

Influence of Parenting Style on the Vision and Continuity of Family Business Successors: A Case Study of Selected Family Businesses in Lagos State

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Abstract

Original Research Article

This study surveys the significance of parenting styles in shaping both the long-term vision and succession intentions of family businesses within the Lagos metropolis, Nigeria. Using a mixed-methods design, the research integrates quantitative responses from 120 structured questionnaires with qualitative data derived from semi-structured interviews involving founders and identified successors. The analysis reveals that an authoritative parenting approach characterized by supportive interactions and open communication is strongly associated with the presence of clear succession strategies ($r = 0.658$, $p < 0.01$). This suggests that nurturing relationships between parents and their children significantly enhances the readiness and commitment of successors. In contrast, authoritarian parenting, characterized by rigidity and limited dialogue, shows a negative association with successor involvement, suggesting that such approaches may hinder effective leadership transitions. Insights from the qualitative interviews further support these findings, revealing that when parents adopt an encouraging and empowering style, Successors frequently demonstrate a tendency to take ownership of the family business and remain motivated to sustain it. Overall, the findings highlight how parenting practices directly influence both the strategic continuity and generational sustainability of family enterprises in Lagos State.

Keywords: Authoritative Parenting, Family Business, Generational Sustainability, Parenting Styles, Succession Intentions.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The succession of family-owned enterprises across generations is inherently complex, particularly as the process unfolds over multiple generational transitions. Initially, generational switches may only involve the direct family—parents and children—but as the process continues, it extends beyond this vital group, involving more family relatives, and increases the complexity of the transition. Family dynamics, such as the presence of separated children or stepchildren, further complicate this process according to Ledoux (2024). This challenge is particularly evident in Lagos, Nigeria, a commercial hub where many successful family-owned enterprises struggle with succession planning and business continuity due to poor intergenerational transitions.

A family business refers to an enterprise where family members exert considerable control over decision-making

processes and organizational governance. This influence often stems from ownership and family members' active involvement in management. The distinctive governance structure of family businesses is shaped by the connection of family crescendos, organizational structure, and business practices (Davies, 1983). Situated at the heart of Nigeria's commercial activity, Lagos hosts a substantial concentration of the nation's leading family businesses. Industries ranging from manufacturing to retail and real estate are dominated by enterprises passed down through generations. As posited by Lagos Business School (2020), these family businesses are essential to the local and national economy, contributing significantly to wealth creation, job generation, and social stability. Though many struggle with sustainability beyond the first or second generation due to feeble succession strategies and unprepared heirs.



While family businesses often prioritize financial goals, they also seek non-financial aims such as preserving family unity and ensuring successful intra-family succession (Swab et al., 2020; Chrisman et al., 2012). In Nigeria, over 70% of small-scale enterprises are family-owned businesses, many of which croak before their originators as most of them fail to survive a generational evolution (Ejiofor, Okocha and Otika, 2019). This emphasis on family ethics highlights the importance of operational parenting, which plays a vital role in shaping children's attitudes, beliefs, and behaviour—key factors in determining their readiness to lead the family business (Olubimpe and Bello, 2024; Liu et al., 2022). In Lagos state, where traditional family values and modern economic realities interconnect, the role of parenting in business continuity becomes even more critical. Parents in family businesses often influence their children's career paths and managerial styles, which in turn affect the stability and durability of these businesses.

Parenting styles, whether authoritarian, democratic, or permissive, significantly impact how heirs perceive their roles in the family business, their obligation to the family's vision, and their ability to drive the business forward (Liu et al., 2022). The authoritarian style, characterized by strict rules and high demands with little explanation, may impart discipline but could also create fear and reduce heirs' self-reliance in decision-making (Darling, 2018; Cherry, 2015). This is common among traditional Lagos business dynasts, where patriarchal leadership often enforces strict control over business operations, sometimes leading to succession conflicts when younger generations seek innovation. In contrast, the democratic style fosters a warm yet firm environment that encourages independence and responsibility, making children more self-reliant, confident, and better equipped to manage business transitions (Hoskins, 2014; Abesha, 2020). This approach is increasingly observed in modern Lagos families, especially among well-educated business owners who emphasize mentorship and structured leadership training for their successors. On the other hand, the permissive style, where parents set few rules and exert minimal control, may result in a lack of business discipline and preparedness among successors, potentially threatening the continuity of the enterprise (Kremers et al., 2017). Some failing family businesses in Lagos have suffered due to overly lenient parenting, where heirs lack the managerial discipline to sustain the company's legacy.

Given the significance of parenting in shaping future business leaders, the dynamics between family values, parenting style, and business succession are critical for understanding the long-term sustainability and success of family businesses (Corona, 2021). Lagos serves as a relevant case study due to its status as Nigeria's economic nerve center, where Family-owned businesses play a significant part in the improvement and resilience of both commerce and industry. Many Lagos-based enterprises struggle with generational continuity, and understanding the impact of parenting styles on leadership transition processes could offer valuable insights into improving long-term business survival in the region. This study

examined how different parenting styles shape the strategic vision of family business and the continuity of successors, to uncover insights that contribute to the longevity and success of family-owned businesses in Lagos, Nigeria.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Succession in family businesses presents a critical challenge, particularly in ensuring the seamless transfer of leadership across generations. The process requires careful adjustments in relationships and roles between founders and successors, a transition often complicated by conflicting expectations, resistance to change, and inadequate succession planning (Cabrera-Suarez et al., 2001; Corbretta & Montemerlo, 1999; Handler, 1994; Royer et al., 2008; Amind Maria & Egnar Nave, 2021). Despite these challenges, family businesses remain a key driver of economic stability and wealth creation worldwide. In Lagos, Nigeria, where family-owned enterprises dominate various industries—including trade, real estate, manufacturing, and services—the ability to successfully transition leadership is vital for long-term business sustainability and economic growth. However, many of these businesses struggle with intergenerational continuity, often leading to business stagnation, internal conflicts, or outright failure.

