

## The Psychological Development and Evaluation of Planning to achieve success in Higher Education Institutions

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### Abstract

The aim of this study is to determine the current status of planning to achieve success in public “Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)” in Malaysia. This study used a descriptive approach. The unit of analysis of this study “consists of Academic and non-academic staff” from four “Malaysian Technical University Network (MTUN)” universities. The research sample consists of 300. A questionnaire is made to collect authentic data from the target population. The result of this study seems to prove the respondents’ desire for an urgent change in the situation of planning to achieve success in public HEIs. The study showed that universities perform relatively well in gender-equitable appointments to leadership positions. Furthermore, respondents to this study valued the importance of planning to achieve success at the university level, with most respondents giving planning to achieve success a high priority. Furthermore, the results of this study show that state laws and policies also play a role in facilitating planning to achieve success practices at the HEI level. This study recommends both public and private HEIs in Malaysia to conduct further research to promote planning to achieve success practices at university level. This study made a “significant contribution to the literature review” by revealing the current status of planning to achieve success implementation in higher education institutions in Malaysia. The findings of this study serve as a guide for higher education institutions in Malaysia to develop their strategies at the university level.

**Keywords-** Psychological, Evaluation, Higher Education

### 1. Introduction

Every organization struggles to identify, develop, and retain talented employees. Many organizations are looking for alternatives to planning to achieve success for the various vacancies. Employee development and planning to achieve success is not new concept in the education sector, but education has been slower to embrace planning to achieve success. It is well known that good planning to achieve success can help academic leaders develop professionally for new leadership roles in academic institutions. However, the concept of planning to achieve success is unfamiliar in HEIs compared to the private sector. Organizations that are successful at planning to achieve success identify potential candidates as part of their recruitment process and begin developing promotion plans once, they are on board. “Planning to achieve success is linked to leadership development in two important ways. First, preparing for a successor is part of leadership development. Second, the process of selecting and promoting a successor is part of a manager's own development (Dubrin, 2010)”. In addition, planning to achieve success allows for continuity in leadership, which is vital for universities to fill vacancies due to retirement.

Higher education institutions need to pay close attention to this issue because of their role in promoting science and technology and developing human capital. Although planning to achieve success is clearly needed, most educational organisations have not implemented a systematic plan to develop future leaders (Bano, 2017). Implementing efficient planning to achieve success programmes in higher education, according to a number of scholars (“Heuer, 2003; Hull, 2005; Mackey, 2008; Rothwell, 2010”), is the best strategy to deal with the retirement issue and the impending leadership crisis. The initiative of planning to achieve success is one that many public higher education institutions put off until it is too late. However, according to Bisbee (2005) and Rothwell (2010), most institutions of higher learning do not place a significant focus on planning to achieve success. Ordinarily, traditional planning to achieve success ignores the leadership gap at the middle and lower management levels. Few organisations, though, implement planning to achieve success for both senior and middle management (Bano, 2017). Many unfavourable appointment decisions in higher education can be linked to a lack of planning to achieve success (Norzaini *et al.*, 2012).

The issue of planning to achieve success is relevant as HEIs struggle to replace the baby boomer generation, which is retiring in large numbers. The aging factor also affects higher educational institutions. In addition, succession at universities is made more difficult by other factors such as budget constraints and declining interest in university careers. A manager's role is important and can play a crucial role in identifying and

developing their successor. Today in modern organizations there are many views about the value of planning to achieve success. Rothwell (2010) mentioned that “senior leaders are fully aware that the continued survival of the organization depends on having the right people in the right place at the right time. The goal of planning to achieve success is a positive transfer of leadership and management power from the existing manager to the successor”.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1 Planning to achieve success**

