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Cross-Project Knowledge Transfer Succession Planning for Family-Owned Businesses

Kristina L. McCarthy
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Walden University

College of Management and Technology

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Kristina L. McCarthy

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Walden University
2018

Abstract

Cross-Project Knowledge Transfer Succession Planning for Family-Owned Businesses

by

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MBA, Iona College, 2004

BA, Iona College, 2003

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Management

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May 2018

Abstract

When the owners of family-owned businesses leave the workplace, they can transfer ownership to the next generation; however, their knowledge of the business goes with them. There is a gap in the literature regarding effective ways to transfer family business resources and knowledge to subsequent generations. The problem was some small and family-owned businesses do not have detailed plans in place based on the needs of owners and the successor generation, with cross-project knowledge as part of the succession plan. The purpose of this nonexperimental study was to examine the relationships between the subscales of cross-project tacit knowledge transfer and to examine the generational differences in cross-project tacit knowledge transfer among small and family-owned businesses. The theoretical underpinning of the study was Argyris and Schön's organizational learning theory. Data from family business owners were collected through an online survey administered by SurveyMonkey, using purposeful sampling. Data ($n = 233$) were analyzed using a Spearman correlation matrix and Kruskal-Wallis tests. The findings indicated there were significant associations for seven of the 10 correlations between the subscales of cross-project knowledge transfer with each relationship being positive. In addition, the findings suggested that there were significant differences in cross-project knowledge transfer by age cohort. These findings may assist informed family-owned business owners with the complexities of succession planning, which may lead to the business being successful over more generations. This may allow the business to sustain its contribution to the local economy and help the community to prosper, leading to positive social change.

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Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to my unborn children as this will help to pave the way for their future. I dedicate this thesis to my mother who steadfastly stood beside me every step of the way. It was her unfailing love and determination that saw me through. I dedicate this thesis to my Pa for his support and hand holding along the way. If I ever lost my sense of vocabulary, he was there to prove the right word. I dedicate this thesis to Henry and Lappy for their unending hours of sitting with me. Finally, I dedicate this thesis to my Dad who watches over me each day from Heaven.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

When the owners of family-owned businesses leave the workplace, they can sell the business, transfer ownership to the next generation of relatives, or close the business altogether (Nordqvist, Wennberg, Bau, & Hellerstedt, 2013). Many owners choose to transfer ownership to the next generation. However, transferring ownership has a high rate of failure, which may result in closing the business (Nordqvist et al., 2013). Williams and Preisser (2003) indicated 70% of businesses fail after transferring ownership to the second generation. The next generation's lack of preparation is cited as the reason transfer of ownership to the next generation fails 25% of the time (Williams & Preisser, 2003). The failure rate is significant because 40.3% of family-owned business owners expect to retire within the next 10 years (Nordqvist et al., 2013). This failure is often because of a lack of tacit knowledge transfer during succession planning (Albizu, Olazaran, Lavía, & Otero, 2011; Helin & Jabri, 2015). As such, the purpose of the present quantitative nonexperimental study was to examine the relationships between the subscales of cross-project tacit knowledge transfer and to examine generational differences in cross-project tacit knowledge transfer among small and family-owned businesses. This chapter includes information on the problem and purpose of the study. I also detail the background of this topic and the research questions. I include the theoretical foundation and nature of the study along with the assumptions and limitations of the study. Also, I explain the significance of the study and why I chose to examine this particular topic.

Background of the Study

When the owners of family-owned businesses wish to retire, many choose to transfer ownership to the next generation, a decision that has a high rate of failure, resulting in the members of the incoming generation closing the business (Nordqvist et al., 2013). Daspit, Holt, Chrisman, and Long (2016) hypothesized these businesses close during the transfer of ownership because family-owned businesses do not have tacit knowledge transfer (knowledge acquired by people in the process of learning by doing; Polanyi, 1966) as part of their succession planning. This is especially true in cases where ownership is transferred from baby boomers to millennials (Helin & Jabri, 2015). There are an estimated four million baby boomers retiring from the workforce each year (Frazier, 2017). If the business owner is in the Gen X population and transfers the business to an individual in the Gen Y population, there is a higher likelihood the business will fail (Helin & Jabri, 2015).

As older individuals age and leave the workforce, the knowledge they obtain from decades of work inevitably goes with them, posing a significant risk to their organizations (Burtless, 2013). When these workers leave, they take knowledge with them about how the company functions on an internal level, the way the daily business runs, and the skills they learned on the job (Keith, Markley, & Perini Abbott, 2007). Another significant risk to the subsequent organizations is the knowledge retiring employees have about how to complete daily tasks in the office such as which employee to go to if an individual needs supplies or which outside vendor to contact (Keith et al., 2007). Frazier (2017) reported the significant risks to these organizations may not only be a temporary loss of

knowledge. One of the main knowledge bases lost as a result of retirement is the individual relationships and networks these employees have cultivated over time (Frazier, 2017). Frazier (2017) also noted how importance of an employee's firsthand recollection, especially when it pertains to the development of a product or specialized service the organization provides. These significant risks to organizations have the possibility to inhibit the owners' ability to earn a profit.

It is crucial for younger generations to preserve this tacit knowledge because it may allow the advancement and redevelopment of knowledge for future generations (Boyd, Royer, Pei, & Zhang, 2015). Martin (2005) argued the ideal generation to accept this transfer of knowledge is the current millennial generation because they have been raised and trained in the newest electronic technology, which they have mastered. Using technology programs, millennials can record the tacit knowledge the older employees impart to them by storing the data in an electronic format rather than by word of mouth (Martin, 2005). This documentation of tacit knowledge is one of the first steps in the process to transform tacit knowledge into explicit knowledge. However, electronic technology is only one part of running a business, and people skills, which individuals of the boomer generation have fine-tuned over time, must be transferred to millennials (Gilbert, 2011). The procedures and advanced technology millennials consider second nature forms part of the basic knowledge capture mechanism to preserve this knowledge (Martin, 2005).

Baby boomers and millennials must develop a process and human technology to transfer knowledge to younger generations (Lindenberger & Stoltz-Loike, 2005). Before

baby boomers leave their senior positions in small and family-owned businesses, they can train and mentor the millennials (Lindenberger & Stoltz-Loike, 2005). Mentoring gives the older employee a chance to orient the new employee with the contacts the older employee has cultivated throughout their years with the company. Mentoring can also allow member of the younger generation, who are dedicated to storing and cataloging this knowledge, to obtain much of this knowledge in electronic data formats. Because of the nature of the job and the volume of information, this is a broad task (Carter, Kidwell, & Camp, 2016; Meier & Schier, 2016).

Research regarding knowledge management in family businesses is rarely found in existing studies (Giovannoni, Maraghini, & Riccaboni, 2011). Specifically, there is a gap in the literature regarding effective ways to transfer family business resources and knowledge to subsequent generations (Trevinyo-Rodríguez & Tàpies, 2010). Previous researchers have examined succession planning in conjunction with age in nursing contexts (Titzer, Shirey, & Hauck, 2014) and succession planning in individuals of varying ethnicities without taking age into account (Lee, Lee, & Bartkus, 2015). However, succession planning and generational differences remain an underreported topic in the pre-existing literature on tacit knowledge transfer in small and family-owned businesses.

Problem Statement

The general problem I encountered was some small and family-owned businesses do not have complete succession planning in place, which results in a higher risk of business closure during the new owners' tenure (Carter et al., 2016; Helin & Jabri, 2015).

According to Verma, Chatterjee, and Sen (2017), 70% of businesses fail after transferring ownership to the second generation. The specific problem was some small and family-owned businesses do not have complete detailed knowledge transfer plans in place based on owners, successor generations, and cross-project knowledge as part of their succession planning. This is particularly problematic because the U.S. average gross state product grows only 2.2% per year (U.S. Small Business Administration [SBA], 2015). Additionally, between 20–30% of businesses fail each year in New York State, contributing to slowed gross state product and further slowing the economy compared to the other states in the United States (SBA, 2015).

The present study examined the relationships between the subscales of cross-project tacit knowledge transfer and to examine the generational differences in cross-project tacit knowledge transfer among small and family-owned businesses. Research regarding small and medium-sized enterprises and the knowledge practices of owners is lacking, especially regarding cross-project knowledge (Verma et al., 2017). Cross-project knowledge consists of five subscales, including human formal methods, human informal methods, technology formal methods, technology informal methods, and knowledge assimilation (Landaeta, 2008).

