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## Of Succession Stories and Scenarios: The Challenges and Options Facing First-Generation Family-Owned Restaurants

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### ABSTRACT

First-generation business owners are concerned with sustaining the business, not how they got started or built their brand. First-generation business owners are considering passing the torch to second-generation to sustain business leadership and brand legacy. This study helps restaurant owners develop a succession plan. The research study determined the perceived challenges in succession planning for first generation family run restaurant owners and correspondingly created an appropriate succession plan. The research focused on first generation restaurant owners' succession planning challenges. Qualitative research was used to arrive at the conclusion of the study. Interpretivism was the philosophical lens through which this was viewed. Participants in this study were first-generation owners of family run restaurants in Cavite Province that had existed for more than seven years. Data were gathered using interview guide. Themes and their meanings were discovered through thematic analysis. Lack of Know-How among Would-Be Successors in Restaurant Management, Lack of Passion in Restaurant Management among Would-Be Successors and Lack of Second Generation Business Successor are the three Challenges to Business Succession faced by business owners. Four business founders' attributes to success have emerged as building blocks in creating appropriate succession plan for Family-Owned Restaurants: (a) Resilience and Tenacity, (b) Resourcefulness, (c) Customer-Centric, and (d) Founders' Interventions. In succession planning, there is no one-size-fits-all solution. An effective succession plan can accommodate the needs of a particular business owner. In this sense, first-generation business owners' unwavering commitment to succession planning is important.

### INTRODUCTION

In business, the objectives must be realistic and clearly defined. These fundamental requirements are further reinforced by the need to understand inherent management practices which should allow business owners to embrace the inevitable challenge: Leaving the Business Legacy. In today's business situation, legacy is about caring and understanding what will happen next – to the business, organization and its stakeholders (Fort, 2019).

While each business faces unique challenges, establishing a legacy for the future should enable its firm, especially its owners, to grasp the critical nature of their business today to continue existing. The legacy is collectively behind-the-scenes actions, succession stories, and scenarios that prepare family businesses for the future. The challenge's readiness for successors to assume leadership is an exemplary definition of legacy.

The world of restaurant industry has seen significant innovation over the past few years (Montaniel, 2019). Most restaurant businesses in the Philippines are typically family-owned (Francia, 2017), particularly in many tourist destination areas. Due to industry growth, restaurant leaders begin to think about transitioning to new leadership (Murray, 2021). Business owners are considering succession planning between family members (Escoffier, 2021), as most restaurant companies fail to consider succession strategies until it is too late (Denney, 2021).

This led me to study succession planning for first-generation business owners in the Philippines, specifically

the restaurant business in Cavite. Succession planning is a strategy for passing on leadership roles, often company ownership, to an employee or employees (Kenton, 2020). According to O'Hara (2020), developing a successful succession plan involves defending the current state of the business and ensuring that there are strategies in place that will allow the business to continue existing and thriving.

### LITERATURE REVIEW

In definition, succession planning guarantees that there should be no vacancies in terms of governance after the exit of the business head in the company. In the family business case, "it ensures that the business continues to run after the exit or death of important persons in the business" (CFI, 2021). With this context, business succession is not only about passing the leadership rather on the aspect of business continuity related to ownership and business legacy. This definition provides insight into the specific aspects, plans, or framework as a whole that must be developed in order to capture an acceptable succession plan for Family-Owned Restaurants business under hospitality industry. Family enterprises have been noted as a concern in the global entrepreneurial development agenda in recent years. This is because of the current problem, which is produced when family business owners fail to plan for succession and view it as a problem rather than an opportunity. (Nandlal and Kumar, 2020). Different experts' interpretations of quoted studies from various continents are regarded a potential for

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validating a certain platform for “Of Succession Stories and Scenarios: The Challenges and Options Facing First-Generation Family-Owned Restaurants”.