Fayol made the claim that an organization's strength is decided by its people in 1916 and that underprepared people lead to weak organisations (Estedadi & Hamidi, 2015). Organisations have traditionally come to terms with the idea that people eventually quit their current jobs and leave vacancies (Estedadi & Hamidi, 2015). Midway through the 20th century, the current perspective on planning to achieve success emerged, first concentrating on the CEO's successor (Gilbert, 2017). Oscar Grusky's (1961; 1963) study is credited for early recognizing the lack of research in this area. Plans for CEO succession and other senior leadership positions have been developed and put into place with a significant investment of time and money (Rothwell, 2010). After a while, businesses and professionals understood that planning to achieve success had advantages that extended beyond senior leadership roles (Stewart, 2016). Trow (1961) reached the following conclusion: Companies having planning to achieve success are less likely to suffer the negative impacts of staff turnover (Glenn, 2016). The academic literature's analysis of the historical evolution of planning to achieve success supports the notion that over time and in different societies, planning to achieve success's scope has evolved (Gilbert, 2017; Marvin, 2015).

When top managers and CEOs left an organisation in the past, it was a concern for the organisation to replace them. Higher education executives looked more closely at strategic planning as a tool to manage the organisation as a result of the expense of higher education starting to climb in the “late 1970s and early 1980s”. The significance of planning to achieve success is now better understood by enterprises. To preserve a sustainable competitive edge in today's highly revolutionary environment, new perspectives in selecting at all levels of the organisation, in preparing, developing, and keeping prospective future leaders, are the key. Today, the goal of planning to achieve success is to limit the operational gap that results when essential staff retire.

According to academic and professional literature, as well as throughout history (Gilbert, 2017; Marvin, 2015), planning to achieve success has undergone changes. The term "planning to achieve success" has been defined differently by several authors. According to Rothwell (2010), planning to achieve success is a strategy for staffing with the appropriate experts. By figuring out how these positions would be filled during both scheduled and unforeseen departures, Schmalzried and Fallon (2007) described planning to achieve success as a proactive effort to maintain continuity of leadership in an organisation. Identification of possible successors for important roles is the first stage in planning to achieve success, after which the potential successors' career paths and/or development activities are planned. The systematic process of planning to achieve success for preparing people to take on important organisational positions (Andrew and Chen, 2018). Planning to achieve success is defined as long-term strategic planning to improve stability within the institution, including identifying employees with leadership qualities and competencies and working on their development to prepare future leadership cadres and ensure leadership continuity (Atwood, 2020).

### **2.2 Planning to achieve success in Higher Education Institutions**

Because there aren't any succession plans in place, higher education institutions are currently dealing with leadership issues. In the literature, planning to achieve success has frequently been discussed. The 2007 crisis and other business scandals, however, have caused the 21st century's events to place a fresh emphasis on planning to achieve success (Kariuki & Ochiri, 2017). The data on publications in the academic literature showed that experienced higher education staff members, particularly institutional vice chancellors, were retiring at an increasing rate. Because there aren't enough talent streams, Manning (2017) said that the workforce in higher education is getting older. The focus on planning to achieve success in the educational sector is evident from Manning's (2017) description. In the past, the adoption of business procedures in higher education has lagged behind those in the corporate sector (Clunies, 2007). By employing a succession management strategy to search deeper inside their ranks and identify possible successors, individual higher education institutions can increase the pool of internal talent (Rothwell, 2005). A talent source approach to planning to achieve success is being used by many enterprises, including HEIs. Business has been using

planning to achieve success and management for the past 30 years to close these gaps by cultivating internal talent to fill open leadership and administrative positions.

Since there won't be enough inexperienced leaders in education in the near future due to retirements and attrition, HEIs must now prioritise developing succession management strategies. Higher education and the private sector differ in that the abilities needed for leadership roles in higher education typically focus on academic abilities (Abdullah et al., 2009). All institutions should consider planning to achieve success since it has benefits. Recruitment of potential staff is very difficult without proper planning to achieve success in an institute or organisation. Without planning to achieve success in universities for leadership, it is risky. Selecting a successor for a leadership position is one of the most important decisions that must be made by all HEIs.