The present study has the potential for positive social change because the findings may inform family-owned business owners how they can better manage the complexities of succession planning by using cross-project knowledge, which will lead to the business owners contributing to the prosperity of their local community. By providing family-owned businesses the tools to succeed in succession planning, the business may exist for

many more generations, allowing the business owners to contribute to the local economy, help the community prosper, and create positive social change.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the present quantitative nonexperimental study was to examine the relationships between the subscales of cross-project tacit knowledge transfer and to examine generational differences in cross-project tacit knowledge transfer among small and family-owned businesses. Generational membership includes generation X and generation Y. Binder (2010) indicated generation X business owners and employees will not sacrifice relationships, their own time, or major advancement in a business position to participate in any activity in which they do not see a direct personal gain. Business owners and employees who are considered Generation Y find networking and mentoring important (Williams & Page, 2011). Generation Y is a generational group who are results-driven in business; however, they have little concern about the steps in the process to reach the result (Williams & Page, 2011). In the present study, the unique focus on generational cohort as a variable is because it is a crucial variable in the study of succession planning around the world. I used a self-report survey from Landaeta's (2008) work on knowledge transfer across projects (see Appendix A). Using cross-project subscales of human formal methods, human informal methods, technology formal methods, technology informal methods, and knowledge assimilation, I offer a unique viewpoint for the owners of small, family-run businesses and their successors to gain awareness about how tacit knowledge transfer can occur during succession planning.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

RQ1: What is the relationship between the subscales of cross-project tacit knowledge transfer among owners in small, family businesses during succession planning?

H_{01} : There is not a significant relationship between the subscales of cross-project tacit knowledge transfer among owners in small, family businesses during succession planning.

H_{a1} : There is a significant relationship between the subscales of cross-project knowledge tacit transfer among owners in small, family businesses during succession planning.

RQ2: What are the differences in cross-project tacit knowledge transfer between generational cohorts (Gen X vs. Gen Y) among owners in small, family businesses during succession planning?

H_{02} : There are not significant differences in cross-project tacit knowledge transfer between generational cohorts (Gen X vs. Gen Y) among owners in small, family businesses during succession planning.

H_{a2} : There are significant differences in cross-project tacit knowledge transfer between generational cohorts (Gen X vs. Gen Y) among owners in small, family businesses during succession planning.

Theoretical Foundation

The theoretical underpinning of the study was Argyris and Schön's (1978) organizational learning theory. The foundational tenets of organizational learning theory

include the idea that organizational learning is a process of inquiry that occurs when members of an organization operate in unfamiliar contexts (Argyris & Schön, 1978). When members of an organization operate in unfamiliar contexts, there is often a discrepancy between what is expected and what occurs. In the context of the present study, this includes small, family-owned businesses operating during the tacit knowledge transfer (unfamiliar context) and risking failure instead of continued success (actual outcome vs. expected outcome). To overcome this discrepancy between expected outcomes and actual outcomes, the members of an organization must undertake an inquiry to allow learning to occur between the members of the transition team (Argyris & Schön, 1978).

There are three stages that occur during organizational learning: acquiring relevant data, interpretation of relevant data, and adaptation of relevant data (Muehlfeld, Rao Sahib, & Van Witteloostuijn, 2012). When relevant data are acquired, members of the organization take the initiative for strategic decision, goal variables, and learning indicators (Muehlfeld et al., 2012). Members of the organization then interpret the data, wherein individuals engage in comparing results to update the learning of the organization. Then, the organization moves into the third stage, or acting on the data, to do what is best for the organization (Muehlfeld et al., 2012). This is key in the transfer of tacit knowledge during succession planning. The previous owners pass the data, or tacit knowledge, to the incoming owners, who then compare the new data to what they already know, adding the tacit knowledge to their collective memory bank. After the incoming

owners retrieve this tacit knowledge, they act on the necessary information to keep the business from shutting down.

Nature of the Study

I used a quantitative nonexperimental research design to examine the relationships between the subscales of cross-project tacit knowledge transfer and to examine the generational differences in cross-project tacit knowledge transfer among small and family-owned businesses. Quantitative studies are appropriate when examining statistical relationships or differences between numerically measurable variables (Howell, 2013). Quantitative data comprise mathematical values in a numerical form and have meaning as a measurement (Moballeghi & Moghaddam, 2008). I used the host website SurveyMonkey to administer the survey instrument. I targeted participants who held management or ownership positions in small, family businesses at the time I administered the survey. SurveyMonkey has a separate screening item that allows researchers to pinpoint a location in the United States. SurveyMonkey screened the participants with the following question: *participant owns or manages a small-to-medium business* or *participant does not own or manage a small-to-medium business*. Only survey participants who selected *participant owns or manages a small-to-medium business* were able to continue the survey. Because of efficiency and affordability, online surveys are advantageous compared to alternative surveying techniques (Buskirk & Andres, 2013). In addition, researchers frequently use online surveys in academic research because they offer improved reliability compared to paper-based survey tools (Tuten, 2010).

I entered data from the survey into SPSS version 24.0 for Windows. I used descriptive statistics to record the trends in nominal and continuous level variables. I used frequencies and percentages to examine the nominal level variables. I used means and standard deviations to describe the continuous level variables. Using Cronbach's alpha test of reliability, I assessed the internal consistency of the scales. Applying George and Mallery's (2016) incremental cutoff, I interpreted the alpha coefficients: $\alpha \geq .9$ (excellent), $\alpha \geq .8$ (good), $\alpha \geq .7$ (acceptable), $\alpha \geq .6$ (questionable), $\alpha \geq .5$ (poor), $\alpha < .5$ (unacceptable).

To address the research questions, I used Spearman correlations to examine the two-way associations between the subscales of cross-project tacit knowledge transfer. I used a series of Kruskal-Wallis tests to statistically examine for differences in the subscales of cross-project tacit knowledge transfer between generational cohorts. Prior to analysis, I tested the assumptions of normality and homogeneity of variance. I evaluated statistical significance for all inferential analyses and assumption tests at the generally accepted alpha level, $\alpha = .05$.

Definitions

Business success: In the present study, a business with profitability and longevity of 5 or more years in business (SBA, 2016).

Cross-project knowledge transfer: The actions taken to shift available knowledge to another individual (Landaeta, 2008).

Entrepreneur: An individual who can create a business opportunity that produces a profit because they had the ability to recognize opportunities that others in that field

failed to capture (Gunter, 2012). Entrepreneurs are business people who are innovative and find solutions within the market (Sandberg, Hurmerinta, & Zettinig, 2013).

Entrepreneurs include a category of business professionals who are self-employed and own their own company (Schoon & Duckworth, 2012).

Family business: A business where most of the business' capital is controlled and managed by family members from the same family unit. This allows the family to retain significant, if not all, control of the business (Abdellatif, Amann, & Jaussaud, 2010).

Family business succession: The process of replacing the business founder or the current leader (Cater & Justis, 2009).

Generational cohort: A vague grouping of people based on common experiences. These common experiences include historical events and social changes in society that affect the values, attitudes, beliefs, and inclinations of individuals (Sessa, Kabacoff, Deal, & Brown, 2007).

Generation X: The generation of individuals who were born between 1961 and 1981 (Glass, 2007).

Generation Y: The generation of individuals who were born between 1982 and 2002. They are also known in literature as millennials (Glass, 2007).

Knowledge assimilation: A process of interpretation of external knowledge.

Small business: A privately held firm with 500 or fewer employees (SBA, 2016). A business owner engaged in portfolio management or providing investment advice would need \$35.5 million dollars of revenue (SBA, 2016).

Small Business Administration: An independent agency of the United States federal government. This agency assists, provides counsel, protects through legislation, and provides resources to small businesses throughout the country (SBA, 2016).

Tacit knowledge: Knowledge acquired by people in the process of learning by doing (Polanyi, 1966).

Technology based formal methods: Knowledge management techniques in which individuals use scientific advances that can make the receiver and the source of knowledge accountable for the execution and outputs of the technology.

Technology based informal methods: Knowledge management techniques in which individuals use scientific advances that cannot make the receiver and the source of knowledge accountable the execution and outputs of the technology.

Human based formal methods: Knowledge management techniques in which individuals do not use scientific advances and can make the receiver and the source of knowledge accountable for its execution and outputs.

Human based informal methods: Knowledge management techniques in which individuals do not use scientific advances and cannot make the receiver and the source of knowledge accountable for its execution and outputs.

Assumptions

I based the first assumption on the accuracy of the data. I assumed the data collected in its original form were accurately captured and saved by the survey hosting company (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). Another assumption was that the participants answered the survey questions honestly. Participant honesty was an assumption because

some participants may not have been forthcoming in their survey responses for a variety of reasons, such as fear of reprisal or an inability to examine themselves critically. Lastly, I assumed all participants who received the link to the survey were the intended individuals and none of the participants pretended to be someone they were not.