### African Succession Planning Context

The South African economy is defined by a history of apartheid, with the black majority owning less than 5% of firms before year 1994. The successor's commitment to and interest in the firm significantly impacts all stages of the management succession process, including decision-making and criterion creation (Gomba and Kele, 2016). A study was compelled by the significant number of Family-Owned Businesses (FOB's) in Anambra State that have either closed shop or ceased to function efficiently upon the loss of the owner/manager due to what appears to be a lack of proper succession planning. The study concluded that mentorship is critical in the effort to sustain family businesses (Nnabuife and Okoli, 2017).

### Asian Succession Planning Context

According to the research conducted in Pakistan, the factors of responsibility, authority, and power, effective communication, honesty and trust, and succession planning are the primary causes for the incapacity of FOBs to sustain themselves. Succession planning has been the primary source of dispute between FOBs and their future, but other problems are equally critical (Ali and Ali, 2018). Japan's family enterprises are well equipped for succession and enjoy the longest lifespans in the world. The critical sustainability characteristics mentioned are innovation, competitive advantage, leadership and team management, as well as developing positive relationships with the local community (Chirapanda, 2020). The aspects of social capital were found to significantly impact succession decision-making, with a particular emphasis on familial stewardship as a new cognitive driving force. When the incumbent and a sibling share “familial stewardship,” the latter's prospects of being chosen as successor are increased (Rima, 2016).

### European Succession Planning Context

According to the empirical findings in “Roadmap for Portuguese Family Businesses,” business succession planning has been highlighted as one of the most difficult stages in the life of a family organization, necessitating appropriate study. Indeed, resistance to succession, founder/successor relationships, succession planning, and organizational culture all contribute to why executive succession is one of the most critical and difficult jobs in organizational life (Marques and Couto, 2020).

### North American Succession Planning Context

Succession planning is not solely concerned with retirement. A succession plan can serve as a springboard for a variety of strategic business decisions. Indeed, according to our 2016 Bank of America Merrill Lynch CFO Outlook, business owners are more likely to have a succession plan in place for significant business

possibilities, such as preparing for the prospect of a sale, merger, or capital raise (O'Hara and Sharkey, 2016).

### South American Succession Planning Context

Succession is viewed as a critical step in the continuity of a family business. It is a well-studied subject, yet only a small percentage of them survive the generational transfer. In developing economies such as Latin America, knowledge development on the subject is critical, given the prevalence of family businesses and their economic and social contributions (Ramos, Maricel, Aguilar and Reyna, 2018).

### Oceanian Succession Planning Context

The vast majority of farms in Australia are ‘family farms,’ meaning they are owned and operated by members of a nuclear or extended family. Financial advisers are increasingly becoming involved in succession difficulties, particularly those involving farming families. Notably for financial advisors, hiring professionals with sufficient estate planning abilities are uncommon (Falkiner, Steen, Hicks and Keogh, 2017).

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

The overarching quest of this study was to formulate the appropriate succession planning framework for first-generation business owners in Cavite to bridge that gap between the business succession planning standards and practices. To this end, the study (Of Succession Stories and Scenarios: The Challenges and Options Facing First-Generation Family-Owned Restaurants) was directed by the subsequent objectives: (a) to make sense of the perceived challenges in succession planning for first-generation owners of family-run restaurants; and (b) to create a corresponding appropriate succession plan for family-owned restaurants.

### Research Design

The process of phenomenological approach was performed through interviews for selected first-generation family-owned restaurants in Cavite in order to acquire relevant information necessary and germane to research. Phenomenological studies look into people's experiences based on the descriptions they provide. These are referred to as “lived experiences.” The purpose of phenomenological research is to characterize the meaning that each subject derives from their experiences. This form of research is utilized to investigate subjects about which little is known (Donalek, 2004). Participants were invited to explain their experiences as they see them in phenomenological research. They have given the opportunity to write about their worries about business succession, but the majority of information was gathered through interviews. The researcher has analyzed their own views and feelings related to business succession in order to comprehend the lived experience from the subject's perspective. The researcher has first defined what she or he expects to find and then set these expectations aside;



this is known as bracketing. It is only feasible to see the phenomenon through the eyes of the individual who has lived it when the researcher sets aside her or his own ideas about the phenomenon.