Leaders in higher education need to recognise that they need to invest in their people. Many organisations, including HEIs, are adopting a talent source approach to planning to achieve success. According to Rothwell (2010), there are four basic reasons for planning to achieve success. First, planning to achieve success is the method an organisation must use to ensure that "the right people are in the right place at the right time". Second, planning to achieve success mitigates the effects of staff reductions. "Third, planning to achieve success promotes diversity and multiculturalism. Fourth, planning to achieve success provides a framework for establishing career paths, training, development plans and individual career moves. The main objective of this study was to understand the status of planning to achieve success in the university concerned from the perspective of academic and non-academic staff in Malaysian public universities. Therefore, this study sought to assess the overall status of planning to achieve success in four public universities".

### **2.2.1 "Conducting planning to achieve success in HEIs"**

Evaluation of planning to achieve success can determine the actual situation in higher education. Such evaluation studies can help institutions to take appropriate measures to address the emerging succession issue. The study of the research question provides information on how well a higher education institution is implementing planning to achieve success. The lack of adequate planning to achieve success in educational institutions has also been noted by other researchers. In Carlson's (2008) study, planning to achieve success was found to be non-existent in Colorado community colleges and lacking in leadership development programmes to train future leaders. Beeson (1998) pointed out the importance of having qualified individuals at each level who are willing to take on positions of greater responsibility. Mackey's (2008) study found that "there is limited formal planning to achieve success at Maricopa Community University District institutions. Furthermore, academic institutions do not even spend time selecting and preparing their leaders (Wolverton & Ackerman, 2006). Many studies have shown that planning to achieve success in higher education is inadequate (Heuer, 2003; Hull, 2005; Rothwell, 2002)". In the study by Harrison, McKinnon and Terry (2006), assessing progress in planning to achieve success was identified as one of the characteristics of effective planning to achieve success.

### **2.2.3 "The level of importance of systematic planning to achieve success in HEIs"**

Systematic planning to achieve success plays an important role on an individual and organizational level. Long-term planning to achieve success can focus on individual career development such as coaching and training development. Planning to achieve success also strengthens the overall competency of the organization by selecting key competencies and highlighting potential vacancies. It is important to recognize the process of establishing systematic planning to achieve success at both an individual and organizational level to enable long-term culture change.

### **2.2.4 "Urgency of establishing a systematic planning to achieve success in HEIs"**

The urgency of implementing or upgrading systematic planning to achieve success at public HEIs is a key concern with this study's planning to achieve success. To inspire employees and effectively manage change, Kotter (2007) stressed the value of instilling a feeling of urgency (Burke, 2017). The ability to develop a sense of urgency in employees to participate in planning to achieve success or whether a sense of urgency drives employees to participate in planning to achieve success may be topics for future research (Swanson, 2018).

### **2.2.4 "Women's promotions at leadership positions in HEIs"**

Diversity is becoming an increasingly important organisational component in today's society (Betts et al., 2009; Rothwell, 2010). The promotion of female professors and administrators is still frequently discriminated against

(Kilian et al., 2005). Diversity is a consideration in planning to achieve success processes, according to Rothwell (2010). Madsen (2012) addressed the imbalance of women in science. She focused on preparatory programs designed specifically for women. Furthermore, according to Bano (2017, p. 4), public HEIs provide their female staff members with the chance to partake in formal training programmes and leadership activities in academia. But there are still several barriers standing in the way of women getting promoted, including entrenched preconceptions and a lack of female representation in decision-making. In reality, in the last three years, 20% of the female staff at Malaysia's public universities had been chosen for managerial posts (Bano, 2017). The role of women workers in the business world is changing. Companies need to open their doors to female employees in managerial positions.

### **2.2.5 “Impact of Laws on planning to achieve success in HEIs”**

Federal or state policies and laws always have some influence on planning to achieve success, e.g., in the recruitment, promotion, retention or development of university and administrative staff, which must also be taken into account.