Scope and Delimitations

The scope of the study involved succession planning for family-owned businesses using a cross-project knowledge transfer framework. In the study, I used purposive sampling and examined participants who owned or managed a small-to-medium sized business. I determined from a prior power analysis that I would need a minimum of 212 participants included in the data collection process (Faul, Erdfelder, Buchner, & Lang, 2014). I used Argyris and Schön's (1978) organizational learning theory in conjunction with the study framework. I conducted the study through SurveyMonkey, using an online survey.

Delimitations are the restrictions the researcher self-imposes to limit the scope of the research (Rovai, Baker, & Ponton, 2014). Because of the time limit for completing the study, one of the delimitations of the present study was the reduction of the scope to business owners in the United States only. In other countries, sporadic literature about this topic exists. Another delimitation of the present study was the time limit in which the survey was available for completion.

Limitations

One potential limitation of the present study was the time restriction. This was a factor in narrowing the sample size and reducing the time in which participants could

send in their survey results. Another limitation of the study was the scope I evaluated. Possible bias by participants was a limitation of the study. Some individuals may not have been truthful in their responses. There was also the added error factor that participants may mean to be truthful, but they do not always remember information from their past accurately.

Bias can come in many forms, including analytical, attrition, confirmation, detection, exclusion, funding, observer, omitted-variable, recall, reporting, selection, and spectrum biases (Sackett, 1979). Analytical bias involves the way the results are evaluated. When a researcher does not complete a correct follow-up during the study, it may result in attrition, or a loss of participants. Confirmation bias occurs during the interpretation of results. If the researcher expects a certain outcome, they are more likely to look for information that supports that outcome when analyzing the results. Detection bias is when the researcher determines differences between groups of participants who share similar characteristics; it occurs when a set of study participants are more likely to obtain certain results. Exclusion bias occurs when certain participants are removed from the results for a specific reason instead of randomly removed. Funding bias occurs when the financial sponsor affects the results of the study to further the financier's goals. Observer bias occurs when the researcher subconsciously influences the participants' answers based on their views of the study (Goldstein, 2011). Omitted-variable bias is when a researcher omits an independent variable in the study analysis (Clarke, 2005). Nonrecall bias occurs when a participant cannot remember a past event accurately. Reporting bias occurs when a researcher finds patterned differences in the

reported and unreported results. Reporting bias is when the availability of data are misrepresented. Selection bias occurs when certain participants are more likely to be selected for participation than others. Spectrum bias occurs when a researcher evaluates diagnostic tests with biased patient samples (Hutchison & Rothman, 1978).

The estimator bias is another form of bias with a slightly different angle. The difference between the true value of the study outcome and the estimator's expected value before the study began is estimator bias (Romano & Siegel, 1986). Individuals can measure the amount of estimator present, and if that amount is zero, then the study is referred to as unbiased (Hardy, 2003). In some research, it is necessary to use a biased estimator.

Another limitation of the present study involves the weaknesses of surveys. A researcher must elicit a sufficient number of responses to have enough data to analyze. Obtaining a sufficient number of respondents is not always possible. Respondents often may not be truthful in their response to personal questions regarding political or controversial issues (Babbie, 2001). Opposed to observation, survey research does not allow a researcher to navigate context and subtlety. Babbie (2001) argues standardized questions may allow participants to superficially answer questions involving complex issues. Participants answering surveys may not accurately describe the context of social life. The final limitation of the present study was that it was a nonexperimental research design. Therefore, I could not measure or infer causality from any significant relationships or differences.

Significance of the Study

The findings from the present study could reduce the gap in the pre-existing literature because I examined the associations between the cross-project knowledge transfer on succession planning within small and family-owned businesses from one generation to the next. Previous researchers have not adequately researched cross-project knowledge transfer, specifically in the context of small or family-owned businesses. Additionally, the present study is significant in a number of ways, which I present in the following sections.

Significance to Theory

The results from the present study may contribute to Argyris and Schön's (1978) organizational learning theory in several ways. The first is that it may help researchers expand their understanding of how organizational learning can be applied within the family business. This topic is noticeably absent in the literature regarding organizational learning theory. In most studies regarding organizational learning theory, researchers focus on multinational corporations and larger companies. However, a dearth of evidence exists regarding small and medium enterprises, especially family-owned businesses. As such, the results of the present study may expand the theory into this field of study, demonstrating the key tenets of the theory may change when implemented within family-owned businesses.

The findings from the present study may also enhance the available information regarding knowledge transfer. Problem solving through sharing or disseminating of knowledge is known as knowledge transfer (Powell & Snellman, 2004). Organizational

theory researchers define the term knowledge transfer as moving or teaching knowledge from one area of the company to another through employee tools and daily tasks (Argote & Ingram, 2000). In the present study, I used the standard definitions of knowledge transfer to examine how these tools are applied within a family-owned business between generational cohorts and tacit knowledge transfer.

Significance to Practice

The results of the present study may be beneficial to business owners regarding business succession planning, because the results detail the benefits of having this type of plan in place. Effective succession planning may allow the business to continue operation into the next generation. The findings from the present study could also help business owners understand the importance of transferring business knowledge from one generation to the next. These results could assist owners of family businesses in understanding the importance of passing business knowledge to younger successors because knowledge transfer can help sustain the business for future generations. Within the pre-existing literature, researchers have determined the longer the older generation postpones the necessary knowledge transfer, the less likely the business is to remain successful (Carter et al., 2016). Early succession planning is crucial for a business to remain competitive and profitable (Helin & Jabri, 2015). As such, the information from the present study may contribute to both the breadth and depth of the pre-existing literature regarding knowledge transfer through succession planning. The implications for business practice include the potential to aid small business owners in successful transition from one generation of ownership to the next.

Additionally, the findings from the present study could highlight the relationships between the subscales of cross-project tacit knowledge transfer, and generational differences in cross-project tacit knowledge transfer among small and family-owned businesses. The results from the present study may add to the existing literature regarding subscales corresponding to cross-project knowledge transfer because I evaluated the five subscales involved in the process. These five subscales included human formal methods, human informal methods, technology formal methods, technology informal methods, and knowledge assimilation.

Significance to Social Change

Social change can benefit a business in many ways. According to Stephan, Patterson, and Kelly (2013), businesses that engage in social change often benefit from the decision. Employees experience a sense of goodwill and the business experiences new, open markets. Improving the company reputation, attracting employees, and increasing market share are the top three benefits a company experiences after positive social change (Klein, 2012). Brammer, Millington, and Rayton (2007) affirm the means of positive social change within a company because there is a new desirability when businesses engage in social change. This desirability is attractive to stakeholders because it allows for smoother relationships between employees, investors, and the community. It is possible for companies to experience a profit from making a significant social change, especially when the owners of the company understand their social purpose from a personal and business standpoint, such as the owners of a family business might (Klein, 2012). Additionally, the findings from the present study could assist informed family-

owned business owners so they can better manage the complexities of succession planning by using cross-project knowledge. This leads to the business owner contributing to the prosperity of the local community. By providing family-owned businesses the tools to succeed in succession planning, the business may exist for many generations, allowing the business owners to contribute to the local economy, help the community prosper, and create positive social change.

Summary and Transition

In this section, I discussed how transferring ownership has a high rate of failure, which results in family-owned businesses closing (Nordqvist et al., 2013). This is often the result of a lack of tacit knowledge transfer during succession planning (Albizu et al., 2011; Helin & Jabri, 2015). As such, the purpose of the quantitative nonexperimental study was to examine the relationships between the subscales of cross-project tacit knowledge transfer, and to examine the generational differences in cross-project tacit knowledge transfer among small and family-owned businesses. In Chapter 2, I examine the professional and relevant literature related to the key variables within the study. In the next chapter, I discuss the literature regarding family-owned businesses, succession planning, and knowledge transfer in detail. In Chapter 3, I present the methodology, which pertains to the research design of the present study. Following Chapter 3 is Chapter 4, the results, in which I present the findings of the research. In the final chapter, Chapter 5, I discuss and review the results, then relate them to the pre-existing literature.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The general problem I studied was how some small and family-owned businesses do not have complete succession planning in place, which results in a higher risk of business closure during the new owners' tenure (Carter et al., 2016; Helin & Jabri, 2015). The specific problem was some small and family-owned businesses do not have complete and detailed knowledge transfer plans in place based on owners and successor age and cross-project knowledge as part of their succession planning. The purpose of the quantitative nonexperimental study was to examine the relationships between the subscales of cross-project tacit knowledge transfer and to examine the generational differences in cross-project tacit knowledge transfer among small and family-owned businesses. In the present study, I adopted a unique focus on age as a variable because it is one of the more prominent variables in the study of succession planning around the world.