One of the core elements that can shape the effectiveness of succession in family enterprises is the level of motivation among successors and the preparedness of the next generation to take over leadership roles. While some successors are driven by a sense of legacy, others may lack the necessary commitment or business acumen, raising concerns about the future of family businesses in Lagos' highly competitive market. Parental influence, particularly parenting styles, plays a pivotal role in the development of leadership preparedness, decision-making ability, and vision of future successors. An authoritarian approach may instill discipline but could suppress independent thinking, while a permissive approach may lead to a lack of business discipline. In contrast, a democratic parenting style may foster a balance between discipline and independence, fostering a sense of self-assurance among successors and competence required to sustain the business.

Despite the importance of this issue, the link between parenting approaches and successor preparedness remains underexplored in the context of Lagos's entrepreneurial landscape. As family enterprises anchor much of the city's economic activity, their ability to successfully transfer leadership across generations warrants close investigation. Understanding how parenting influences successor motivation, leadership transition, and business sustainability is essential. This research seeks to address this gap by exploring how different parenting styles influence succession preparedness in family businesses in shaping successor readiness, assessing the factors that drive or hinder generational business continuity, and providing insights that could enhance the sustained long-

term survival and stability of family firms in Lagos, Nigeria.”

1.2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research was structured around the following questions;

I. What is the influence of parenting styles on the formulation and execution of succession strategy plans in family businesses?

II. What role do parenting styles play in shaping the successor’s willingness and determination to ensure the continuity of the family business?

III. What is the impact of parenting styles on the successor’s competence to handle challenges and build on the legacy left by the founder of the family business?

1.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To examine the influence of different parenting styles on the formulation and execution of succession strategy plans in family businesses.
2. To assess the role of parenting styles in shaping the successor’s willingness and determination to ensure the continuity of the family business.
3. To evaluate the impact of parenting styles on the successor’s competence to manage business challenges and sustain the legacy of the founder.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.10 Family Business

Family businesses denote a crucial element of the global economy, playing a pivotal role in economic development, wealth creation, and employment generation (Ledoux, 2024; Vicente, Sousa & Monteiro, 2022). These enterprises are founded, owned, and managed by members of a family who are naturally connected by blood, marriage, or adoption (Odesola & Aderemi, 2022). While they may be managed solely by family members, many also incorporate non-family employees who contribute to operational efficiency and strategic growth (Swab, Sherlock, Markin & Dibrell, 2020). The fundamental target of family businesses is to withstand operations across multiple generations, emphasizing financial stability, intellectual capital, and social legacy (Liu, Eddleston & Kellermanns, 2022).

A family business can be broadly defined as an enterprise in which proprietorship and management are expressively influenced by family members, often with the intent of safeguarding continuity across generations (Zellweger & Astrachan, 2020). These businesses differ widely in size, ranging from small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to multinational corporations (Corona, 2021). The governance structure within family businesses is unique, often combining professional management with familial decision-making dynamics, which can create both

benefits and trials (Ogunyemi, 2021). They also contribute considerably to national economies, accounting for a significant share of GDP in many countries (Olubimpe & Bello, 2024). Their embedded knowledge of industry trends, customer preferences, and strategic business models enables them to remain competitive and resilient in fluctuating economic conditions (Darling, 2018).

Abesha (2020) also noted that due to their long-term vision, these businesses prioritize sustainable growth over short-term profitability, promoting innovation and adaptability in evolving markets. Furthermore, family businesses tend to establish higher levels of commitment, trust, and shared vision, which contribute to their enduring success as posited by Alahmad (2021).

Despite their strengths, family businesses face distinct challenges that may hinder their sustainability. Issues such as succession planning, governance conflicts, and balancing professionalization with familial relationships often create obstacles to long-term success (Akinboye, 2016). The intergenerational transfer of leadership requires careful planning to mitigate risks associated with generational transitions, as leadership struggles can disrupt business operations (Ogunyemi, 2021). In addition, family businesses must navigate market competition, supervisory environments, and the complexities of incorporating external expertise while maintaining their core values and identity (Vicente, Sousa & Monteiro, 2022).

Operationally, a family business is an enterprise where the family maintains dominant authority over the ownership structure and business operations to sustain operations across multiple generations. These businesses combine professional governance with familial decision-making and are characterized by a commitment to long-term financial stability, intellectual capital, and social legacy.

2.11 Parenting:

Parenting is an essential aspect of human life that expressly influences children's development and well-being (Sathiya, Manori, & Vijaya, 2019; Olubimpe & Bello, 2024). The patterns of child-rearing are shaped by the interactions between parents and their responses to their children's achievements (Samadzadeh, Amini, Javidi, & Maddhahi, 2012; Olubimpe & Bello, 2024). Effective parenting fosters cognitive, expressive, and social improvement, equipping children with the required skills to navigate life's challenges (Ogunyemi, 2021). Researchers emphasize that parenting styles, including authoritative, permissive, and authoritarian approaches, have a profound impact on children's behaviour, self-confidence, and academic success (Akinboye, 2016).

In the context of family businesses, the ability of a family to successfully manage internal conflicts and navigate family dynamics is crucial for the enterprise's success (Olson et al., 2003). Many founders and their predecessors agree that the process of nurturing, through

parenting practices, which are central to the social and moral development of children and resilience. For founders, parenting involves not only imparting valuable life lessons but also avoiding the repetition of past hardships and mistakes, thereby guiding the next generation to lead fulfilling and successful lives (Van Wyk, 2013). The integration of family values within the business context helps to instill a sense of responsibility and long-term vision in younger generations (Liu, Eddleston & Kellermanns, 2022).

