

Rugayah Hashim
Abu Bakar Abdul Majeed *Editors*

Proceedings of the Colloquium on Administrative Science and Technology

CoAST 2013

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Rugayah Hashim • Abu Bakar Abdul Majeed
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Springer

Editors

Rugayah Hashim
Head-Research Impact, Research
Management Institute, Universiti
Teknologi MARA
Shah Alam Selangor
Malaysia

Abu Bakar Abdul Majeed
Assistance Vice Chancellor, Research
Management Institute, Universiti
Teknologi MARA
Shah Alam Selangor
Malaysia

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Preface

We are very happy to present the first proceedings book of the Colloquium on Administrative Science and Technology 2013 (CoAST 2013). CoAST 2013 focuses on the areas of Administrative Science and Technology, Management, and Arts and Humanities. Other specific areas of social science through technology by providing contemporary insights within the scope of public sector institutions. The conference was organized by the Research Management Institute (RMI), Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) in cooperation with IEEE Joint Chapter of Malaysia, with its proceedings to be archived in Springer Digital Library.

The CoAST 2013 conference received 98 submissions with a 67.3% acceptance rate. However, the final count of 47 papers was submitted to Springer for publication. All submitted papers were subject to double blind peer review by an independent international review board of 750 experts.

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- Associate Professor Dr. Mohamad Nidzam Rahmat, Head of Monitoring Unit, RMI and co-chair of CoAST 2013 (
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- Associate Professor Dr. Sabarinah Sheikh Ahmad, Head, International and Industrial Grants Unit, RMI
- Associate Professor Dr. Nooritawati Md. Tahir, Head of InfoRec Unit, RMI
- Darmarajah Nadarajan, Fellow, Research Impact Unit, RMI cum Secretariat, CoAST 2013
- Noorsalissa Saedah, Assistant Registrar cum Secretariat, CoAST 2013
- Puteri Murni Salleh-hudin, Executive Office, Research Impact Unit, RMI cum Secretariat, CoAST 2013
- Fatimahtun Nur Zainal Ulum, Research Impact Unit, RMI cum Secretariat, CoAST 2013
- Muhamad Bahtiar Marsidin, Research Impact Unit, RMI cum Secretariat, CoAST 2013
- Aqilah Ainaa Naraji,, Research Impact Unit, RMI cum Secretariat, CoAST 2013
- Wazerul Amin Mohd Rahim, RMI cum Secretariat, CoAST 2013
- Siti Rafidah Mohd. Anuar, RMI

General Chair, CoAST 2013

Rugayah Gy Hashim, PhD

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Contributors

Mohammed Rahezzal Shah Abdul Karim Faculty of Administrative Science and Policies Studies, Universiti Teknologi MARA Sabah, Sepanggar, Sabah, Malaysia

Mohamad Rahizam Abdul Rahim Faculty of Sport Science and Recreation, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Shah Alam, Malaysia

Nor Irwani Abdul Rahman Faculty of Business Management, Universiti Teknologi Mara, Shah Alam, Malaysia

Azlan Bin Abdul Rahman Language Studies Department, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Merbok, Kedah, Malaysia

Nik Ramli Nik Abdul Rashid Faculty of Business Management, Universiti Teknologi Mara, Shah Alam, Malaysia

Ahmad Sharim Abdullah Centre of Studies for Building Surveying, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia

Shazila Abdullah Department of English Language and Linguistics, Academy of Language Studies, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Malaysia

Azzura Abdullah Faculty of Applied Sciences, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Selangor Darul Ehsan, Malaysia

Dayang Nailul Munna Abg Abdullah Faculty of Business Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Puncak Alam Campus, Kuala Selangor, Selangor, Malaysia

Nagoor Meera Abdullah Faculty of Sport Science and Recreation, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Shah Alam, Malaysia

Zainah Abdullah Institute of Business Excellence, Faculty of Business Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia

Rabiatul Alawiyah Zainal Abidin Faculty of Business Management (Finance), Universiti Teknologi MARA, Segamat, Johor, Malaysia

Rahmat Adnan Faculty of Sport Science and Recreation, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Shah Alam, Malaysia

H. Mohd Affandi Faculty of Architecture, Planning and Surveying, Universiti Teknologi MARA, (UiTM), Shah Alam, Malaysia

H. Mohd Affandi Faculty of Architecture, Planning and Surveying, University of Technology Mara (UiTM), Shah Alam, Malaysia