### Research Environment

This research was undertaken in Cavite. The choice of site was due to numerous Restaurant Business being owned by Filipino Business owners. The target locale has a huge number of Family-Owned Business Restaurants who are actually managing the business operation located in Tagaytay City and the Municipalities of Silang and Alfonso. Short walks, distinctive themed restaurants, retreats and conventions, spas, and other leisure activities are popular in the province. According to Cavite Ecological Profile (2019), Cavite is a world-class tourism destination, providing guests with the finest hotel accommodations and upscale restaurants serving local and international cuisine. Cavite is abundant in natural marvels, making it a sparkling and ideal location for an unforgettable eco-holiday. It is a lovely, scenic province that is ideal for both business and recreation. From 2015 to 2019, the average number of same-day visitors was 5,135,797, with the majority of tourists, more than 3.5 million, visiting Cavite for leisure, relaxation, and sports.

### Research Informants

Purposive sampling (judgment, selective, or subjective sampling) is a method in which the researcher chooses study participants based on his or her own judgment. Purposive samples are chosen based on demographics and the study's purpose (Crossman, 2020). First-generation business owners participated. There is no required type of restaurant ownership, but five are registered as partnerships and one as a corporation. The family restaurant serves Filipino dishes and has been operational for at least seven years. There were six participants. Some qualitative research specialists avoid discussing "how many" interviews are "enough," but minimums vary. Numerous papers, book chapters, and books recommend between 5 and 50 people (Davis, 2021).

### Research Instruments

I have conducted the study using an interview guide. This set of questions was my guide in the conduct of the interview. Along with the discussion, the research has considered taking notes using a pen and paper. A cell phone was used as a recording device to capture the specifics of the conversation as well as the participants' non-verbal signals.

### Data Collection

The interview used a validated instrument guide. Before data collection, I gathered interview materials. Business owners were interviewed using a guide. The researcher established rapport with the participant and conducted the interview at the participant's request. The face-to-face interview was recorded on a mobile phone.

### Data Analysis

In qualitative research, data analysis is the systematic search and organization of interview transcripts, observation notes, and other non-textual materials. Coding or categorizing qualitative data is key to analysis. It involves reducing the volume of raw data, finding patterns, interpreting the data, and building a logical chain of evidence (Bhattacharjee, 2018). The Data Analysis (Thematic Analysis) adapted from Creswell (2014) aims to identify themes from first-generation business owners' succession planning challenges. Raw interview data were transcribed to prepare these for analysis. I have read all data for data coding. I identified themes after data coding. My final data (thematic) analysis interpreted interrelated themes' meanings. These interpretations and understandings were used to build a succession plan.

### Ethical Consideration

Human subject protection is critical in any research study. This is accomplished by the use of suitable ethical norms. Due to the in-depth nature of a qualitative study, ethical questions take on a special resonance (Arifin, 2018). The purpose of this research was to share my own experience in the conduct of six (6) individual face-to-face interviews with first-generation family-owned restaurant owners in Cavite regarding their business's succession planning. This paper has discussed tactics that I used to preserve participants' identities throughout our interactions with participants from diverse family histories and managed distress during the interview. It was critical to evaluate ethical considerations throughout all stages of a qualitative study in order to strike a balance between the potential hazards and likely benefits of the research.

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

My intention to create the conforming appropriate succession plan has been conferred as the object of my study for the first-generation family-owned restaurants in Cavite. This affords the responses to the research questions and objectives of my study. Interpretivism as my philosophical lens permits me to construe the meaning of the lived experiences of my participants, understanding their narratives using Data Analysis (Thematic Analysis) adapted from Creswell (2014) where the end purpose is the emergence of themes from the life-world of first-generation business owners in crafting applicable framework in a succession plan.