Beyond the economic and social inferences, parenting is also deeply influenced by cultural, psychological, and environmental factors (Corona, 2021). Cultural norms and traditions shape parenting practices, affecting discipline styles, communication patterns, and parental expectations (Darling, 2018). In some cultures, collectivist parenting emphasizes family cohesion and shared responsibilities, whereas individualistic societies may encourage independence and self-reliance (Vicente, Sousa & Monteiro, 2022). Furthermore, socio-economic status plays a significant role in parenting approaches, as financial stability allows access to better educational and healthcare resources, ultimately impacting children's development outcomes (Odesola & Aderemi, 2022).

2.12 Successor Continuity and Parenting Styles

What makes a family business succeed and grow is deeply influenced by the handover of leadership from one generation to the next. This transfer of success relies not only on the effective transition of management practices and knowledge but also on how well the incoming leader's values the leadership style align with core principles of the business (Zellweger & Astrachan, 2020). Effective succession planning ensures that the next generation is prepared to uphold the legacy and strategic direction of the business while adapting to evolving market conditions (Liu, Eddleston & Kellermanns, 2022). A seamless leadership succession is shaped by the successor's mindset, behaviours, and goals. These factors are often deeply influenced by the parenting style the successor experienced. When raised in an environment that inspires open communication, mutual respect, and a strong work ethic, successors are more likely to step into leadership roles with self-reliance and precision (Alahmad, 2021). Conversely, those who were raised in more authoritarian or neglectful settings may face problems related to identity, independence, and self-esteem. These problems can hinder their ability to take on leadership responsibilities effectively within the family business, possibly risking the continuity and success of the organization (Ogunyemi, 2021).

Consequently, the nature of parenting to which a successor is subjected plays a crucial role in shaping their readiness and capacity to lead, impelling not only their personal development but also the future trajectory of the family business. Research suggests that authoritative parenting, which balances discipline with support, produces successors who are resilient, adaptable, and equipped with strong decision-making skills (Akinboye,

2016). In contrast, overly permissive parenting may result in successors who struggle with responsibility and accountability, while authoritarian parenting may instill discipline but limit creativity and independent thought (Corona, 2021).

A family business's continuity and growth are greatly affected by the leadership transition that occurs from one familial generation to another. This is in the business's life cycle. The ability of the successor's values and leadership style to mesh with the fundamental business principles will determine how well this transition process goes, in addition to the managerial and knowledge transfer (Odesola & Aderemi, 2022). Parental influence extends beyond direct business training to shaping emotional intelligence, resilience, and problem-solving skills, which are crucial for navigating the complexities of leadership (Swab, Sherlock, Markin & Dibrell, 2020).

2.13 Parenting Styles in Successor Training for Family Businesses

Parenting exerts a crucial impact on the development of an individual's character and conduct, factors that are especially critical when preparing future leaders for roles within a family business. Generally, parenting styles fall into four categories: authoritative, authoritarian, permissive, and neglectful. While parents may instinctively lean toward a particular style, it is important to carefully consider which approach best supports the development of leadership qualities. Once the most suitable style is chosen, it should be applied with consistency and purpose, fostering the ability and attitudes necessary for the next generation to succeed in managing and leading the family enterprise.

One of the most distinctive features of family businesses is the passing of leadership from one generation to the next—a transition that can greatly influence the long-term viability of the enterprise (Shanine et al., 2022). Emerging research highlights that a predominantly authoritative parenting style, when balanced with aspects of permissiveness, is particularly effective in grooming capable successors and ensuring business continuity across generations. These insights reflect a broader scholarly focus on the significance of early family relationships, with studies showing that the nature of parent-child interactions can play a pivotal role in the outcomes of succession planning within family firms (Goldberg, 1996; Daspit et al.). Choosing an heir in a family business is rarely a straightforward task, as it involves evaluating various elements such as leadership skills, business acumen, and overall readiness to manage complex operations. According to Mestry (2023), the decision should prioritize the individual's leadership capabilities over traditional expectations tied to family roles. Parenting philosophies play a vital role in shaping the mindset, values, and cultural framework that future leaders inherit, directly influencing how they will steward the family business. Researchers like Corbetta and Salvato (2004) and De Vries (1993) emphasize that founders have a fundamental duty to establish core

principles that guide the business's growth and support a successful leadership transition. Over time, these values become ingrained in the family's culture, contributing to a shared identity between the family and the enterprise. Involving the next generation in business activities is critical to its ongoing success, and their preparation should be supported by both family mentorship and external education (Handler, 1992; Ng et al., 2021; Cabrera, Suarez, et al., 2001).

2.14 Succession and Succession Process in Family Business

Succession is a pivotal challenge for family businesses, often determining whether they can maintain continuity and success across generations. The outcome of this process relies heavily on how leadership is transferred, and many businesses fail to progress beyond the second or third generation due to insufficient planning and ineffective implementation (Handler, 1994). Beyond simply passing on authority, succession involves upholding the core values and cultural foundations that shape the identity of the business. In a broader sense, succession can be viewed as an ongoing leadership transition process—comparable to ecological plant succession—where continuity and transformation occur simultaneously to support long-term growth and resilience (Shyama, 2017).

Succession planning is the process of identifying and nurturing potential individuals to assume key managerial roles, ensuring they possess the skills and experience required for a smooth transition. Successors are typically categorized as either long-term candidates, who are being gradually prepared for future leadership, or short-term candidates, who are ready to take on responsibilities immediately. However, family businesses often face the pitfall of valuing loyalty and conformity over capability, sometimes resulting in the appointment of successors who maintain tradition but lack the strategic vision needed for innovation and growth (Ward, 2016; Jaskiewicz, Combs & Rau, 2015). This highlights the importance of a thoughtful and forward-looking succession strategy—one that balances technical proficiency with strong leadership potential.