N. A. Ahmad Department of Hospitality Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA Malaysia, Shah Alam, Malaysia

Sharifah Fazirah Syed Ahmad Faculty of Business Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia

Hasnizan Aksah Centre of Studies for Building Surveying, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia

Juriah Mohd Amin Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Malaysia

MD. Fuad Arif Fine Art Department, Faculty of Art & Design, University Technology MARA, Shah Alam, Malaysia

Nooraslinda Abdul Aris Accounting Research Institute & Faculty of Accountancy, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Malaysia

Mohamad Awang Centre of Studies for Interior Architecture, Faculty of Architecture, Planning & Surveying, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Malaysia

Rozilah Abdul Aziz Center for Applied Management, Faculty of Business Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Selangor, Malaysia

A. A. Aziz Department of Hospitality Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA Malaysia, Shah Alam, Malaysia

A. Abdul Aziz Faculty of Architecture, Planning and Surveying, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Malaysia

Rafidah Mohd Azli Academy for Contemporary Islamic Studies (ACIS), Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Malaysia

Nazirah Mohamad Ba'ai Faculty of Art and Design, Department of Metal Design Contemporary, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Malaysia

Ajau Danis Faculty of Health Sciences, Universiti Teknologi MARA, (UiTM), Selangor, Malaysia

Esmawee Endut Faculty of Architecture, Planning & Surveying, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Shah Alam, Malaysia

S. F. S. M. Fuzi Faculty of Administrative Science & Policy Studies, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Shah Alam, Malaysia

Aziatul Waznah Ghazali Accounting Research Institute & Faculty of Accountancy, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Malaysia

Nur Balqis Hakim Bt Lokman Hakim Contemporary Metal Design, Art & Design Faculty, UiTM, Shah Alam, Malaysia

Abuzar Abdul Halim Faculty of Communication and Media Studies, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Selangor, Malaysia

Nor Atikah Hamdan Arshad Ayub Graduate Business School, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Malaysia

Abu Bakar Abd Hamid Centre of Studies for Interior Architecture, Faculty of Architecture, Planning & Surveying, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Malaysia

Shireen Haron Faculty of Administrative Science and Policy Studies, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Shah Alam, Malaysia

Ahmad Ezanee Hashim Centre of Studies for Building Surveying, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia

R. G. Hashim Faculty of Administrative Science & Policy Studies, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Shah Alam, Malaysia

Rugayah Hashim Faculty of Administrative Science and Policy Studies, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia

H. Z. Hashim Faculty of Art and Design, Department of Metal Design Contemporary, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Malaysia

Mohd Adnan Hashim Kampus Alor Gajah, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) Melaka, Alor Gajah, Malaysia

Narehan Hassan Center for Applied Management, Faculty of Business Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Selangor, Malaysia

Norraidah Hassan Faculty of Administrative Science and Policy Studies, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Shah Alam, Malaysia

P. F. Hassan Faculty of Architecture, Planning and Surveying, University of Technology Mara (UiTM), Shah Alam, Malaysia

Suzana Hassan Faculty of Business Management (Finance), Universiti Teknologi MARA, Segamat, Johor, Malaysia

Ramani Hipnie Center for Aviation Safety and Survival Training, Construction and Industrial Training Center, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Amariah Hanum Hussin Faculty of Accountancy, Universiti Teknologi Mara, Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia

Mohamad Fahmi Bin Hussin Faculty of Electrical Engineering, University of Technology (UiTM), Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia

Nur Hidayah Hussin Supervision and Enforcement, Lembaga Perkhidmatan Kewangan Labuan, Wilayah Persekutuan Labuan, Malaysia

Siti Sara Ibrahim Faculty of Business Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia

Yusarina Mat Isa Accounting Research Institute & Faculty of Accountancy, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Malaysia

Amal Hayati Ishak Academy of Contemporary Islamic Studies (ACIS), Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Shah Alam, Malaysia

Noor Rizallinda Ishak Building Department, Universiti Teknologi MARA (Perak), Perak, Malaysia

Norsalisma Ismail Centre of Studies for Building Surveying, UiTM, Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia

Building Surveying Department, Faculty of Architecture, Planning and Surveying, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia

Elma Dewiyana Ismail Centre of Studies for Building Surveying, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia

Z. Ismail Faculty of Architecture, Planning and Surveying, University of Technology Mara (UiTM), Shah Alam, Malaysia

Zulhabri Ismail Faculty of Architecture, Planning and Surveying, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia

N. N. Ismail Faculty of Electrical Engineering, University of Technology (UiTM), Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia

Rossalynn Ismail Limkokwing Institute of Creative Technology (LICT), Kuching, Sarawak, Malaysia

Masthurhah Ismail Universiti Teknologi MARA, Seri Iskandar, Perak, Malaysia

Zarina Isnin Centre of Studies for Building Surveying, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia

Sheela Jayabalan Faculty of Law, Universiti Teknologi Mara, (UiTM), Shah Alam, Malaysia

Cheam Sheue Jin Faculty of Cognitive Sciences and Human Development, Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS), Kota Samarahan, Sarawak, Malaysia

Razana Juhaida Johari Accounting Research Institute & Faculty of Accountancy, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Malaysia

Noraini Johari Universiti Teknologi MARA, Seri Iskandar, Perak, Malaysia

M. F. Mustaffa Kamal Faculty of Architecture, Planning and Surveying, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Malaysia

M. F. Mustaffa Kamal Faculty of Architecture, Planning and Surveying, University of Technology Mara (UiTM), Shah Alam, Malaysia

M. S. Y. Kamaruddin Department of Culinary Arts and Gastronomy, Universiti Teknologi MARA Malaysia, Shah Alam, Malaysia

Nawal Kasim Faculty of Accountancy, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia

Daleeler Kaur Faculty of Law, Universiti Teknologi Mara, Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia

Nor Aniswati Awang Lah MARA Art & Design Excellence Centre (MADEC), Department of Interior Design, Kolej Kemahiran Tinggi MARA, Rembau, Malaysia

Rohanizan Md. Lazan Faculty of Business Management (Finance), Universiti Teknologi MARA, Segamat, Johor, Malaysia

Farrah Aini Lugiman Graphic Department, Faculty of Art & Design, University Technology MARA, Puncak Alam, Malaysia

Siti Akhtar Mahayuddin Building Department, Universiti Teknologi MARA (Perak), Perak, Malaysia

Mashanim Mahazir Faculty of Engineering and the Built, EnvironmentSEGI University, Kota Damansara, Selangor, Malaysia

Maisarah Makmor Faculty of Architecture, Planning and Surveying, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia

Nor'Azam Mastuki Faculty of Accountancy, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia

M. Che Mat Faculty of Architecture, Planning and Surveying, University of Technology Mara (UiTM), Shah Alam, Malaysia

Nadiyah Mohamad Fine Art Department, Faculty of Art & Design, University Technology MARA, Shah Alam, Malaysia

Mohamed Rizal Mohamed Building Department, Universiti Teknologi MARA (Perak), Perak, Malaysia

Mohd Firdaus Mohd Fathir Faculty of Communication and Media Studies, Universiti Teknologi Mara, Shah Alam, Malaysia

Dean Nelson Mojolou Center for Applied Management, Faculty of Business Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Kuching, Sarawak, Malaysia

Imani Mokhtar Faculty of Business Management, UiTM, Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia

R. Muhammad Department of Culinary Arts and Gastronomy, Universiti Teknologi MARA Malaysia, Shah Alam, Malaysia

A. R. Muhd. Shah Jehan Faculty of Applied Sciences, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Selangor Darul Ehsan, Malaysia

Khairudin Murad Faculty of Communication and Media Studies, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Selangor, Malaysia

Rosidah Musa Institute of Business Excellence, Faculty of Business Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia

Faculty of Business Management, Institute of Business Excellence, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia

Sakinah Muslim College of Law, Government and International Studies, Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM), Sintok, Malaysia

Raja Munirah Raja Mustapha Faculty of Business Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia

Noraini Nasirun Faculty of Business Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA (Perlis), Arau, Perlis, Malaysia

Noorzan Mohd Noor Department of English Language and Linguistics, Academy of Language Studies, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Malaysia

Sarina Muhamad Noor Faculty of Business Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA (Perlis), Arau, Perlis, Malaysia

Fauziah Noordin INTEC Education College, Shah Alam, Malaysia

Wan Hanafi Nurhayati Faculty of Applied Sciences, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Selangor Darul Ehsan, Malaysia

Safiah Omar Arshad Ayub Graduate Business School, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Malaysia