Seven (7) themes have emerged from the participants' captured narratives and motivating facts that inspired them to address the (1) Challenges to Business Succession while emphasizing the importance of the business brand in the community in light of (2) Business Founders' Attributes to Success. In addition, I have identified four (4) Business Founders' Interventions under 7th Theme that empower first-generation business owners to take actions in order to achieve the objective of business continuity and legacy.

My participants are typical Filipinos who were inspired

Table 1: Emerging Themes on Challenges to Business Succession and Business Founders' Attributes to Success

Objectives (O)	Categories (C)	Themes (T)
O1: On making sense of the perceived challenges in succession planning for first-generation owners of family-run restaurants	T1C1: Lack of Knowledge in Restaurant Management T2.C1: Successor with Different Profession T2.C2: Passion of Children in the Business T3.C1: Lack of Successor	T1: Lack of Know-How Among Would-Be Successors in Restaurant Management T2: Lack of Passion in Restaurant Management Among Would-Be Successors T3: Lack of Second- Generation Business Successor
O1: On creating corresponding appropriate succession plan for family-owned restaurants	T4.C1: Business Resilience T4.C2: Social Responsibility T5.C1: Availability of Resources T6.C1: Customer Satisfaction T6.C2: Product Innovation T6.C3: Building Expansion T7.C1: Enrolling Children to Culinary Schools T7.C2: Allowing Children to Manage Separate Restaurants T7.C3: Hiring Children as Employees T7.C4: Incorporating the Business with Children as Directors	T4: Resilience and Tenacity T5: Resourcefulness T6: Customer-Centric T7: Founders' Interventions

to envision themselves as “successful in the future”, with the intention to “improve the lives of their own families”, the desire in responding to the “inquiry of a particular customer”, and to sensibly realize the unexpected “offer of money from a stranger to start her own business” - these are not light-hearted tales, as they are not found in any literature but are told from the hearts of my participants being the reason behind the contemporary feat of their restaurants in Cavite. I initially had no reaction as they began recounting the events of the last seven or thirty years of their businesses. I appreciate how much of their lives had been devoted to the brand, notwithstanding the fact that I was not present to witness their struggles, but I could feel their tears and joy throughout our conversation. I have detected a strong belief in the importance of the brand, because of the work they have done, the brand is well-known to a large number of people. I did venture to suggest that the intensity of their feelings when recounting their experiences reflects their struggles. In the enthusiasm of telling their stories of the past, there is a clear sense of challenges.

They have been tested since the business' inception and have encountered numerous obstacles during operation. The important narratives have spoken their minds about how they will maintain the brand's continuity as well as to learn more about who will take over the business in the future. Even though I was not present for every detail of their experiences, I was able to get first-hand confirmation of my notion from the people, my participants, who took part in the study. What appears to be implied in the context is that the future successors of the firm will be

their offspring or members of the second generation. In the article “Succession Planning for Family Restaurant: How to Ensure Your Relations Preserve Your Legacy” by Martell (2017), The business owners and their desire for more years are approaching retirement, and it is vital that the owners seek to retain the firm in the family, which is why they trust their children, the second-generation owners, to carry out the goal. According to Klein (2018), author of “Thriving or Trapped in the Family Business?” When successors reevaluate their motivations, qualifications, and emotional tie to the prior generation's heritage, the children of business owners can be certain that the future leadership is a good match.

### The Challenges to Business Successions

#### Lack of Know-How Among Would-Be Successors in Restaurant Management

Restaurants are among the busiest and most demanding food company operations. Skilled and efficient restaurant managers maximize visitor and owner productivity (Cornell, 2019). Indeed (2021) says food service workers need restaurant and food preparation skills to succeed. I think business knowledge is crucial. Due to market competition, businesses should not rely solely on experience, but also on current marketing and management trends.