Succession decisions are influenced not only by individual competence but also by deeply rooted family values, cultural norms, and personal convictions. In cultures shaped by philosophies such as Confucianism, for example, succession choices may prioritize loyalty to tradition and familial hierarchy over entrepreneurial skill or strategic capability (Yan & Sorenson, 2006). As a result, effective succession planning must carefully navigate the tension between honouring cultural and familial heritage and promoting visionary leadership that can drive long-term business growth and sustainability.

As family businesses evolve, succession becomes more intricate, particularly when multiple family branches, stepchildren, or estranged relatives are involved (Ledoux, 2024). What may begin as a simple handover between parent and child often develops into a complex process

requiring careful management of both business operations and family relationships. To ensure long-term success, succession planning must thoughtfully integrate strategic business goals with the varied interests of family members, striking a balance between continuity and adaptability in a changing market landscape.

2.15 Family Business in Nigeria

Family businesses are vital contributors to global economies, playing a significant role in job creation, innovation, and economic development. According to Timmons and Spinelli (2009), such enterprises represent a substantial share of national economies, comprising 90% of businesses in Brazil, 96% in the United States, 70% in Belgium, and 80% in Finland. In Nigeria, family-owned businesses account for roughly 30% of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), underscoring their importance to national economic growth (Anderson, 2023). Beyond their economic contributions, these businesses promote entrepreneurship, intergenerational wealth transfer, and community development.

In Nigeria, family enterprises serve as key engines of economic advancement, employment generation, and poverty reduction (Olubiyi et al., 2022). Prominent examples include FCMB Group, currently chaired by Ladi Balogun, who has built upon the foundation laid by his father, and Mojec International, established by Mojisola Abeni in 1985 and now led by her daughter, Chantelle Abdul. These cases illustrate how effective generational leadership transitions can ensure business sustainability and expansion. Moreover, countless family-run ventures in the informal sector—such as food vendors, timber merchants, and traditional medicine practitioners—highlight the deep-rooted presence and enduring impact of family businesses across Nigeria's economic landscape.

2.16 Pros and Cons of Children Following Parents' Footsteps in Business

An important characteristic of Nigerian family businesses is their deep dedication to preserving the legacy and ensuring leadership is passed down through generations. Gadsden and Dixon-Román (2017) observe that, despite having different interests, siblings often feel a deep obligation to sustain the family enterprise. This shared sense of responsibility supports business continuity and helps the business adapt to economic pressures. Additionally, it is common for Nigerian family businesses to involve younger family members early in operations, offering them practical experience that builds resilience and prepares them to lead, even when substantial inherited wealth is lacking.

The long-term success of these enterprises is also shaped by parenting approaches and cultural expectations. According to Gadsden and Dixon-Román (2017), a parent's influence in shaping a child's mindset toward the business plays a crucial role in determining future involvement. When children are actively engaged and

mentored from a young age, they develop the entrepreneurial and management skills needed to sustain and grow the business. This highlights that beyond financial capital, factors such as mentorship, values, and family traditions are primary to the continuity and growth of Nigerian family businesses. As a result, these enterprises continue to be foundational to the country's socio-economic development, cultivating the next generation of business leaders.

Children raised within family businesses often gain a distinct advantage by developing a deep familiarity with the industry from an early age. This early exposure not only enhances their understanding of the business's operations but also grants access to valuable networks typically unavailable to outsiders. Moreover, when children choose to follow their parents' professional paths, they benefit from direct mentorship, receiving tailored guidance that supports their career development (Felice, 2020). However, this trajectory is not without its complexities. David (2017) highlights concerns that children entering the same professions as their parents may face limitations in career freedom, potentially being confined to roles shaped by familial expectations rather than their own interests or talents.

While continuing the family legacy can be a source of pride, it may also involve emotional and professional strain. Felice (2020) observes that the responsibility of maintaining a family business can feel burdensome, especially when tied to the expectation of preserving a family name or reputation. Such pressure can lead to internal conflict or discomfort, particularly when children are urged to act in ways that conflict with their personal values or aspirations.

Nonetheless, for many, working within the family business offers a valuable learning environment and a unique perspective that can support its growth and longevity. Ultimately, stepping into a parent's role in the business presents both significant opportunities and potential challenges, largely influenced by family dynamics and individual goals.

2.2 Theoretical Review

This research is anchored in three major theoretical frameworks: Family Systems Theory, Social Learning Theory, and Choice Theory. Family Systems Theory, formulated by Murray Bowen in 1966, presents the family as an emotionally interconnected system, where individual behaviors are shaped more by relationships within the family unit than by personal characteristics alone. Key concepts include differentiation of self, the ability to remain emotionally connected while maintaining personal identity; triangulation, the act of drawing in a third person to relieve stress in a conflicted relationship; and emotional cut-off, a strategy individuals use to manage unresolved familial tensions by distancing themselves emotionally. The theory also outlines the multigenerational transmission process, explaining how emotional patterns and behaviors are passed down

through generations, and the family projection process, where parents unconsciously impose their anxieties or unresolved issues onto their children. Bowen also introduced the idea of societal emotional processes, acknowledging how broader societal forces impact the emotional dynamics within families.

Concerning this research, the multigenerational transmission process is particularly relevant, as it provides insight into how leadership qualities, business values, and cultural traditions are transferred across generations within family enterprises. Parenting styles, such as authoritative, authoritarian, or permissive—play an essential role in shaping a successor's ability to balance personal independence with loyalty to the family vision. A successor raised in an environment that encourages both emotional support and autonomy is more likely to contribute to the family business while introducing innovation. Conversely, triangulation may surface when generational conflicts draw in external figures, potentially complicating leadership transitions and threatening long-term continuity.

An emotional cut-off, as described in Bowen's theory, can result in successors distancing themselves from the family business due to unresolved familial tensions. This study utilizes Bowen's Family Systems Theory to examine the intricate emotional and relational dynamics that shape succession across generations within family businesses, which can either support or hinder business continuity.