Muhamad Rahimi Osman Academy of Contemporary Islamic Studies (ACIS), Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Shah Alam, Malaysia

Ismah Osman Faculty of Business Management, UiTM, Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia

Rohana Othman Accounting Research Institute & Faculty of Accountancy, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Malaysia

Vincent Parnabas Faculty of Sport Science and Recreation, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Shah Alam, Malaysia

Mohammad Redzwan Raffe Centre of Construction Management, Faculty of Architecture, Planning and Surveying, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia

Ramita Abdul Rahim Faculty of Business Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia

Abd Rasid Abd Rahman Centre for Media and Information Warfare Studies, Faculty of Communication and Media Studies, Universiti Teknologi Mara, Shah Alam, Malaysia

Nurulhuda Abd Rahman Faculty of Accountancy, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia

Mohamad Nidzam Rahmat Centre of Studies for Building Surveying, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia

Research Management Institute (RMI), Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia

Noor Adila Mohd Rajili Faculty of Art and Design, Department of Metal Design Contemporary, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Malaysia

Aliza Ramli Faculty of Accountancy & Accounting Research Institute, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Malaysia

Shahriza Ilyana Binti Ramli Faculty of Administrative Science & Policy Studies, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Merbok, Kedah, Malaysia

Marsitah Ramli Faculty of Art and Design, UiTM, Contemporary Metal Design Department, Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia

Daleleer Kaur Randawar Faculty of Law, Universiti Teknologi Mara, (UiTM), Shah Alam, Malaysia

Robiah Abdul Rashid Centre of Studies for Building Surveying, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia

Abu Bakar Abd Raub Faculty of Architecture, Planning & Surveying, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Shah Alam, Malaysia

Norfadzilah Abdul Razak Center for Applied Management, Faculty of Business Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Selangor, Malaysia

Dzuljastri Abdul Razak Kulliyah of Economics and Management Sciences, International Islamic University Malaysia, Gombak, Selangor, Malaysia

Fatimah Az Zahra Md Ripin Accounting Research Institute & Faculty of Accountancy, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Malaysia

Abdul Kadir Rosline Faculty of Administrative Science and Policies Studies, Universiti Teknologi MARA Sabah, Sepanggar, Sabah, Malaysia

Suhaimie Saahar@Saabar Faculty of Communication and Media Studies, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Selangor, Malaysia

Ahmadreza Saberi Faculty of Architecture, Planning & Surveying, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Shah Alam, Malaysia

Shahrul Yani Said Centre of Studies for Building Surveying, UiTM, Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia

Siti Najah Raihan Sakrani Kampus Alor Gajah, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) Melaka, Alor Gajah, Malaysia

Azni Syafena Binti Andin Selamat Faculty of Administrative Science & Policy Studies, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Merbok, Kedah, Malaysia

Shahnon Mohamed Salleh Centre for Media and Information Warfare Studies, Faculty of Communication and Media Studies, Universiti Teknologi Mara, Shah Alam, Malaysia

Nor Fazalina Salleh Faculty of Business Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia

Maizatul Nadia Samion Arshad Ayub Graduate Business School, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Malaysia

N. Samsudin Faculty of Administrative Science & Policy Studies, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Shah Alam, Malaysia

Zuraidah Mohd Sanusi Accounting Research Institute & Faculty of Accountancy, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Malaysia

Teo Kok Seong The Institute of Malay Heritage and Civilization, The National University of Malaysia, Bangi, Selangor, Malaysia

Fatimah Setapa Faculty of Business Management, UiTM, Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia

Tengku Intan Suzila Tengku Sharif Academy of Language Studies, Universiti Teknologi Mara Pahang, Bandar Tun Abdul Razak Jengka, Pahang, Malaysia

Siti Halijjah Shariff Arshad Ayub Graduate Business School, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Malaysia

Sharfizie Mohd Sharip Faculty of Business Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia

J. Sheela Faculty of Law, Universiti Teknologi Mara, Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia

Suriati Sidek Faculty of Health Sciences, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Selangor, Malaysia

Balbir Singh Sports Centre, University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Rita Rohaiza Sohari Center for Foundation Studies of Sciences, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Puncak Alam Campus, Puncak Alam, Selangor Darul Ehsan, Malaysia

Suhaila Subahir Faculty of Electrical Engineering, University of Technology (UiTM), Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia

Firdausi Suffian Faculty of Administrative Science and Policies Studies, Universiti Teknologi MARA Sabah, Sepanggar, Sabah, Malaysia

Suzana Sulaiman Faculty of Accountancy & Accounting Research Institute, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Malaysia

Norasruddin Sulaiman Faculty of Sport Science and Recreation, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Shah Alam, Malaysia

Mohamad Hanif Abdul Wahab Centre of Studies for Interior Architecture, Faculty of Architecture, Planning & Surveying, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Malaysia

Shafezah Abdul Wahab Kampus Alor Gajah, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) Melaka, Alor Gajah, Malaysia

Bin Wang School of Engineering and Design, Brunel University, Uxbridge, UK

Mazlah Yaacob Universiti Teknologi MARA, Seri Iskandar, Perak, Malaysia

Muhammad Sufi Mohd Yusoff Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Malaysia

Safiah Md. Yusof Faculty of Health Sciences, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Selangor, Malaysia

M. S. M. Zahari Department of Culinary Arts and Gastronomy, Universiti Teknologi MARA Malaysia, Shah Alam, Malaysia

Nur Fadhlina Zainal Abedin Faculty of Business Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia

Zairul Nurshazana Zainuddin Faculty of Accountancy & Accounting Research Institute, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Malaysia

K. Zakaria Faculty of Administrative Science & Policy Studies, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Shah Alam, Malaysia

Shah Rizal Zambahari Faculty of Business Management, UiTM, Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia

Zahira Zulkifli Arshad Ayub Graduate Business School, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Malaysia

M. Yusof Farida Zuraina Faculty of Applied Sciences, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Selangor Darul Ehsan, Malaysia

Chapter 1

Leadership Development Initiatives to Ensure Succession Planning Effectiveness

Sakinah Muslim, Shireen Haron, Rugayah Hashim and Norraidah Hassan

Abstract Leadership development has received considerable coverage in recent decades, and this is evident by the proliferation of research and popular literature covering this topic. In practice, organizations are employing leadership development initiatives in an effort to nurture talented individuals who will provide effective leadership. As a leadership development becomes prevalent in academia and practice, it is critical to understand what are leadership development initiatives and their related concepts. In this chapter, we review the literature on these ubiquitous yet elusive concepts. We begin by exploring what are leadership development initiatives, distinguishing between leader development and leadership development terms and highlighting the difference between experiential and educational leadership development. In the final part of this chapter, we highlight the importance of leadership development initiatives in succession planning. This chapter uses supportive literature to examine leadership development initiatives to ensure succession planning effectiveness.

Keywords Leadership · Development · Succession planning · Academic · Practice

1.1 Introduction

Leadership development program or leadership initiative is “the banner under which potential successors are developed systematically and visible way” [1]. In detail, leadership development initiatives are processes or programs that develop

S. Muslim (✉)
College of Law, Government and International Studies,
Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM), Sintok, Malaysia
e-mail: sakinah@uum.edu.my

S. Haron · R. Hashim · N. Hassan
Faculty of Administrative Science and Policy Studies,
Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Shah Alam, Malaysia
e-mail: shireen738@salam.uitm.edu.my

R. Hashim
e-mail: gy@salam.uitm.edu.my

N. Hassan
e-mail: norraidah@salam.uitm.edu.my

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characteristics of leadership, competencies, personal attributes, traits, and organizational vision, thereby creating emotional connections that support sustainable change within an organization [2].

Leonard and Lang [3] stressed that identifying future talent needs and creating solutions to those needs are very important in succession planning. The challenge is how to create leadership development initiatives that can cater the leadership skills needed in future. Hence, the aim of this chapter is to explore leadership development initiatives in ensuring succession planning goals achieved and related concepts.

1.2 Leadership Definition and Related Issues

Having a valid leadership theory as a roadmap to guide leadership development initiatives is fundamental to understanding how it works. It can ensure that we can expect and evaluate the right things. However, many authors fail to provide a definition of leadership before discussing leadership development [4].

The leadership literature is diverse and lacks consensus. There is little agreement on the exact nature of leadership and the effectiveness of particular approaches. Basically, leadership is “the process of influencing others to understand and agree about what needs to be done and how to do it, and the process of facilitating individual and collective efforts to accomplish shared objectives” [5]. There are many leadership theories that have been developed over the years. From traits, behaviors through contingency theory and situational theory to transformational, researchers have long attempted to understand the determinants of effective leadership. Besides, two mutually exclusive views about leadership involve the school of thoughts holding that leaders are born and the school of thoughts holding that humans need to work hard to develop these qualities [6].