Literature Search Strategy

I obtained the literature compiled for this review through comprehensive online library search methods. Among the journal databases I searched, those that generated the most applicable results were EBSCOhost, ProQuest, Google Scholar, and American Doctoral Dissertations. These databases included articles published within the last 5 years. The search included the following keywords: *succession planning*, *age and succession planning*, *family business succession*, *knowledge transfer in family businesses*, *age and knowledge transfer*, *knowledge transfer*, *generational differences in family business*, and *leadership*. I accessed many other databases in the search process as well.

Prior to generating the search results, I selected the peer-reviewed feature to ensure all the literature generated would fit this designation.

I reviewed current literature containing empirical research regarding the topic of the present study. I reviewed articles that appeared in a wide range of publications, such as *Family Business Review*, *International Small Business Journal*, *Organization Studies*, *American Journal of Entrepreneurship*, and *Small Business Economics*. Additionally, after I identified key authors, I reviewed the corpus of their work for other relevant research. Similarly, I reviewed other works cited by these key authors. I also reviewed the previously identified journals, especially in specifically themed issues, for other relevant work.

Theoretical Foundation

The theoretical underpinning of the present study was Argyris and Schön's (1978) organizational learning theory. In the foundational tenets of organizational learning theory, the researchers state organizational learning is a process of inquiry that occurs when organizations operate in unfamiliar contexts (Argyris & Schön, 1978). When organizations operate in unfamiliar contexts, there is often a discrepancy between what is expected and what occurs. Within the context of the present study, this included small family-owned businesses operating during tacit knowledge transfer (unfamiliar context), and risking failure instead of continued success (actual outcome vs. expected outcome). To overcome this discrepancy between expected outcomes and actual outcomes, the members of the organization must undertake an inquiry to allow learning to occur between the members of the transition team (Argyris & Schön, 1978).

Argyris and Schön (1978) developed the concepts of single-loop and double-loop learning when they studied organizational learning. Single-loop learning is the repeat process used to solve a problem with no deviation from the process (Argyris & Schön, 1978). The end goal is never questioned or taken into consideration during the single-loop learning process. Double-loop learning involves a shift in understanding and a change in the process, which is used to solve the problem (Argyris & Schön, 1978). Double-loop learning requires a change to part of the model before the individuals find a solution. Single-loop learning is a static solution, and double-loop learning is a dynamic solution (Argyris & Schön, 1978).

There are three stages that occur during organizational learning: acquiring relevant data, interpretation of relevant data, and adaptation of relevant data (Muehlfeld, et al., 2012). When members of an organization acquire relevant data, they take the initiative for strategic decisions, goal variables, and learning indicators (Muehlfeld et al., 2012). The members of the organization then interpret the data and compare results to update the learning of the organization. Then, the organization moves into the third stage, or acting on the data, in an attempt to do what is best for the organization (Muehlfeld et al., 2012). This is key in the transfer of tacit knowledge during succession planning. The previous owners transfer the data, or tacit knowledge, to the incoming owners. Then, the incoming owners compare the new data to what they already know, adding the tacit knowledge to their collective memory bank. After the incoming owners retrieve this tacit knowledge, they can act on the necessary information to keep the business from shutting down.

There are four types of organizational units in the learning process: individual, team, organizational, and interorganizational (Argote, 2013). The smallest unit is individual learning because it involves one person at a time. The second smallest unit is group learning (Sole & Edmondson, 2002). Group learning is when several people, more than two, work together to share knowledge through an experience (Sole & Edmondson, 2002). The largest unit is interorganizational learning, which occurs when organizations partner to collaborate and share knowledge (Tucker, Nembhard, & Edmondson, 2007).

Organizational learning is the second largest unit in learning. Organizational learning is the study of experience and knowledge. Individuals from the fields of anthropology, economics, educational psychology, management science, political science, and sociology have all contributed information to this topic (Fiol & Lyles, 1985). Three different items affect organizational learning rates. The first item is individual proficiency (Argote, 2013). The second item is improvements in an organization's technology; the third item is improvements in the structures, routines, and methods of coordination (Argote, 2013).

Organizations exist to achieve goals (Lunenburg & Ornstein, 2012). Lunenburg and Ornstein (2012) stated an organization is an entity with a collective goal or purpose that is linked to the external environment in which the entity exists. Although many theories regarding managing organizational change exist, Kotter's (2012) 8-step change model is closely linked to organizational learning. Kotter was a major force in organizational change theory after he published the 8-step change model in his book *Leading Change*. This 8-step change process includes establishing a sense of urgency,

creating a guiding coalition, developing a vision strategy, communicating the change vision, empowering broad-base action, generating short-term wins, consolidating gains and producing more gains, and anchoring the new approaches to the organizational culture (Kotter, 2012).

The first step in the 8-step change process is to create a sense of urgency. All members of the organization must feel this urgency before any additional steps in the 8-step change model can occur. Kotter (2012) recommended 75% of the organization's management adopt this urgency for the final change to be successful. The urgency for change in the organization could initiate motivation for moving toward the next steps. To create this motivation and sense of urgency, employees can use a variety of techniques (Kotter, 2012).

The second step in the process is to build a guiding coalition. Employees need to convince others in the organization that change is necessary to form a powerful coalition. Strong leadership is key in making the second step work successful. Visible agreement and buy-in from senior leaders in the organization is fundamental (Kotter, 2012). Kotter (2012) noted the coalition must comprise individuals from different departments, job titles, expertise, status, and positions of political importance in the organization. The people in the coalition must be influential (Kotter, 2012).

The third step in the process is to form a strategic vision, initiatives, and strategy. This stage can be similar to when members of the organization first determine their mission and vision during the start-up phase. Having a clear vision is beneficial because it lets others in the organization know why they need a sense of urgency and why they

should embrace the change (Kotter, 2012). Kotter (2012) stated employees tend to better understand the directives they are given when they can link them to a larger overall picture. The vision must be central to the entire organization so individuals can identify with it (Kotter, 2012). An individual should be able to present the future of the organization in one or two briefs, straightforward sentences (Kotter, 2012). The members of the guiding coalition should be able to describe the vision and strategy in more detail if asked but should communicate the details in five minutes or less. After individuals create the vision, they must establish a strategy to fulfill the vision.

The fourth step in the process is communicating the vision clearly to the entire organization. Every organization has many forms and methods of communication that reach each employee daily. The members of the coalition need to determine the most effective way to communicate their vision to ensure employees do not overlook the communication (Kotter, 2012). One way to ensure communication is heard and seen is to communicate frequently and powerfully; the members of coalition should talk about the vision at every chance they get and embed it within everything they do (Kotter, 2012). Kotter (2012) emphasized the importance of leading by example. All members of the coalition must demonstrate the behavior they want to see from others because actions are more believable than unheeded speech (Kotter, 2012). Coalition members can accomplish this by using their vision to solve problems that arise. Members can use the vision in daily decision-making (Kotter, 2012).

The fifth step in the process is to empower broad based action and remove obstacles. Members of the coalition must assess if there are processes or structures in

place in the organization that would prevent progress (Kotter, 2012). The members of the coalition should monitor employees who are still resisting change. Removing obstacles and resistance can help the change process move forward and may hinder the people who oppose the vision from being empowered (Kotter, 2012). It is crucial to put a structure in place that allows for change to occur. Kotter (2012) noted members must remove barriers quickly so they do not spread.

The sixth step in the process is to generate short-term wins. Members of the coalition must create a number of short-term goals for the project. One long-term goal will not give as much of an opportunity to show employees the process is working. An obstacle such as critical thinkers can hurt the coalition's progress (Kotter, 2012). The members of the coalition must work these short-term goals into the larger vision, ensuring almost no room for failure (Kotter, 2012). The members of the coalition must analyze the pros and cons of each short-term goal. Kotter (2012) noted the benefits of rewarding the employees in the organization who help the coalition meet the short-term goals.

The seventh step in the process is to sustain acceleration by building on the change. Although the members of the coalition seek an early short-term win, they must not declare victory prematurely. The members of the coalition must ensure the employees in the organization know the short-term goals are only the beginning and that these goals must continue to be reached for the real change and vision to occur (Kotter, 2012). The complete organizational change runs deep throughout the organization and cannot be achieved in a short period of time. The members of the coalition should encourage

employees to view each win as another learning opportunity on which they build each success and identify areas of weakness so they can be improved for the next project (Kotter, 2012). The more frequently new projects are completed successfully using the new vision, the stronger the message is that the system is working (Kotter, 2012).