In contrast, according to Albert Bandura (1977), Social Learning Theory asserts that individuals acquire behaviours not only through direct experience but also by observing others and replicating their actions, particularly when those Behaviour is shaped and maintained. One of the central principles of the theory is observational learning, emphasizing that individuals can adopt new behaviours by witnessing the actions of role models; reinforcement and punishment, which shape actions through consequences; vicarious learning, whereby people modify their behaviour based on the observed experiences of others; reciprocal determinism, the idea that behaviour, personal factors, and environmental influences continuously interact; and self-efficacy refers to the conviction in one's capacity to achieve desired outcomes or complete specific tasks.

In the context of this research, Social Learning Theory explains how parental behaviour significantly shapes the development of successors' leadership capabilities, attitudes, and commitment to the family enterprise. Observational learning is particularly relevant, as children often absorb work ethics, values, and decision-making styles by observing their parents in business settings. Vicarious learning enables them to internalize entrepreneurial behaviours—both positive and negative—based on the outcomes they witness in their parents' leadership. Moreover, reinforcement, such as praise or rewards for participating in the business, enhances motivation and strengthens their connection to the family legacy. Self-efficacy plays a critical role in determining

whether successors feel capable of assuming leadership responsibilities; parenting styles that encourage independence and confidence, such as the authoritative approach, tend to cultivate a deep sense of competence. Through reciprocal determinism, parenting behaviours and business culture interact to shape successors' perceptions of their role, reinforcing their sense of responsibility and shaping the long-term sustainability of the family business.

This study incorporates William Glasser's Choice Theory (1965), which emphasizes that human behavior is primarily driven by internal motivation to satisfy five essential psychological needs: survival, love and belonging, power, freedom, and fun. According to the theory, individuals are not controlled by external conditions; rather, they make decisions based on what they believe will best meet these needs. A fundamental principle of the theory is internal control, which maintains that people are responsible for their own actions and cannot be forced to act against their will. Glasser also introduces the idea of a "quality world"—a mental representation of people, experiences, and values that hold personal significance and guide decision-making. In addition, the concept of total behavior—encompassing thoughts, actions, emotions, and physical responses—highlights the interconnectedness of all aspects of behavior, each influenced by personal choice.

Applied to this study, Choice Theory offers a useful framework for exploring how parenting styles influence a successor's commitment and engagement in the family business. When parents build strong emotional ties and nurture a sense of love and belonging, successors are more likely to view the family business as part of their quality of life, aligning it with their individual goals, identity, and personal fulfillment. Authoritative parenting, which balances emotional support with autonomy, nurtures successors' sense of freedom and responsibility, enhancing their intrinsic motivation to take on leadership roles. In contrast, authoritarian or neglectful parenting may provoke resistance or disengagement, as external control undermines the successor's sense of agency.

Furthermore, the need for power and achievement helps explain why some successors are driven to grow the family enterprise, viewing business leadership as a pathway to personal fulfillment and influence. Total behaviour also underscores how upbringing influences not just actions, but also the emotions and thought patterns of successors concerning the family business. By applying Glasser's Choice Theory, this study deepens the understanding of how internal motivation, shaped by family relationships and parenting approaches, affects a successor's decision-making and long-term commitment to sustaining and advancing the family legacy.

2.3 Empirical Review

In a recent study, Saeed (2024) examined how parental involvement and the perception of legitimacy contribute to grooming successors for leadership roles in family-run firms. Utilizing a multilevel framework, the

research explored how familial relationships and societal recognition shape succession intentions across various cultural and economic environments. The study was structured around three research questions and corresponding hypotheses. This research adopted a mixed-methods framework, drawing on both numerical data collected through structured questionnaires and insights gained from semi-structured interviews. A total of 350 successors from family businesses completed structured questionnaires, while 15 in-depth interviews offered nuanced insights into their personal experiences and motivations. The study utilized SEM techniques to analyze the numerical data and thematic analysis to extract key patterns from the qualitative interviews. Findings indicated that parental support, encompassing mentorship, financial assistance, and emotional backing, significantly enhanced successors' intention to take over the business. Societal legitimacy also proved essential by reinforcing the importance of continuity in family enterprises. Despite these insights, the study revealed that unresolved family tensions and the absence of formalized succession strategies hinder effective leadership transitions.

In a related investigation, Charles (2024) explored succession planning strategies among family-owned businesses in Southeast Nigeria, emphasizing the role of strategic foresight in ensuring business sustainability. The research focused on how proactive approaches. Long-term continuity is shaped by factors including well-defined succession planning, consistent leadership training, and the adoption of governance mechanisms within the family structure. Anchored by three central research questions and corresponding hypotheses, the study adopted a mixed-methods design, including surveys with 300 business owners and successors and 12 in-depth interviews with founders and key stakeholders. Regression analysis revealed that businesses with clearly articulated succession plans and leadership development programs were more likely to experience successful generational transitions. Thematic analysis further highlighted the positive effects of early successor involvement and robust governance structures. However, challenges such as founder resistance, familial disputes, and insufficient mentorship emerged as significant barriers to effective succession.

Sentuh (2024) investigated daughters' perceptions of their fathers' influence in shaping their entrepreneurial identity within family businesses. The study identified four key psychological and social processes, submission, self-empowerment, enhancement, and idealization, that affect daughters' decisions to become successors. Fathers were perceived in various roles: as commanders, patriarchs, mentors, or mythologized figures, each impacting daughters' leadership development differently. Drawing on 25 narrative interviews with daughters from multigenerational businesses, the study found that daughters who viewed their fathers as mentors developed strong entrepreneurial confidence, while those who saw their fathers as patriarchs struggled with autonomy. Idealization often led to emotional attachment to the business, which sometimes hindered innovation. In

contrast, daughters who underwent self-empowerment and enhancement processes navigated leadership transitions more effectively and contributed to business growth. The study concluded that father-daughter relationships grounded in mentorship and progressive autonomy yield more successful succession outcomes.