1.3 Leadership Development Initiatives

How can potential leaders be cultivated and readied for the challenges they will face in their institution? One of the answers is implementing leadership development initiatives. There are many developmental activities or internal employee developments related to succession planning, or they are part of the succession planning process. For instance, Rothwell [7] posited that there were 300 general ways to develop individuals. From a practice standpoint, leadership development has been classified in many different ways. The majority of the leadership community agrees that leadership development is best addressed through a systems approach in which individuals are exposed to developmental opportunities through experience, mentorship, and formal training [8]. Although Kouzes and Posner [9] suggest that formal leader development programs or initiatives constitute the smallest portion of an effective leadership development mix, they are still significant.

To that end, the American Society for Training & Development (ASTD, cited in [10]) classified these initiatives under four general types of leadership development practices: experiential learning, education, coaching, and assessment. These four broad types of initiatives are also known as assessment option, coaching option, learning option, and experience option.

a. *Experiential learning*

In related literature, the term developmental experiences, developmental job assignment, experiential learning, experiential leader development, and experiential job assignment are frequently used interchangeably.

There are a few important activities included under these initiatives. While the classification of developmental assignment can vary, there are a number of common initiatives typically associated with the effective approach. Day [10] claimed that action learning, job rotation, and stretch assignment were under this approach.

Velsor, McCauley, and Ruderman [11] added up job moves, temporary assignment, and leadership roles outside work in the list. Groves [12] recommended stretch assignments, cross-divisional or cross-site assignments (job rotation), and action-learning projects as the most critical of this technique. DeRue and Wellman [13] argued that the types of assignments that were particularly developmental included an increase in the scope of responsibilities and unfamiliar responsibilities, creating change, job rotations and transitions, stakeholder engagement assignment, and working in a different culture or across boundaries. Basically most of the scholars discussed quite the same approach but in different and sometimes interchangeable terms.

b. *Education*

Another factor impacting the succession planning goal is education. Education is one of the important developmental initiatives of especially strategically relevant and powerful well-timed programs [14]. Education includes formal training or targeted educational programs. However, it should be supplemented with real-world experiences [15].

According to McCall [16], educational experience becomes a significant part of learning when

1. used as an opportunity to reflect on and make better sense of experience,
2. substituted for an experience that is either unavailable to enough people or is too risky or expensive to use for development, and
3. preparing people to choose more wisely and get more from the experience.

c. *Developmental relationship*

Coaching and mentoring or developmental relationships are often considered as a formalized form of feedback and often lead to succession planning goals. Coaching can be a short-term intervention intended to develop specific leadership skills or a more extensive process involving a series of meetings over time. Coaching can take place in two different forms. A coach may choose to work one-to-one with an individual manager or conduct workshops and seminars with larger groups of managers. The latter approach is a one-to-many coaching process, also defined as team

coaching [17]. Mentoring, on the other hand, is a committed, long-term relationship, in which a senior person supports the personal and professional development of a junior person [4]. Sosik, Lee, and Bouquillon [18] concluded that mentoring relationships have been increasingly used as a means for leadership development across a range of contexts. As a result, organizations may enhance the levels of organizational commitment, retention, managerial succession, and productivity by supporting mentoring.

The difference between mentoring and coaching is that a mentor is normally someone who is higher up in the organization while a coach can be someone in or outside the organization. According to Rothwell et al. [19], a mentor serves as a sounding board and offers a less experienced person advice on what to do, when to do it, and how to do it. On the other hand, coaching enables to provide an individual, unfiltered feedback and provides reinforcement of the knowledge and self-awareness gained in the developmental process. Coaching can strengthen the ties of the other inputs to knowledge and self-awareness.