The eighth step in the process is to institute change and ensure it is anchored within the organization's culture moving forward. The day-to-day work of employees needs to show the vision and values established by the coalition for the new changes to be embedded in the organization's corporate culture (Kotter, 2012). Change that becomes part of the organization's core will become the new norm (Kotter, 2012). The members of the coalition need to focus their efforts on ensuring all aspect of the organization can see and participate in the change. Kotter (2012) noted leaders in the organization must support the change, and future leaders must be ready to embrace the new vision. Current leaders who do not support the change can cause the organization to revert to old ways.

Literature Review

After studying knowledge theories, research methodologies, and research measurement techniques, I selected an internet survey. This modality became the preferred survey technique for the present research. After reviewing peer-reviewed articles and past studies, I acquired survey data and knowledge regarding the current research on the survey topic to determine the areas in need of additional study and knowledge enhancement. Reviewing past studies allowed me to learn the goals of research scholars, so I could help advance the existing social knowledge. This selection

process of a research subject and area of discovery was the first step in formulating a research methodology for the study.

Generational Differences in the Workplace

Generational differences in the workplace have become a prominent topic for research because of the increased numbers of baby boomers retiring from the workforce and handing their businesses to younger generational cohorts (Becton, Walker, & Jones-Farmer, 2014; Costanza & Finkelstein, 2015). As such, renewed interest in topics related to leadership, succession planning, and workplace values pertaining to generational differences have led to increased literature on the topic. Additionally, researchers' interest has expanded regarding how these differences apply to family-owned businesses.

Three generational cohorts comprise the workforce today (Hernaus & Vokic, 2014). These generational cohorts include baby boomers (individuals born between 1945 and 1960), Generation X (individuals born between 1960 and 1980), and Generation Y (individuals born between 1980 and 2000). There are a few veterans who were born before 1945; however, most individuals of this generation are retired. Generation Z, or individuals born after 2000, have not entered the workforce (Hernaus & Vokic, 2014). Baby boomers come from a background in which the male is the main family supporter and the workplace is dominated by men. However, Generation X and Generation Y individuals have grown up in a time period with diversity within the workforce and have more experience dealing with diverse people (Mencl & Lester, 2014). Baby boomers tend to be more entrenched in the company environment. This means they stay with a company for years, stay in the same position, and are less likely to engage in new training

that is not seen as beneficial to their current position (Mencel & Lester, 2014).

Additionally, Generation X and Generation Y individuals have grown up and worked in an era in which downsizing is common within a company and they need to continually participate in training programs to stay competitive and employed (Mencel & Lester, 2014). Lastly, Generation Y individuals grew up in a technology era and they are used to finding information within seconds; they are also more likely to look for instant gratification (Mencel & Lester, 2014). An individual's generational cohort, worldview, relationships, work ethic, behavior, motivators, inclination toward teamwork, communication preferences, perception of organizational hierarchy, and how they manage change can be different from those of someone in a different generational cohort (Hernaus & Vokic, 2014).

Baby boomers have jobs with enriched tasks, which allows variety. They prefer work autonomy and strong task identity. Generation X and Generation Y individuals share the same ideas regarding tasks, characterized by variety. Both Generation X and Generation Y individuals prefer task identity (Yeaton, 2008). Generation Y individuals interact with others significantly less than baby boomer and Generation X workers (Yeaton, 2008). Generation Y individuals have significantly lower initiated interdependence than other individuals in the baby boomer and Generation Y cohorts (Hernaus & Vokic, 2014). In terms of characteristics regarding individuals in each generational cohort, baby boomers are optimistic, idealistic, goal-driven, critical, tolerant, self-centered, self-sufficient, and materialistic (Hernaus & Vokic, 2014). Generation X individuals are individualistic, pragmatic, cautious, skeptical, informal, independent, self-

reliant, and flexible (Hernaus & Vokic, 2014). Generation Y individuals tend to be optimistic, have high expectations, be confident, have high self-esteem, be very moral, be socially aware, be responsible, be idealistic, have global and diversity consciousness, and have close family ties (Hernaus & Vokic, 2014).

Schullery (2013) asserted baby boomers often want interesting and challenging work incorporated into their daily tasks at the office. However, individuals from each successive generation have less interest in the challenge of the work they complete. Millennials have less interest in social reward and intrinsic rewards than the Generation X employees do, although Generation X individuals and millennials assign higher value to leisure time at work than baby boomers (Schullery, 2013). Additionally, millennials learn differently than individuals from past generations within the workplace; they do not respond to lectures well and tend to take away less information when taught in this format (Schullery, 2013). Given this, Schullery (2013) recommended millennials be taught to gain self-direction, gather experience, apply motivation through applications that can advance their careers, and have an immediate application for the learning they complete.

In terms of generational differences as they apply to behavior within the workplace, Becton et al. (2014) sought to determine the accuracy of common generational stereotypes regarding values and attitudes of baby boomers, Generation X individuals, and millennials. The presence of current stereotypes suggests generational differences present challenges for workplace managers. Becton et al. (2014) sampled 8,128 applicants for employment at two hospitals located in the southeastern United

States. Becton et al. (2014) administered questionnaires that included questions regarding each applicants' job mobility behavior, asking about the longest time employees spent at one job and the number of jobs held in the past five years. The questionnaire also included question related to compliance with work rules, asking how supervisors would rate employee's attendance and employee's dress code adherence. Also included in the questionnaire were questions about employee termination record (the number of times employee was fired in the past) and the employee's willingness to work overtime. Becton et al. (2014) suggested generational differences exist in some workplace behaviors, but the commonly accepted generational differences were not significantly displayed in the study results. Becton et al. (2014) found individuals from each of the three age groups held similar numbers of jobs in the past five years, were similar in compliance with work rules, and answered in similar percentages regarding their willingness to work overtime. More than 78% of individuals from each of the three groups had never been fired. The researchers concluded the behavior of individuals belonging to each of the three groups in the workplace were very similar. Becton et al. (2014) suggested employers should be cautious in redesigning work practices with different criteria for each of the three groups based on common misconceptions that major differences exist between individuals of different generations. Relative age, gender, and generation all affected the attendance behaviors; however, relative age and generational difference did not prove to be a significant variation in behavior. The researchers found a difference in the amount of disciplinary action individuals of different generations faced from the organization. Baby boomers were more willing to work overtime hours than Generation X employees

(Becton et al., 2014). In concluding their study, Becton et al. (2014) presented a list of consequences for organizations if there is a lack of understanding regarding generational employee differences. These consequences include intergenerational workplace conflict, misunderstanding, miscommunication, poor working relationships, reduced employee productivity, poor employee well-being, and lower innovation (Becton et al., 2014).

Regarding generational differences in values, Costanza and Finkelstein (2015) disagreed with the notion of perceived or actual performance differences between workers of differing ages. Many prior researchers proposed this idea, citing little empirical evidence. Differences have been outlined by scholars who use age, historical period, and cohort of shared experiences as a basis for offering differences in age groups. However, the time period in which researchers implemented the study may introduce an age bias (Costanza & Finkelstein, 2015). Age, period, and cohort are three related but different factors researchers use when discussing and researching generational differences regarding individual characteristics. The researchers who produced most of the existing literature regarding generational difference have used cross-sectional or cross-temporal designs (Costanza & Finkelstein, 2015). These two designs do not fully remove the effects of age on the outcome of the studies. The historical period in which researchers complete these studies can also affect the results because the individuals who are assessed may be affected by the specific historical events of the time. For example, many individuals think baby boomers were influenced by the civil rights movement and Generation X individuals were influenced by watching their parents struggle to pay bills

and have enough money, despite having two working parents (Costanza & Finkelstein, 2015).

Generational differences in family businesses. Within overall research regarding generational differences in the workplace, much of the research on generational differences within family businesses pertains to differences in succession planning (Brun de Pontet, Wrosch, & Gagne, 2007; Dawson, Irving, Sharma, Chirico, & Marcus, 2014). Families in the workplace want to see their company stay within the family for many reasons, including transgenerational entrepreneurship, family social capital, transgenerational family effect, transgenerational wealth, family entrepreneurial orientation, and family socioemotional wealth preservation (Michael-Tsabari, Labaki, & Zachary, 2014). Transgenerational is “the processes through which a family uses and develops entrepreneurial mindsets and family influenced capabilities to create new streams of entrepreneurial, financial and social value among generations” (Habbershon et al., 2010, p. 7). Michael-Tsabari et al. (2014) asserted when two or more generations of family members are in business together, the highest level of entrepreneurial orientation is achieved. The “family-in-business” mindset occurs when a family runs a particular business and sees themselves as the business instead of seeing the business as its own entity. This mindset is seen in first generation ownership (Michael-Tsabari et al., 2014). The “family-as-investor” mindset occurs when the family has many businesses and multiple generations working within the business. This mindset is created when the family is looking for wealth creation within the market, opposed to a direct identity with the business they created (Michael-Tsabari et al., 2014).