#### Lack of Passion in Restaurant Management Among Would-Be Successors

Passion drives entrepreneurs. According to research, enthusiasm predicts entrepreneurs' ingenuity, persistence,

and venture success. Entrepreneurs with a strong purpose are more successful (Mol, Cardon, & Khapova, 2020). This study captures “lack of passion” on the context (a) Successor with Different Profession - Being a successor does not guarantee the business’s survival. The individual in charge of running a business must have the skills, knowledge, and ability to deal with the same issues that arise during the restaurant’s daily operations, and (b) Passion of Children in the Business - Business owners must evaluate each potential successor’s skills and commitment to manage the company.

### Lack of Second-Generation Business Successor

Without legitimate successors to carry on the family business, it may struggle to survive, despite its profitability. Family businesses may fall to outside investors or key employees not related by blood or marriage (IMD, 2022). Prior research pointed out that a successful company succession strategy is to transfer the business to siblings (Rima, 2016), relatives, or family members (Guo, 2017), or to franchise (Serrano and Garcia, 2019), merge (O’Hara and Sharkey, 2019), or sell the business (Newcomer-Dyer, 2019).

My study’s second objective was to create a corresponding appropriate succession plan for Family- Owned Restaurants. To create an effective succession plan, it is critical to understand how the firm has performed from its inception to the present. There are comparable attributes of success that business owners address and execute.

### Business Founders’ Attributes to Success

#### Resilience and Tenacity

i. Tenacity is a combination of willpower, persistence, and grit that can make the difference between failure and success for businesses and teams (Eberhardt, 2018). Business owners rely on possibility to keep their companies afloat.

ii. Business Resilience. Due to the difficulties most business owners are facing, business resilience has emerged. Business resilience is crucial. Businesses can continue operations while protecting employees, assets, and brand equity.

Social Responsibility. Sustainability requires social responsibility. Adopting social responsibility concepts like accountability and openness can help ensure a system’s

long-term success (ASQ, 2022). This study captures “social responsibility” in the context of (a) Treatment to Employees - when employees are treated with dignity, gratitude, and encouragement, they are more likely to go out of their way to provide excellent service to the company’s clients and customers, (b) Family Business and Relationship - numerous family members are committed to professionalism and try to keep work and family separate in their interactions (Igbal and Bennink-Bai, 2020), and (c) Compliance - The restaurant must follow labor and environmental regulations to stay open.

### Resourcefulness

Today’s leaders value resourcefulness. A resourceful person can adapt quickly to new situations, think creatively, and make do with what they have. To continue restaurant operations, options must be available, such as people to perform operations, raw materials and food supply, a contingency reserve to operate the business, and other alternatives.

### Customer-Centric

Client-centric business strategy and way of life focuses on providing the best customer experience and increasing brand loyalty. Client-centric firms put the customer first in their philosophy, operations, and ideas. This study captures “customer-centric” on the context of (a) Customer Satisfaction - Complete customer satisfaction is demonstrated when customers leave your restaurants delighted, (b) Product Innovation - Because technology evolves, a company can’t thrive if its employees and management are stuck in the past. I think thinking about innovation and implementing this strategy simultaneously helps us understand the impact of our operations on consumers. Development and innovation are key to the industry’s success, and (c) Building Expansion - Expanding operations increases their product’s market. The company’s expansion is not just about building bigger facilities; it is also about expanding their brand.

### Founders’ Interventions

Founders’ intervention as a business success factor captured the major influence of the four solutions discussed. First-generation owners want to improve the brand and ensure the company’s long- term viability.

