. (Please circle the correct response)

YES  NO

I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet. (Please circle the correct response)

YES  NO

Signature: __________________________ Date __________________

Full name: __________________________________________
THƯ CHÁP THUẤN CỦA NGƯỜI THAM GIA PHÔNG VÂN

Tôi đã đọc thông tin về nội dung đề tài nghiên cứu sinh của Bà. Tôi biết rằng tôi có thể tìm hiểu thêm về đề tài này.

Tôi biết rằng tôi có quyền tự chơi tham gia đề tài trong bất cứ lúc nào.

Tôi đồng ý / không đồng ý công tác với Bà, với điều kiện Bà không được sử dụng tên tôi nếu chưa được chấp thuận. (Xin vui lòng khoanh câu trả lời)

Có ❌ Không ✓

Tôi hiểu rằng buổi phỏng vấn sẽ có ghi âm và tôi có quyền yêu cầu tắt máy ghi âm bất cứ lúc nào.

Tôi đồng ý / không đồng ý ghi âm khi phỏng vấn. (Xin vui lòng khoanh câu trả lời)

Có ❌ Không ✓

Tôi đồng ý tham gia đề tài nghiên cứu này.

Có ❌ Không ✓

Chữ ký: __________________________________________________________

Ngày: __________________________________________________________

Họ và tên: ______________________________________________________

Chức vụ: _________________________________________________________
Appendix 10    Authority for release of transcripts

Library Leadership and Succession Planning in Vietnam

AUTHORITY FOR THE RELEASE OF TRANSCRIPTS

I confirm that I have had the opportunity to read and amend the transcript of the interview(s) conducted to me.

I agree that the edited transcript and extracts from this may be used in reports and publications arising from the research.

Signature: ___________________________ Date ______________

Full name: ____________________________________________

GIÁY ỦY THÁC SỬ DỤNG NỘI DUNG GHI ÂM PHÔNG VÀN

Tôi xác nhận đã đọc và bổ sung bản ghi âm phòng vấn để tài liệu nghiên cứu sinh của Bà.

Tôi đồng ý cho Bà sử dụng bản ghi âm phòng vấn trong báo cáo và xuất bản khoa học.

Chữ ký: ____________________________________________

Ngày:  __________________________________________________________________

Họ và tên: ____________________________________________