## **3. Research Question**

**RQ:** “How do academic and non-academic staff generally evaluate the status of the university’s planning to achieve success efforts?”

Research question one sought to evaluate the general status of succession efforts at the four MTUN universities through five variables.

## **4. Methodology**

“This research design is related to the quantitative method because this research requires the use of mathematical, statistical data. There are some studies conducted by researchers in HEIs Malaysia. Omar and Hassan (2015) conducted an empirical study to examine the issue of competencies within the vice chancellor's leadership pipeline in the Malaysian system. Another study was conducted by (Kamil *et al.*, 2016) to examine the degree of effectiveness of planning to achieve success in Malaysian universities. Kaya *et al.* (2018) conducted a quantitative study on planning to achieve success strategy for non-academic staff at Malaysian HLIs. The study by Ahmed *et al.* (2020) examined the role of national culture in implementing planning to achieve success in Malaysian HLIs”. Most recently, a quantitative study on planning to achieve success practices and staff retention in public higher education institutions in Malaysia was conducted by Bano, Omar & Ismail (2022).

A descriptive analysis was used in this study. The questionnaires were distributed to four public technical universities, namely “Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka (UTeM)”, “Universiti Malaysia Pahang (UMP)”, “Universiti Malaysia Perlis (UniMap)”, and “Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia (UTHM)”. The data collection method is a systematic approach to collecting information from various sources. Both paper and digital versions of the survey were developed for this study. The questionnaire was administered personally at the respective universities and the unavailable respondents were contacted via their official email and Google Form online survey. Ethical and moral codes for data collection were also considered in this study. Before conducting the actual study process, a pilot study was conducted. The survey was pilot tested with a small number of respondents from 2 Malaysian public universities. Respondents were randomly selected to test content validity. The response rate for the pilot study was 50%. The questionnaires for this research were made available to the target audience via paper distribution and online survey for six hundred (600) staff from four technical universities in Malaysia. A total of 9,750 served as the target group. A random sample of 300 selected individuals from four public universities was used for this study. Simple random sampling is a technique that selects a sample completely at random.

## **5. Findings**

Descriptive research includes some subtypes of research methods such as surveys, content analysis and qualitative studies. These subtypes do not differ in their data availability, but in their data collection procedures. Thus, a descriptive study may include both quantitative and qualitative analysis. A survey, for example, is usually designed to examine the views of a large population group on a particular problem (Atmowardoyo, 2018). “Descriptive analysis techniques were used to analyse the data collected in order to summarise and describe the data. This analysis is useful to make some general observations about the data collection. Descriptive analysis refers to the transformation of raw data into a form that provides information describing a set of factors in a situation that makes it easy to understand and interpret (Sekran, 2000). Descriptive statistics

summarise the data with the aim of describing what occurred in the sample (Allua & Thompson, 2009). The resulting descriptive statistics were expressed as summaries that reported the total sample size and the percentage (%) for each group”.

“Frequency Figure 1: Respondents Profile”

Characteristics	Category	Frequency	%
Gender	Female	125	41.7
	Male	175	58.3
Age	Under 30	62	20.7
	30 to 40	113	37.7
	41 to 50	96	32.0
	51 to 60	28	9.3
	61 and above	1	0.33
Number of years working in university	5 years and below	106	35.3
	6 to 10 Years	78	26.0
	11 to 16 Years	60	20.0
	16 to 20 Years	55	18.3
	20 Y ears and above	1	0.33
Current Position	Academic	209	69.6
	Non-academic	91	30.3

## 5.1 Respondents Profile

The demographic of this study in Table 1 showed the distribution of respondents in terms of gender, age, number of years working in university and current position.

### 5.1.1 Gender

The questionnaire asked respondents to indicate their gender. The results of the gender demographic factor were quite close between the genders. In Table 1, most of the respondents are male, comprises of 175 (58.3%). The proportion of females is 125 (41.7%). From the results in Table 1, it can be seen that men were the most represented in this study.