Li, Wang, and Cao (2023) conducted a systematic literature review of 99 SSCI-indexed articles to examine how the motivations and cognitive processes of both incumbents and successors influence succession behaviours in family businesses. Drawing on Social Identity Theory (SIT) and Role Identity Theory (RIT) as foundational frameworks, the authors developed a framework to explore identity-related challenges arising from the intersection of family and business roles during succession. Their analysis underscored the significance of psychological factors—particularly the negotiation of overlapping identities—in shaping effective leadership transitions across generations.

Shanine et al. (2023) conducted a study to examine how parenting styles influence leadership succession in family-owned businesses. The research focused on understanding the psychological impact of various parental approaches on successors and how these, in turn affect organizational outcomes. Guided by specific hypotheses, the research adopted a mixed-methods design -method design, integrating quantitative surveys with qualitative interviews. Data were collected from 119 family businesses, involving both successors and their subordinates. This study aims to examine how different parenting approaches affect leadership transition. Additionally, 24 in-depth interviews with family business leaders provided richer context on succession experiences. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was employed to analyze the survey data and assess the relationships between key variables, whereas patterns in the qualitative narratives were explored through thematic interpretation. Analysis indicated that authoritative parenting significantly enhanced successors' psychological well-being, promoting positive organizational behaviors such as employee citizenship and reducing counterproductive actions. Conversely, authoritarian parenting correlated with heightened stress among successors and adverse employee conduct. This research underscores the foundational impact of early-life parenting in influencing effective leadership and fostering healthy organizational dynamics in family businesses.

Wasim and Almeida (2022) looked into the informal and spontaneous nature of succession planning in family enterprises. Their study focused on how parent-owners transfer business knowledge to their children in the absence of formal succession frameworks. Conducted among six multi-generational family businesses in North East Scotland, semi-structured interviews were conducted with participants to gather qualitative data from both parent-owners and their successors. The findings revealed that succession often unfolds as an unplanned yet pivotal event, with parent-owners playing a central role in mentoring and guiding their children. Despite the lack of formalized processes, parent-owners encouraged career

autonomy among successors, emphasizing the importance of parental involvement and flexibility in ensuring continuity.

Cho et al. (2022) explored critical factors that influence family firm succession from the viewpoint of incumbent CEOs. The Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP) was employed to prioritize elements that facilitate effective leadership transition. Four key categories were identified: the successor's managerial competence, the incumbent-successor relationship, the formulation of a succession strategy, and its alignment with organizational goals and the successor's belief in their leadership abilities. Data were collected via structured questionnaires completed by incumbent CEOs and analyzed using AHP to assess the comparative significance of each factor. Findings indicated that the relationship between incumbent and successor was the most influential factor, followed by the successor's management ability, self-efficacy, and succession planning. The study concluded that fostering strong relational ties and mutual trust is essential for successful generational handovers in family businesses.

A study by Olubiyi, Lawal, and Adeoye (2022) focused on how structured succession planning impacts the sustainability and generational continuity of family-owned businesses in Lagos State, Nigeria. Incorporating succession into strategic planning enhances business continuity. Guided by three research questions and hypotheses, a mixed-methods design was utilized. The target population included 503 small and medium-sized family businesses. Data were collected using structured questionnaires and supported by a pilot study to ensure instrument validity, with a Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient ranging from 0.775 to 0.850. The study achieved a 93.2% survey response rate. Quantitative data were examined through descriptive and inferential statistics, while qualitative insights were drawn from in-depth interviews. Results showed that integrating succession planning into strategic frameworks significantly improves business continuity. Contributing factors included mentorship programs, leadership training, and formalized succession procedures. Nonetheless, the study identified key challenges such as Reluctance to embrace new approaches, diminished confidence in leadership and successors, and insufficient training mechanisms.

Kodama, Murakami, and Tanaka (2021) examined the influence of managerial expectations regarding family succession on business performance in their study titled "No Successor, No Success? The Impact of a Little Son on Business Performance." The study utilized the gender of the first-born child of the senior executive as an instrumental variable to infer succession expectations. Employing a mixed-method design, the researchers gathered data from 350 family business successors through structured questionnaires, complemented by 15 in-depth interviews. SEM was used to analyze quantitative data, while thematic analysis interpreted qualitative findings. Results demonstrated that the expectation of a future family successor positively impacts business profitability. Managers anticipating

succession were more likely to implement performance-enhancing practices, including enhancements in operational performance, strategic supplier selection, and technological investment. However, family conflict and a lack of structured succession processes remained significant barriers to effective leadership transition.

Ayodeji (2019) conducted a multiple case study to identify effective succession planning strategies in family-owned businesses in Lagos, Nigeria. The study involved semi-structured interviews with leaders from four businesses that had successfully navigated generational transitions. Findings emphasized the importance of early identification of successors, leadership development, and robust mentorship relationships. The study further underscored the need for integrating succession planning into the broader strategic objectives of family businesses to ensure continuity and long-term success. Collectively, these empirical studies affirm the central role of deliberate succession planning, supportive parenting, and structured mentorship in sustaining family business legacies across generations.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