Decision-making in family businesses can be affected by diversity. Generational diversity is crucial to family businesses because diversity allows knowledge heterogeneity, which leads to contingent effects (Tsai, Lin, Lin, Lu, & Nugroho, 2017). Therefore, generational diversity is positively associated with collective decision-making, but negatively associated with overconfidence in decision-making abilities. Overconfidence in decision-making ability is negatively associated with collective decision-making, but this can be mediated with generational diversity (Tsai et al., 2017).

Family-Owned Businesses

Family-owned businesses consist of any business in which most of the ownership or control is in the hands of a family (Ramadani & Hoy, 2015; Sciascia, Mazzola, & Kellermanns, 2014). Family-owned enterprises are a unique form of business because hesitancy and difficulty exist when it comes time for succession planning and knowledge transfer (Nordqvist et al., 2013). The controlling family unit, the business entity, and the individual family members connect through bidirectional and multidirectional relationships to create a social system known as a family business (Bettinelli, Fayolle, & Randerson, 2014). One of the key factors that makes family businesses so unique is the blending of home and work lives. According to Nordqvist et al. (2013), familial structure, parental background, and spousal characteristics are significant predictors of an individual's entrepreneurial behavior, which leads to a strong correlation between family ownership and family management in family-owned businesses. Both family and nonfamily members can be involved in the management of these businesses (Ramadani & Hoy, 2015). One of the most crucial tasks of the family-owned business involves

transferring ownership from one generation to another. Daspit et al. (2016) asserted most family businesses do not survive past the first generation because of insufficient succession planning and knowledge transfer.

Ramadani and Hoy (2015) asserted the existence of six categories of family business: captain, corporation, family investment group, emperor, family team, and professional. In the captain model of the family businesses, entrepreneurs share ownership with other family members, creating an environment where the family comprises the management side of the business and they employ nonfamily members (Ramadani & Hoy, 2015). The corporate model is the most developed and complex model. The corporate model is distinguished by long-time family ownership, including the presence of managers who are an average age of 61 years old or older (Ramadani & Hoy, 2015). The highest level of structure is seen in the corporate model, which allows for “the businesses, which are managed by family members, (to) easily evolve into businesses managed by non-family members” (Ramadani & Hoy, 2015, p. 17).

In the family investment model, the family sells the business. After dividing the wealth earned from the sale, family members enter various businesses as investors, either jointly or in groups (Ramadani & Hoy, 2015). The emperor model occurs when individuals from two generations work together under one leader. In the family team model, each family member of the business is a shareholder in the organization (Ramadani & Hoy, 2015). In the professional family model, the family manages high levels of growth and management while operating in a professional manner (Ramadani & Hoy, 2015). The professional family structure is opposite of the family team because the

complexity of the business model exceeds family complexity (Ramadani & Hoy, 2015). Ramadani and Hoy (2015) indicated family members are oriented toward business operations and growth and development come from a less personalized structure.

Mussolino and Calabro (2014) used interviews to determine if the predecessor's leadership style influenced the success or failure of a transfer of ownership within the business. Mussolino and Calabro (2014) previously asserted family businesses operate on three models of paternalistic leadership: authoritarian, benevolent, and moral.

Authoritarian paternalistic leadership is the least desirable for successors of family firms to encounter, because it is the most restrictive for successors when they try to promote their innovations and ideas (Mussolino & Calabro, 2014). A moral leadership style occurs when the predecessor mentors the individual who is going to own the business. Moral paternalistic leadership is marked by the predecessor empowering the successor and therefore allowing the successor to become an effective leader, using the same set of morals as the predecessor (Mussolino & Calabro, 2014). In the authoritarian model, predecessors are more likely to exhibit undesirable superiority characteristics toward successors, often treating them as subordinates. Benevolent and moral styles are the preferred paternalistic leadership approaches because of the presence of reflection of care, control, and authority while instilling personal virtues such as integrity, self-discipline, selflessness, and support (Mussolino & Calabro, 2014). Many successors were concerned with normative beliefs because they thought their predecessors would not approve of the progress they were making in the transition process (Mussolino & Calabro, 2014).

Additionally, there are four types of family-owned business participants, including the senior generation, who currently runs the business and is ready to transfer it; the incumbent generation, who is ready to take a management position; inactive family members; and nonfamily members (Ramadani & Hoy, 2015). Further division among family members in the business exists: a family member could be an employee and an owner, an employee but not an owner, an owner, or neither an employee nor an owner (Ramadani & Hoy, 2015). Nonfamily members can be employees and owners, or just employees (Ramadani & Hoy, 2015).

Because of the complexity of both the family-owned business and the individuals involved in the business, various cultures are often present in these organizations. The four main types of culture described by Ramadani and Hoy (2015) are paternalistic culture, laissez-faire culture, participative culture, and professional culture. Both paternalistic culture and laissez-faire culture are linear. Participative culture is collateral, although professional culture requires an individualistic relationship (Ramadani & Hoy, 2015). In laissez-faire culture and participative culture, orientation toward the environment is a harmonizing/proactive stance, although in paternalistic culture this orientation is a proactive stance. The professional culture is dominated by a reactive stance (Ramadani & Hoy, 2015). The nature of human activity can define the culture within a business. When the family members are doing the orientation, the culture can be paternalistic, laissez-faire, or professional; but when the family members are being orientated, the culture is participative (Ramadani & Hoy, 2015).

Succession planning becomes difficult for the owners of many family-owned businesses because of the complex, mitigating factors of the business, which often compete with one another (Nordqvist et al., 2013). This is often what causes family-owned businesses to fail during the succession planning phase. As such, Ramadani and Hoy (2015) outlined a 4-step approach to assist with these organizations during the succession phase. The first step, the initial stage, occurs when the current owner of a family business realizes they must find a successor. This is followed by the integration stage, during which the successor is integrated into the business as an apprentice, gaining technical knowledge about the workings of the organization (Ramadani & Hoy, 2015). The successor then engages in joint management stage, in which the successor assumes a joint management status either exclusively or by sharing tasks and responsibilities with the predecessor (Ramadani & Hoy, 2015). Following this, the successor enters the disengagement stage, in which the predecessor retires from the business and transfers leadership, authority, and ownership to the successor (Ramadani & Hoy, 2015).

Family business success is dependent on the agency theory, the effectiveness of family member managers, and how the manager's own agenda aligns with the organizational goals (Abu Bakar, Ahmad, & Buchanan, 2015). There are various factors that affect the growth rate a family-owned business. From an individual standpoint, the founder's education, experience, and growth aspiration are the main three factors. However, from a business standpoint, firm-level resources and strategies are the two main factors affecting the growth of the business (Abu Bakar et al., 2015). At the macro level, market conditions and environment conditions are the two main factors (Abu Bakar

et al., 2015). When these factors are reduced to their simplest form, the three overarching influences on growth rate are “the background and access to resources of the founder(s) or entrepreneur(s), the firm itself, and the strategic decisions taken by the firm once it is trading” (Abu Bakar et al., 2015, p. 6). To ensure success, Abu Bakar et al. (2015) recommended family businesses adopt growth strategies such as organic growth, acquisition, strategic alliance, and joint venture. Organic growth occurs when the owners of the business expand their current product line or create new products by spending money on research and development (Abu Bakar et al., 2015). Acquisition occurs when the business buys out an existing business and incorporates the new product line into what they already sell. Abu Bakar et al. (2015) defined strategic alliance and joint venture as a new partnership, which is the strongest of the growth strategies. A partnership gives the new business access to resources to develop new products the business would not otherwise possess, which fosters efficient learning and new product development (Abu Bakar et al., 2015). Successful family business owners succeed because they reposition their strategic orientation, which leads to transgenerational growth (Abu Bakar et al., 2015).

When determining the successor problem within family businesses, Blumentritt (2016) identified three categories of offspring motivation. The first category of offspring motivation includes potential successors who are willing and interested in joining the family firm without any additional encouragements (Blumentritt, 2016). The second classification includes offspring who have specific interests, skills, or attributes for other careers and interests such as music, sports, or entertainment. There may be nothing a

founder can do to entice these offspring into the business. The third type of offspring includes the potential successor. Individuals in this category consider careers with the firm against other professional options (Blumentritt, 2016). This group may possess the best assets to the firm, if they can be recruited. In these cases, the offspring may have different motivations than the founders.