### 5.1.2 Age

Five groups were classified of the respondents in Table 1. The largest group is between 30-40 years old with 113 (37.7%). 96 (32.0%) are between 41 to 50 years. Respondents in the age group under 30 made up 62 (20.7%). Respondents in the age group 51 to 60 years with 28 (9.3%). A small fraction of the sample 1 (0.3%) is in the group of 61 years and above.

### 5.1.3 Number of working Years

Results from Table 1 showed the number of years working at a university. There are a large number of respondents who have worked at a university for less than 5 years, that is 106 (35.3%). The second large number of respondents worked 6-10 years at a university, which represents 78 (26%). We can see from Table 1 that, 60 (20%) participants who had worked at a university for 11-15 years, 55 (18.3%) participants who had worked at a university for 16-20 years and 1 (0.3%) participant who had worked at a university for more than 21 years.

### 5.1.4 Current Position

The above data in Table 1 covered both academic and non-academic staff from four MTUN universities. Both academic and non-academic staff contribute significantly to the success of higher education institutions in Malaysia. The academic staff cannot handle the tasks of higher education management alone. Therefore, administrative tasks (e.g., academic support for students, engagement) are undertaken by non-academic staff. Academic staff can focus on teaching and research. The results in Table 1 showed that most of the 209 respondents (69.6%) were academic staff, including lecturers, professors, deans, deputy dean, and heads of

departments. The non-academic respondents (91 or 30.3%) were faculty administrative staff and registrar staff. In this study, the participation of academic staff was the highest.

## 5.2 The Evaluation of planning to achieve success practices in HEIs Malaysia

Five variables prescribed by the researcher were examined at four MTUN universities Malaysia. These includes currently conducting planning to achieve success, the level of importance of a systematic planning to achieve success, the urgency for planning to achieve success, consideration of women in leadership promotion and the level of impact of state policies and laws on succession practices.

### 5.2.1 Currently conducting planning to achieve success at the university.

The descriptive statistics from Table 2 imply that the performance of the university in planning to achieve success was generally rated as inadequately by the respondents 115 (38.3%). However, 98 (32.7%) of the respondents indicated that the university was performing adequately in planning to achieve success. The other 53 (17.7%) respondents indicated that it is doing well and only 34 (11.3%) respondents indicated that it is conducting very well.

“Frequency Figure 2: Currently conducting planning to achieve success”

Responses	f	%
Inadequately	115	38.3
Adequately	98	32.7
Well	53	17.7
Very well	34	11.3
Total	300	100.0

### 5.2.2 Importance of a systematic planning to achieve success

With regard to the importance of systematic planning to achieve success in Table 3, 115 (38.3%) of the respondents gave a high importance to planning to achieve success practices, while 101 (33.7%) of those surveyed rated it as very high. The importance of a systematic planning to achieve success at university level was rated 57 (19%) Moderate. While 27 (9%) respondents showed low importance in this survey. The result is reasonable, since participants showed their interest in importance of systematic planning to achieve success.

“Frequency Figure 3: Importance of a systematic planning to achieve success”

Responses	f	%
Low	27	9.0
Moderate	57	19.0
High	115	38.3
Very High	101	33.7
Total	300	100.0

### 5.2.3 The urgency of planning to achieve success

Descriptive statistics from Table 4 for this study also demonstrated the urgency of planning to achieve success. The majority, 132 (44%) respondents, indicated that university-level planning to achieve success was urgent. Another 51 (17%) said it was urgent. On the other hand, 97 (32.3%) of respondents indicated that it was necessary but not urgent, while only 20 (6.7%) of respondents indicated that it was not necessary at all. This result shows the respondents' desire for an urgent change in planning to achieve success at universities.