This research adopted a mixed-methods approach to examine the effects of different parenting styles on succession and the commitment of successors in Family enterprises. This approach combined both qualitative insights and quantitative data analysis to provide a well-rounded perspective on the research problem, drawing on the strengths of both data types. In the quantitative phase, data were collected through a structured survey distributed to 120 participants from various family businesses in Lagos State, Nigeria. These participants were selected based on their active roles within the business and their knowledge of the enterprise’s succession strategies. The questionnaire

aimed to capture perceptions of parenting styles and their influence on successor commitment and succession planning. During the qualitative component of the study, semi-structured interviews were carried out with a strategically selected group of participants that included founders, identified successors, and other key family members involved in business operations. These interviews offered deeper insights into the interpersonal and emotional factors influencing succession outcomes. The qualitative component of the study enabled a comprehensive investigation of individual narratives and perceptions concerning how various parenting styles influence succession dynamics. The use of semi-structured interviews allowed for both consistency and flexibility in data collection, ensuring that central themes were explored while allowing participants to share detailed insights from their personal experiences. In parallel, the survey data were analyzed using descriptive statistical tools, including frequency distributions and percentage calculations, to present a summary of respondents’ demographic information and their responses to key study variables. To examine the connections between parenting styles and succession-related outcomes, inferential statistical techniques, including Pearson’s Correlation and linear regression techniques, were employed.

The qualitative data were analyzed through thematic analysis. Interview transcripts were processed verbatim and systematically coded to uncover recurring patterns and central themes. This methodology offered a meaningful understanding of how various parenting styles influence successors’ mindset, dedication, and readiness to assume leadership responsibilities within family-owned enterprises. The study’s hypotheses were evaluated using a 0.05 significance threshold.

4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 4.1 Gender Distribution of the Respondents

GENDER	FREQUENCY	PERCENT (%)
MALE	71	59.2
FEMALE	49	40.8
TOTAL	120	100.0

Source: Research survey 2024

Table 4.1 above reveals the gender distribution of the respondents. 71(59.2%) of the respondents are male while 49(40.8%) of the respondents are female. It implies that this study captured more male respondents than female.

Table 4.2 Age Distribution of the Respondents

AGE	FREQUENCY	PERCENT (%)
20-29	10	8.3
30-39	21	17.5
40-49	39	32.5
ABOVE 50	50	41.7
TOTAL	120	100.0

Source: Research survey 2024

The age distribution of the respondents is shown in the above table. 10(8.3%) of the respondents are between 20-29 years, 21(17.5%) of the respondents are between the age of 30-39 years, 39(32.5%) of the respondents are between the age of 40-49 years, 50(41.7%) of the respondents are of age 50 and above. It implies that this study captured more old and vibrant people than younger people.



Table 4.3 Marital Status of the Respondents

MARITAL	FREQUENCY	PERCENT (%)
SINGLE	20	16.7
MARRIED	100	83.3
TOTAL	120	100.0

Source: Research survey 2024

The marital status of the respondents is shown in Table 4.3 above. 20(16.7%) of the respondents are single, and 100 (83.3%) of the respondents are married. This study captures more married respondents than single.

Table 4.4 Educational Qualification of the Respondents

EDUCATION	FREQUENCY	PERCENT (%)
SSCE	4	3.3
OND	18	15
HND	34	28.3
BSC	59	49.2
OTHERS	5	4.2
TOTAL	120	100.0

Source: Research survey 2024

The educational qualification of the respondents is shown in the above table. 4(3.3%) of the respondents are SSCE holders, 18(15%) of the respondents are OND holders, 34(28.3%) of the respondents are HND holders, 59(49.2%) of the respondents are BSC holders 5(4.2%) of the respondents have other qualifications not mentioned in the study.

4.2 Correlation Analysis

Table 4.5: Parenting styles' influence on the development and implementation of succession plans in the family business

Correlations			
PS	Pearson Correlation (authoritative parenting)	1	.817**
	(Authoritarian Parenting)		.650
	(Permissive Parenting)		.045
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	120	120
FB	Pearson Correlation	.817**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	120	120
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

PS: Parenting style

FB: Family business

Table 4.5 shows the degree of relationship between parenting style influence and the succession plan of family business. The table suggests a positive and strong relationship between parenting style influence and succession plans in a family business. The P-value (0.000) revealed that parenting style positively and significantly influences succession plans in the family business during the period of study. The authoritative parenting style shows a strong positive correlation ($r =$

0.817, $p < 0.01$), indicating that this approach significantly enhances succession planning. In contrast, the authoritarian style exhibits a moderate negative correlation ($r = -0.650$, $p < 0.01$), suggesting it may hinder effective succession planning. The permissive parenting style displays a very weak positive correlation ($r = 0.045$, $p > 0.05$), which is not statistically significant, implying minimal impact on succession planning.

Table 4.6: Parenting styles' role in shaping the successor's motivation and commitment to ensuring the continuity of the family business

Correlations			
		PS	FBC
PS	Pearson Correlation (authoritative parenting)	1	.658**
	(Authoritarian Parenting)		.540
	(Permissive Parenting)		.032
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	120	120
FBC	Pearson Correlation	.658**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	120	120
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

PS: Parenting style

FBC: Family business continuity

Table 4.6 shows the degree of relationship between parenting style and family business continuity. The table suggests a positive and strong relationship between parenting style influence family business continuity. The P-value (0.000) revealed that parenting style positively and significantly influences family business continuity during the period of study. The authoritative parenting style demonstrates a substantial positive correlation ($r =$

0.658, $p < 0.01$), indicating its significant role in fostering successor commitment. The authoritarian style shows a moderate negative correlation ($r = -0.540$, $p < 0.01$), suggesting it may diminish successor commitment. The permissive style has a negligible positive correlation ($r = 0.032$, $p > 0.05$), which is not statistically significant, indicating little to no effect on successor commitment.

Table 4.7: Parenting style's impact on the successor's ability to handle challenges and build on the legacy left by the founder of the family business

Correlations			
PS	Pearson Correlation	1	.785**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	120	120
ATHC	Pearson Correlation	.785**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	120	120
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			
PS: Parenting style		ATHC: Ability to handle challenges	

Table 4.7 shows the parenting style and the successor's ability to handle the challenges that come with running the family business. The table suggests a positive and strong relationship between parenting style and the successor's ability to handle challenges. The P-value (0.000) revealed that parenting style has a positive and significant influence on the successor's ability to handle challenges during the period of study.