Furthermore, coaching is question based in which the coach does not need to have any specific “sector” experience. Coaching therefore extracts all the various options available to the one being coached through questioning, encouraging him to select the option he feels best fits the issue. In contrast, mentoring is solution based. The mentor is able to guide the conversation in a manner that will enable the mentee to profit from the mentor’s experience in context with his issue [20]. In short, the coach demonstrates and the mentor models and guides.

d. *Assessment*

Assessment or feedback mechanism is also argued as an important intervention in achieving the succession planning goal. Under the assessment method, the 360° feedback has gained momentum and become the most important trend in leadership development [21]. The 360° feedback is an assessment tool used in many executive development initiatives to evaluate leadership skills of participants based on an organization’s core competencies. This is conducted by surveying supervisors, peers, subordinates, and outside colleagues in order to gather feedback to be used to narrow the performance gaps [22]. By using assessment, the future potential of an employee is analyzed in terms of not just what was accomplished in the past, but also what this individual could bring to the table in going forward. The organization is then able to see where the employee’s potential plays into future company strategies, analyze any gaps, and chart a development course for closing those gaps [23]. At the same time, this approach also encourages self-reflection and self-analysis [24]. However, this effort is not a stand-alone event, but there must be follow-up sessions.

1.4 Leader Development and Leadership Development

The topics of leader development and leadership development are very important in the context of development in succession planning. However, leader development and leadership development are not synonymous. Therefore, a distinction should be made between these terms [25].

Leader development as described by McDermott, Kidney, and Flood [26] is one aspect of leadership development. Leader development is based on a traditional, individualistic conception of leadership that occurs through the development of individual leaders. That means it is concerned with the personal development of individual leaders or intrapersonal aspects while leadership development is based on contemporary relational strategies which help individuals understand how to relate to others and coordinate efforts or interpersonal aspects.

Based on the works of McCauley and Velsor [27] and Velsor, McCauley, and Ruderman [28], leader development is enhancing a person's capacity whereas leadership development is the expansion of organizational capacity. As Day [29] suggests, leader development is individual level development whereas leadership development involves interaction between individual leaders and the social cultural environment in which they function. Thus, leader development is an orientation toward developing human capital whereas leadership development is an orientation toward social capital.

In short, leadership development is a multi-level phenomenon, with individual leader development as a foundation and collective leadership development at the apex [30]. Amidst differences, all leadership developments must be linked with leader development.

1.5 Experiential and Educational Leadership Development

In an effort to develop potential leaders, diverse developmental job experiences have been identified as the best way to increase readiness. Barnett and Davies' [31] extensive review of succession planning and leadership development literature to determine the best practices in succession planning led to the conclusion that "new or expanded job responsibilities, stretch assignments and otherwise challenging experiences are the best ways to prepare individuals for future leadership roles" (p. 729). This conclusion is in line with Garman and Tyler's [32] report on succession planning in freestanding US hospitals and Hernez-Broome and Hughes' [33] reviews of notable trends where they highlighted that any developmental job experience is one of the "best practices" used to develop the needed skills and network.

On the other hand, McCall [34] also draws our attention to the importance of formal initiatives or classroom-based programs. He stressed that formal trainings, especially strategically relevant, powerful well-timed programs, are also needed as supplements to the experience-based development. In fact, the greater the variety of leadership development methods, the better it will be for the potential leaders [35]. One of the reasons is that each approach has its strengths and limitations and sparks a different kind of learning and development [36].

Basically, the importance of experience and actual work events as vital elements in expanding the individuals' capacity to learn is very clear. Specifically the merit of an on-the-job experience versus formal training is very clear. Workplace development rather than classroom-centric development as a primary source of leader

growth is proven in many studies [37]. All these studies reinforce the importance of providing meaningful developmental experiences for developing leaders. Furthermore, many researches support the idea that assignments are a major source of development for managerial skills [38].

Theoretical framework by Tesluk and Jacobs [39] outlined a process model in which work experiences produce intermediate outcomes such as work motivation, knowledge, and skill development and work related attitudes which in turn result in secondary results such as performance and career development. McCauley and her colleagues [40] found that challenging work experiences are interconnected with learning and performance results.

In addition, there is also empirical evidence for the relationship between work experiences and leader development. For instance, McCall, Lombardo, and Morrison [40] asked successful executives of six Fortune 500 companies to describe the key developmental events in their career. More than half of the events reported stories about work assignments. Hewitt Associates [41] surveyed 373 private companies and found 89% of the top 20 companies grow their high potential through developmental assignments. The use of developmental assignments is considered very important to develop potential leaders, but these assignments should be long enough to allow sufficient time for learning to occur.

Clearly, providing succession candidates with challenging job assignments is a potent developmental strategy. Review of succession systems has emphasized the importance of developing future high-level managers by placing them in assignments for which they are not fully qualified [42].