Characterizing candidates for succession, Blumentritt (2016) categorized potential candidates into four groups, none of which are perfect successors. The long shots are the lowest possible group; these individuals do not have natural ability or desire to join the business (Blumentritt, 2016). Individuals in the second category, or on-target group, have the ability to become successful successors but are also able to pursue other opportunities outside the family (Blumentritt, 2016). The third group is willing but challenged because they are uncertain about their own ability, which may be a result of their own analysis or may be from other family members casting doubts (Blumentritt, 2016). The fourth and most promising group are the high potential offspring, who possess good natural ability and a high natural interest in running the business, although they may be equally suitable for outside endeavors. Individuals in this group, although they are the most appropriate choices, may require the founder to display and engage in investments and maneuvers that are appealing to the offspring to induce them to join the firm (Blumentritt, 2016). As the founder increases tangible capital in the firm, the business will be increasingly healthy when the potential successor becomes the leader (Blumentritt, 2016).

Communicating this activity to the successor may encourage an offspring to join the firm effort as its new leader. Founder's investment should benefit the firm and

strengthen the business, which can contribute to the success of the offspring and the firm itself. These efforts of the founder must be communicated to the offspring and the family to receive family enthusiasm and approval.

Naldi, Chirico, Kellermanns, and Campopiano (2015) examined 128 Swedish family firms to understand the direct relationship between family members serving in an advising capacity and the firm's performance. The researchers used two perspectives to evaluate the relationship. In the first perspective, family members viewed themselves as stewards of the family firm, known as stewardship (Naldi et al., 2015). Stewardship leads to family members nurturing the business for future generations; maximizing performance; and emphasizing product research, market share, and reputation development (Naldi et al., 2015). In the second perspective, family members acted out of parochial preference and purpose, known as agency. Agency leads to a family member underinvesting in the firm, avoiding business risk, and extracting resources to pursue personal gain (Naldi et al., 2015). The number of family member advisors and the members of the generation owning the business contribute to the balance between stewardship and agency. Advisors to a family business have specific advising skills for the needs of the business that are not present in a nonfamily business atmosphere (Naldi et al., 2015). Knowing the needs of the family members within the overlapping family and business systems is crucial to the success of the advisor. Naldi et al. (2015) noted the more family advisors exist within the same business, the lower each advisor's motivation. Strategic decision-making processes within the family firm are affected by the emotional attachment and rational judgment the family has created within their personal life; there

is no defined way to remove this emotional factor from the business decision-making process (Naldi et al., 2015). Naldi et al. (2015) asserted agency theory shows family members use the business for family needs at the expense of other shareholders. Within agency theory, a business owner takes less risks to preserve the family cash flow, but might miss a new business opportunity (Naldi et al., 2015). The role of a business advisor is different in a family firm than in a corporation. An advisor must deal with family conflicts and balance conflicting stakeholder interests within a family firm (Naldi et al., 2015).

According to Duh (2015), family business rebirth is a goal for succession planning. Using knowledge transfer and knowledge creation as essential tools, the successor attempts to achieve success. The successor also uses socialization, externalization, internalization, and combination to convert knowledge from the predecessor (Duh, 2015). During this time, the role of the predecessor diminishes and the role of the successor increases until the successor becomes a competent leader. When the successor captures the tacit and explicit knowledge from the predecessor he or she can then use innovation to run the business and address daily entrepreneurial challenges (Duh, 2015).

According to De Massis, Frattini, Kotlar, Petruzzelli, and Wright (2016), innovation through tradition is one of the key components for ensuring growth of the family businesses. Innovation through tradition occurs through sources of past knowledge, forms of past knowledge, types of product innovation, and reinterpretation capabilities (De Massis et al., 2016). Managers of nonfamily firms must learn from this

trend and emulate and apply successful traditions, rather than discard older, competitive advantages for possible new ideas. Value creation by recognizing the importance of the past has been shown effective in not only business but in economics, sociology, and psychology. Because individual identity is strongly based on the past, new products are more widely accepted if they are linked with past accepted products, which helps individuals make sense of the present (De Massis et al., 2016). Family firms have learned tradition is a valuable resource, which is not easily copied by others. De Massis et al. (2016) indicated long-lasting family businesses could leverage tradition when developing new products for their markets, because buyers were familiar with the family name. This is an example of innovation in which the business owners remain anchored to the firm's tradition and reputation while applying new technology to proven products and concepts (De Massis et al., 2016).

In most family businesses, after the owner departs, the business becomes less entrepreneurial (Jaskiewicz, Combs, & Rau, 2014). Although no theories as to why this occurs currently exist, Jaskiewicz et al. (2014) suggested turning to 11th generation German and Italian wineries, both located in countries known for having older family firms. Although researchers show genetic factors and founders' role modeling extend the life cycle of family businesses, they generally only last for three generations.

However, there are three activities that predict entrepreneurial legacy (Jaskiewicz et al., 2014). The first activity is strategic education of younger family members while they work in the firm because environmental influences, which occur in youth, remain imprinted into adulthood. Therefore, early education is an opportune time for learning

family business history (Jaskiewicz et al., 2014). The second activity is entrepreneurial bridging, in which older workers work side-by-side with younger workers, which allows younger members to apply strategic education guided by seniors (Jaskiewicz et al., 2014). The third activity is strategic succession, in which older members, particularly the predecessor, protect the assets and security of the younger members and successors by securing capital, preventing sibling buyouts, and integrating potential in-laws into the family (Jaskiewicz et al., 2014). Jaskiewicz et al. (2014) admitted this process is long and fragile, but it has worked in certain families and can be adapted for future generations of family businesses.

Succession Planning

One of the most crucial aspects of success in a family business is succession planning. However, no general theory regarding family business succession exists (Sharma, Chrisman, & Chua, 2003). Succession planning is the process in which internal individuals are identified and developed to fill necessary positions in business organizations as the organizations undergo a change (Bizri, 2016; De Massis & Kotlar, 2014; Goel, 2016). Additionally, Chalus-Sauvannet, Deschamps, and Cisneros (2015) asserted the succession process is planned because the predecessors and successors map out and prepare the roles they would take during the process. This ensures the transfer of ownership is free of unnecessary stress and barriers that could inhibit the future success of the business (Nordqvist et al., 2013).

In succession planning for family-owned businesses, the founder, family, managers, owners, and environment are factors with the most substantial effects on the

planning process (Ramadani & Hoy, 2015). Factors affecting succession transition often include personal relationships between family, family values and beliefs that unify members, and effective successor training (Ghee, Ibrahim, & Abdul-Halim, 2015). Additionally, Ramadani, Bexheti, Rexhepi, Ratten, and Ibraimi (2017) asserted for a successful transfer of ownership to occur, family business owners must focus on entrepreneurship, studies, internal formal education, external experience, a written plan, and a contractual agreement.

Succession planning is carried out for several reasons. One of these reasons is to ensure the business continues without issues. Succession developed around the idea of new business opportunities is beneficial for the entrepreneurial entry and entrepreneurial exit (Nordqvist et al., 2013). Many factors are incorporated in succession planning, including the personal goals of the retiring owner, the ambitions of the successor, family structure, and financial issues (Nordqvist et al., 2013).

Gilding, Gregory, and Cosson (2015) reported succession planning is subject to four motivations. The first two motivations involve the incumbents, wherein they wish to ensure the existence of the family business between generations and to ensure family harmony (Gilding et al., 2015). The first motivation combines strong motivation of the predecessor for continuity and harmony, resulting in the family firm converting to an institution with strength and increased future success (Gilding et al., 2015). This is the preferred type of succession featured in most of the literature regarding succession. The second motivation combines the predecessor's weakness for succession continuity and weakness for harmony, causing the family business to implode and disappear (Gilding et

al., 2015). The third motivation is a combination of strong motivation for succession but weak motivation for family harmony, resulting in the incumbent constructing their succession settlement, which could result in imposition of the appointment of a family member or an outsider as successor without clearly deciding the ownership (Gilding et al., 2015). The fourth motivation consists of a strong motivation for family harmony, but a weak motivation for continuity. This motivation is termed individualization, in which the owner sells the business when it is still profitable, which usually occurs when no heir exists to continue the business (Gilding et al., 2015).