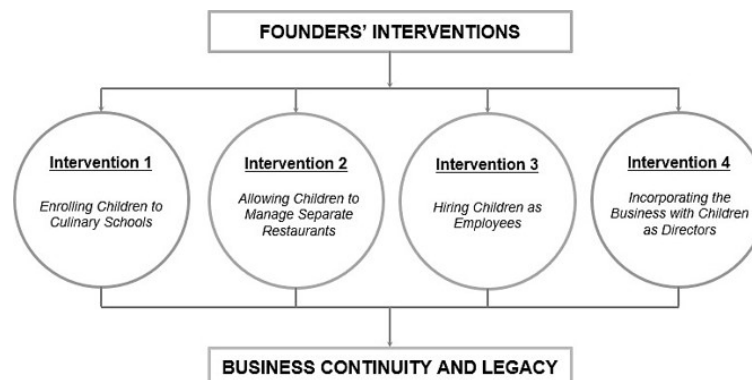


Figure 1: Business Founders’ Interventions

1. Enrolling Children to Culinary Schools. Managing a restaurant is not just about day-to-day operations; one must also know products well if one prepares meals. Enrolling their children in culinary school sends a stronger message to their successors: that preparing food is a passion best expressed through dishes served with affection.

2. Allowing Children to Manage Separate Restaurants. Continuous learning and good deeds at work allow me to create intelligent actions that affect whole organizations. Business owners want their children to face the same startup and ongoing challenges they did. In this context, the children will understand that their parents' original brand deserves to be protected and continued, even if they open their own restaurants under the successors' name.

3. Hiring Children as Employees. Employing children teaches them to obey commands and work with diligence and integrity. The business owners' decision to hire their children exposes them to the entire operation.

4. Incorporating the Business with Children as Directors. Small business entrepreneurs have several legal form options. Corporations are an option. By including children as directors, the business is more accountable. They have given them responsibilities while retaining parental privileges. This obligation could motivate business successors to prioritize their restaurant's legacy.

## CONCLUSION

The Challenges to Business Succession and Business Founders' Attributes to Success has constructively aligned with the set objectives of the study. It reflected how business owners dealt with the difficulties of starting their firm until the brand name made an impression on society. To make sense of the perceived challenges in succession planning for first-generation owners of family-run restaurants, the successor to be able to assume the business leadership should have both conceptual knowledge and procedural knowledge, the successor must immerse themselves in the ground, and the family should have a serious discussion about other options -- transferring the business to siblings, relatives or family members, or allowing the franchise, merging, or selling of the business. To create corresponding appropriate succession plan for Family-Owned Restaurants, being resilient is not only during the time of adversities, but also considering social responsibility affecting employees, family relationship and legal compliance, the response of complying to the business requirement to assure the availability of options and alternatives as contingency reserve to operate the business, the understanding that the context of customer-centric as business strategy shall focus in providing the greatest possible experience for the customer, and the business owners' initiatives as founders' interventions should have the noble purpose of ensuring that the business will remain viable in the next coming years.

The challenges to business succession serve as the

foundation for implementing the necessary procedure to address business owners' concerns. Once these challenges have been resolved, they will serve as a support system to bolster the confirmation of business continuity and the development of initiatives based on the Business Founders' Success Attributes. In conversely to the concerns of business owners, the attributes of a business are the requirements for its survival. The two disciplines collaborate to address business continuity in the future, where the interventions of business founders are integral to reconciling succession planning challenges. The noble objective of the first-generation owners' interventions is to ensure the business's continued viability in the coming years. This expanding concept and the disciplines derived from the experiences of business owners are sufficient to validate the strong desire for legacy creation.

The impact of how my participants shared their narratives in order to create a valuable framework for business succession provided me with a wealth of new ideas and perspectives on how to advance in all facets of my personal and professional life. While this was not stated directly to me, it has inspired me in some way. This inspiration informed my essay on how I made sense of their narratives. Our contribution to the body of knowledge is comprised of all the captured thoughts, insights, and sense that form a remarkable foundation for succession planning. The value of life is identical to the value of a business legacy; it makes no difference whether we exist for seven years or more; what matters is how your life has inspired others and the impact these business owners have on society.

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