“Frequency Figure 4: The urgency of planning to achieve success”

Responses	f	%
Not needed at all	20	6.7
Needed, but not urgently	97	32.3
Urgently needed	132	44.0
Very urgently needed	51	17.0
Total	300	100.0

### 5.2.3 Women's promotion for leadership positions

This survey confirms the importance of promoting women in leadership positions. The majority of the respondents, 111 (37.0%), described the promotion of women in leadership positions as adequate, while only 40 (13.3%) described it as inadequately. A significant proportion of 32.7% or 98 respondents said promotion was good and 51 (17%) respondents said it was very good. This result indicates that the consideration of diversity at the university in question is generally adequate. The results showed that the consideration of women in the promotion of senior staff was viewed positively. It is evident that Malaysian public universities perform relatively better in gender equality in leadership positions.

“Frequency Figure 5: Women's promotion for leadership positions”

Responses	f	%
Inadequately	40	13.3
Adequately	111	37.0
Well	98	32.7
very well	51	17.0
Total	300	100.0

### 5.2.4 Impact of state Laws and policies on planning to achieve success at university level

The descriptive statistics of this study in Table 5 revealed that the influence of government policies and laws on succession practises was rated high with 128 (42.7%) respondents while 124 (41.3%) respondents indicated moderate influence of government policies and laws at the university level. However, a significant proportion of 27 (9%) respondents indicated very high influence. Only 21 (7%) respondents indicated a low influence. This result shows that government policies and legislation play an important role in facilitating succession practises at the HEI level.

“Frequency Figure 6: Impact of state Laws and policies on planning to achieve success at university level”

Responses	f	%
Low	21	7.0
Moderate	124	41.3
High	128	42.7
Very High	27	9.0
Total	300	100.0

## 6. Discussions

Planning to achieve success is regularly practised in companies, but less attention is paid to it in educational institutions. The main problem in higher education institutions is that planning to achieve success is a big task and cannot be tackled (Adewale, Abolaji, & Kolade, 2011). “Therefore, failure of planning to achieve success is the inability of an institution to implement a formal succession plan (Kumar & Kota, 2017)”.

The research question of this study aimed to assess the overall status of planning to achieve success efforts in public universities in Malaysia. This section revealed that planning to achieve success is an important issue that deserves much attention, especially in higher education institutions. Using descriptive statistics, this study identified five key findings on the state of planning to achieve success in higher education institutions in Malaysia. Several findings emerge from this study. The performance of HEIs in planning to achieve success is generally rated as inadequate. Statistics on the level of importance of systematic planning to achieve success were rated the highest. The majority of respondents were in favour of urgent planning to achieve success at the HEI level. The results showed that the consideration of women in leadership promotions was rated positively. Descriptive statistics showed that the influence of government policies and laws on succession practises was high, while a large proportion of respondents indicated a moderate influence of government laws at the HEIs level. This study shows that planning to achieve success needs to be improved through the urgent introduction of systematic planning to achieve success.

The findings of this study are consistent with the findings of other studies. Heuer (2003) found that there is no formal planning to achieve success in universities. Mackey (2008) found limited planning to achieve success

in Maricopa community colleges. Mateso's study in 2010 found that consideration of women in leadership positions was very good and adequate in 83% of respondents. Neefe (2009) found that formal succession plans have been used by companies for more than 30 years. However, planning to achieve success is often not in place in the education sector.

## 7. Recommendations

1. This study used a quantitative method. Future studies can employ a mixed methodology. Future researchers are encouraged to use this study to follow up the results and conduct a qualitative study. Instead of a random selection technique, the purposeful sampling method can improve the diversity of future studies such as purposeful sampling for top positions.
2. It is recommended that the Ministry of Higher Education in Malaysia give high priority to university level. This could be achieved by raising awareness of the importance of planning to achieve success at university level and considering the promotion of women to leadership positions.
3. It is recommended that both "public and private higher education institutions" conduct more relevant research. In addition, both "public and private higher education institutions" need to adopt an institutional culture that can foster effective planning to achieve success practices at the university level.

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