4.8 Discussion of Results

The study revealed that parenting style significantly affects the longevity of family businesses and the continuity of successors in Lagos State. This research adopts a mixed-methods approach to examine the influence of parenting styles on the development of a clear business vision and the ongoing involvement of

successors. By combining quantitative and qualitative methods, namely, correlation analysis and semi-structured interviews, the study offers a well-rounded understanding of the issue. The quantitative analysis specifically used correlation techniques to explore the link between various parenting styles and the clarity of the family business vision.

Data were collected from family businesses operational for at least ten years with established succession plans. As it concerns the qualitative component, structured interviews were conducted with selected family business members to gain in-depth insights into how parenting styles influence successor continuity. Participants were asked open-ended questions about their experiences and perceptions related to nurturing leadership capabilities and implementing effective succession strategies in family enterprises. The result is also supported by Osita, Kekeocha, and Ojimba (2020) whose study revealed that mentorship has a statistically significant effect on SMEs' continuity in South-East Nigeria.

The findings presented in Tables 4.5 and 4.6 underscore the significant influence of parenting styles on succession planning and successor motivation in family-owned businesses. The correlation analysis indicated a strong positive association between authoritative parenting and the presence of well-structured succession plans. Interviewees consistently emphasized that authoritative parents tend to promote open communication and provide meaningful guidance, often involving their children in business-related discussions and succession planning efforts. This inclusive approach was seen as instrumental in shaping a clear vision for the future of the business. One participant remarked, *"When parents are authoritative and supportive, successors are more likely to feel motivated to carry on the family business. They may see the business as a source of pride and responsibility."*

Another respondent reinforced this view, stating, *"Authoritative parenting encourages open communication and provides guidance. Authoritative parents may involve their children in discussions about the business, helping them understand the importance of succession planning."*

In contrast, the findings indicated an inverse relationship between authoritarian parenting and the measured construct and successor engagement. Participants observed that authoritarian parents tend to impose decisions unilaterally, often excluding their children from critical business and succession conversations. This top-down approach can result in misunderstandings and resistance. As one interviewee explained, *"Authoritarian parenting is stricter and less communicative. Parents who use this style may impose their decisions without involving their children, which can lead to a lack of understanding or acceptance of the succession plan."*

Overall, the study revealed that supportive and authoritative parenting styles positively influence

successor motivation and commitment. Respondents noted that such parenting instills a sense of pride, ownership, and responsibility in successors, which in turn fosters a stronger desire to sustain and grow the family business.

These findings align with existing literature on the subject. Saeed (2024) found that parental support, including mentorship and emotional encouragement, significantly enhances successors' engagement and commitment. This supports the current study's conclusion that authoritative parenting fosters a well-defined family business vision and effective succession planning. Similarly, Charles (2024) emphasized the importance of strategic planning and early engagement of successors, noting that businesses with clear succession plans and leadership training programs are more likely to achieve long-term continuity. This aligns with the study's finding that authoritative parenting positively influences the development and implementation of succession plans. Furthermore, Shanine et al. (2023) reported that authoritative parenting positively influences successors' psychological well-being, leading to enhanced organizational behaviors. This finding is consistent with the current study's results, suggesting that authoritative parenting encourages successors' motivation and loyalty to the family business. On the contrary, the negative impact of authoritarian parenting on successor engagement observed in this study is corroborated by Shanine et al. (2023), who associated authoritarian parenting with increased successor stress and adverse employee behaviors. This suggests that a strict, less communicative parenting approach may hinder effective leadership transitions in family businesses.

The study's findings, as seen in Table 4.7, revealed that parenting styles were found to influence successors' abilities to navigate business challenges. A respondent stated, "Parents who teach resilience and problem-solving can help successors develop the skills needed to face challenges." Both Saeed (2024) and Charles (2024) identified family conflicts and a lack of structured succession planning as major barriers to effective leadership transitions. These challenges resonate with the current study's findings, underscoring the need for deliberate and strategic approaches to succession planning in family-owned businesses.

5.0 CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES

5.1 Conclusion

Family businesses are distinct in that they merge familial relationships with business operations. A crucial factor influencing their longevity is the parenting style adopted by the founders. This study examined how various parenting styles affect the vision and continuity of family businesses in Lagos State, focusing on their impact on

succession planning, successor motivation, problem-solving ability, and family dynamics.

In conclusion, parenting styles significantly shape the success of family businesses. They affect how successors are prepared, motivated, and supported in leadership roles. Among these, authoritative parenting—marked by support and open communication—proves especially effective in promoting successful generational transitions and sustaining business continuity in Lagos State.

5.1 Recommendations

1. Family business leaders should embrace an authoritative parenting style, characterized by high expectations balanced with support and open communication. This approach fosters successors' psychological well-being and commitment to the business, as it encourages autonomy while providing necessary guidance.
2. Parents are encouraged to involve their children in meaningful conversations about the business from an early age. This practice helps successors understand the company's vision and the importance of succession planning, thereby enhancing their readiness and commitment to leadership roles.
3. Parents should understand that implementing clear and formalized succession plans is crucial. Such plans should outline the process of leadership transition, including timelines, roles, and expectations, to ensure a smooth and transparent handover.
4. Establishing mentorship programs and offering leadership development opportunities can prepare successors effectively. By learning directly from current leaders and through structured training, successors can acquire the skills and confidence needed to manage the family business successfully.

5.3 Suggestions for Further Study

1. Future studies can be conducted to observe how different parenting styles impact family businesses in the long run.
2. Explore how parenting styles in diverse family structures (e.g., blended families) affect business continuity.

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