Hill [43] emphasizes stretch assignment as the most important learning experiences. Stretch assignment is an experience which stimulates and potentially broadens a person's current capability of the lens of individual goal orientations. The Center for Creative Leadership (CCL) conducted a research to answer the questions of the processes that can make executives learn, grow, and change. They discovered that stretch assignment and developmental relationship are critical to the development of successful executives [44].

Action learning, described by Groves [45], is the project-based learning directed at current, critical business problems, often involving cross-functional teams of high-potential people. Further, Leonard and Lang [3] claim that action learning is being used increasingly as a main method for building leadership skills and improving leadership behavior.

Action learning teams usually set out to solve a business problem. In so doing, members learn from each other and from the project experience, and those lessons help to build individual and organizational competence. Hernez-Broome and Hughes [4] note that action learning solved important real-time organizational problems.

The action learning method gives the kind of real-world practice and accountability that Hicks and Peterson [46] identify as necessary situations for transferable leadership learning to occur. One of the strengths of action learning is that learning focuses on the skills that individual team members consider high priorities for them. Furthermore, individual team members determine what behaviors or leadership skills they want to develop at that time and given the problem at hand [3].

Recent studies also found job rotation as one of the important activities, and useful development takes place when job rotations are part of an integrated leader development program binding into a larger succession plan [47]. One of the paramount goals of job rotation is to create a strong base of talent that can be matched up to a portfolio of available jobs within a company [48]. There is a general consensus in the business literature that rotating potential leaders through a number of leadership experiences provides a variety of challenges that cover the spectrum of the company's activities and gives the new leader the best opportunity for learning [49].

In short, experiential approach toward leadership development is very important and effective. This has been proved by many previous studies. However, the practice is always misdirected where an organization emphasizes more on formal training compared to experiential learning [50]. Thus, the architecture of the pipeline should be weighted much more heavily toward work experiences than formal programs.

1.6 The Importance of Leadership Development Initiatives in Succession Planning

Why do we need succession planning? The main reason is to get the best people to lead the organization [51]. In detail, the goal of succession planning is to ensure that potential leaders are identified, fully capable, and ready to contribute [52]. We cannot expect good leadership to simply exist in the organization. According to Allio [53], "leadership is a potentiality, undeveloped and unrealized until it is developed" (p. 1072). Therefore, leadership development initiatives play an important role in succession planning by helping to provide leadership capabilities to employees.

As reflected in most of the literature, leadership development is an essential factor in developing a successful succession planning. Leadership development is seen as one of the ways to assure that enough leaders are present to meet the future challenges [54]. The first step in effective and integrated succession planning system is to decide how the succession process will link to other management and HR systems including links to leadership development [55].

In general, the use of development initiatives is considered to be a best practice leading organization as a means of ensuring the maintenance of leadership pipeline or bench strength [56]. However, there are criticisms of developmental initiatives as well. For example, research focusing on outcomes of developmental activities is still considered, by some, to be in a relative early development [57], and most programs have an ad-hoc nature [58].

Systematically driven leadership development initiatives usually lead to enhanced leadership capabilities and organizational performance [59]. Accomplishment of the most comprehensive succession planning systems involves providing the process and structure for identifying and understanding the leadership talent in the organization and emphasizes and facilitates ongoing learning and development for the organization's most talented leaders [60].

It is argued that succession planning can be successful only if high-potential employees are given the opportunity to develop their skills, knowledge, and attitudes through an ongoing learning process [61]. It is therefore not surprising that research by advocates indicates a direct link between development opportunities provided by an organization to leaders and the overall strength of the leadership bench. Hence, the critical task, faced by any organization, is to ensure that the potential leaders have access to the right developmental opportunities.

1.7 Conclusion

In ensuring a qualified pool of potential leaders to ascend to leadership positions, developing sufficient leadership development initiatives is very critical. A combination of both experiential and educational leadership development is very important to cultivate the next crop of leaders in effort of succession planning. There must be a proper planning for every individual development, and it must be an ongoing process. The year-end practice of formulating a set calendar of development programs for the following 12 months, where people self-nominate, has to be reconsidered with elements of individual potential leadership character that is further enhanced and upgraded. To upkeep the schedule for a future year training projection may no longer be effective and may not meet people's actual needs at work.

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