Gilding et al. (2015) developed a typology of incumbent's motives for creating a strong family succession plan. Gilding et al. (2015) based the typology on a cross axis of family harmony versus the continuity of a family business, resulting in four cells. The top left cell represents business owners with a strong family harmony and a weak desire for the continuity of the family business. Individuals categorized in this cell produce individualization of the family business. The top right cell represents business owners with a strong family harmony and a strong desire for the continuity of the family business. Individuals categorized in this cell produce institutionalization of the family business. The bottom left cell represents business owners with a weak family harmony and a weak desire for the continuity of the family business. Individuals categorized in this cell produce an implosion of the family business. The bottom right cell represents business owners with a weak family harmony and a strong desire for the continuity of the family business. Individuals categorized in this cell produce an imposition of the family business.

One of the key facets in succession planning is the generational difference between a predecessor and a successor. Generational workers differ within the entrepreneurship environment in various ways, including the accumulation of resources and skills; psychological, cognitive, and motivational attributes; reaction to influences from the environment; culture; and norms (Minola, Criaco, & Cassia, 2014). Individuals must possess competencies, knowledge, assets, relationships, attributes, and skills to perform tasks. According to Minola et al. (2014), older entrepreneurs have a better ability to perceive and pursue opportunities because they have a larger resource endowment. Older entrepreneurs have larger financial and social endowments and are more likely to engage an external consultant. Additionally, family business CEOs “are more prone to develop formal succession plans” as they get older because of the positive associations with competitive conflict and cooperative conflict (Minola et al., 2014, p. 246). Twelve of the articles mentioned in the study by Minola et al. (2014) focused on owners or founders within an entrepreneurial firm or small family business. This is the same demographic and business size I focus on throughout the present study, regarding cross-generational knowledge transfer within small, family-owned businesses. In these 12 articles, researchers examined the differences in financial performance and internationalization of small businesses based on the age of the entrepreneurs (Minola et al., 2014). Because the studies were based in several different countries, this suggests age as an independent variable is not dependent on geographical location. Minola et al. (2014) noted the effect of mentors on entrepreneurial activities differed depending on age group. The researchers also indicated older business owners tend to use family resources

in the business, whereas younger owners keep the family resources separate from the business (Minola et al., 2014).

Duh and Letonja (2013) asserted researcher could predict successful succession based on characteristics of nurturing, preparation, and the development of the successor by the predecessor. Successful succession can be predicted by the interaction of tacit and explicit knowledge to create four stages of knowledge conversion. The four stages are socialization, externalization, combination, and internalization (Duh & Letonja, 2013). Some of the knowledge creation activities within the socialization stage include employee rotation, brainstorming retreats, apprenticeship, mentoring, and informal social meetings. Within the externalization mode, technology is used more through modeling based on analogies, chat groups, and groupware. In the combination mode, individuals reconfigure existing information within databases and add web access to the data. Lastly, in the internalization mode, individuals use knowledge creation activities in which learning happens by observation, doing, and during on-the-job training. Twelve cases were used for the data analysis and included small and medium-sized family firms, which is the same size of the firms I overserved in the present research. Careful planning and writing steps improves the probability of the success of the succession planning process (Duh & Letonja, 2013). Duh and Letonja (2013) concluded verbal succession plans, passed from the retiring owner to the new owner, are not as effective as a written plan because other stakeholders must be appraised of the succession plan as well. A verbal succession plan cannot be passed to other stakeholders, whereas a written plan can easily be accessed by others.

Marler, Botero, and De Massis (2017) stated one aspect of successor transition that is not well understood is the manner in which the successor and incumbent personalities affect the succession process. Marler et al. (2017) attempted to capture the individual's tendencies to make a meaningful change in the business environment. The proactive personalities of both incumbents and successors may or may not lead to effective role transitions in the succession process (Marler et al., 2017). Marler et al. (2017) suggested powerful individuals, both successors and incumbents, can slow or damage the transition through their powerful personal traits.

Marler et al. (2017) focused on two aspects of role transition that affect succession transfer. The first occurs when the incumbent is ready for the role transition, and the second occurs when the incumbent is not ready for the role transition. In analyzing this process of succession, the researchers developed four assumptions: there is a definite intention of the major coalition of the family business to transfer control, the family successor is ready and willing to accept the succession, the incumbents vary in their commitment to succession, and leadership succession will take place (Marler et al., 2017). Although there is a large amount of family succession research, researchers have devoted little attention to the role of personality traits of both incumbents and successors (Marler et al., 2017). The researchers claimed they were the first to investigate proactive personalities of both leaders and followers in the succession process, especially regarding incumbent personality when an incumbent intends to let go of power.

Many family businesses do not have written succession plans and verbally tell the successor knowledge about the business (Duh & Letonja, 2013). Most successors are

involved in mentoring relations with a predecessor, but are not given instructions in writing, which leads to both predecessor and successor having different knowledge creation ideas (Duh & Letonja, 2013). Ideally, the successor and the predecessor possess the same routine knowledge so they can build and sustain the firm's competitive advantage (Duh & Letonja, 2013).

Communication is key during the succession process because it allows for peaceful transition. Helin and Jabri (2015) observed eight family meetings during the succession planning stage to examine how communication affected the outcome of the transfer. Helin and Jabri (2015) noted compromise and striving toward consensus were not necessarily beneficial because these behaviors led to people giving up things they later regretted, effectively causing more harm in the future. Although honest and open communication occurred without a formal plan during the planning stages, Helin and Jabri (2015) suggested it is beneficial for families to follow some sort of outline to balance ideas and questions that might otherwise be lost or not thought about.

Communication is driven by emotions on both sides, family emotions in the background, and psychological aspects of both the predecessor and the successor. This can lead to misinterpretation by both parties (Michael-Tsabari & Weiss, 2015). One of the solutions to stalemate succession communication is intervention of a consultant or third party who is briefed on the needs of the family business (Michael-Tsabari & Weiss, 2015).

Consultants, if properly briefed, can eliminate misunderstanding between the two parties in negotiation. One method of clarifying succession communications is for both parties to understand the necessity for succession; this must be communicated at the start of the

discussion to clear up subsequent confusion as to whether the succession is wanted, needed, and if it can be consummated (Michael-Tsabari & Weiss, 2015).

To understand the early stages of succession planning, Meier and Schier (2016) studied a 10-year real-time case study of one family firm by Leonard-Barton (1990). Meier and Schier (2016) believed the integrated model for succession process of Le Breton-Miller et al. was an accurate outline for successful succession planning. This integrated model outlined four stages: defining the ground rules, training potential successors, selecting successors, and passing the baton. Attention to this process, particularly in the early stages (10 years prior to succession), is not well documented in literature (Meier & Schier, 2016). This research was enlightening because many businesses require more than 20 years to complete the succession process. The central issue of this article concentrates on the first point of Le Breton-Miller's integrated model: defining the ground rules for succession. Meier and Schier (2016) highlighted the importance of studying how the incumbent generation can prepare the firm and family to control conflicts of interest in the early stages of succession planning. Christensen (1953) articulated the key stages in the succession process. Christensen (1953) recommended using stewardship to calm self-interest and promote the common interests between the group and the family. After family unity is restored, the family uses transfer of control and ownership to identify potential successors, choose successors, and establish the successor in a firm position of control (Meier & Schier, 2016). When all family members are included in the succession planning, fewer issues arise. Meier and Schier (2016) stated creating a permanent collaborative process within the family ownership is crucial

for choosing successors and preserving the interest of the business. By combining business interests with family objectives, new successors receive increased support from family and firm management.

Ghee et al. (2015) researched the key factors of business performance in terms of family business succession planning in Malaysia. Using mixed methods, Ghee et al. (2015) focused on second and third generation family business owners in 55 family-owned firms. The researchers found management style, relationships between family members, shared values and beliefs, and successor training significantly influenced business performance levels. Although these factors were crucial, succession experience in second and third generation successions were the most significant predictors of success. Additionally, Ghee et al. (2015) highlighted the importance of family businesses by stating family businesses such as Michelin, Wal-Mart, Home Depot, and IKEA were founded by families and are still managed by families. These types of family-owned businesses, which have been under-researched, dominate most of the world's economies. Unlike most of the prevailing research, Ghee et al. (2015) showed successful and surviving family businesses survived succession not by requiring members to enter the business at low levels, requiring members to achieve higher education, or outside experience prior to joining the family firm. What appeared to be the most successful was founders and predecessors offering successors middle to senior management level positions. The founders, by affirming the capabilities of successors in the eyes of others in the family, built confidence in successors and produced a successful transition (Ghee et al., 2015).

Similar to Ghee et al. (2015), Carter et al. (2016) examined successor team dynamics in their qualitative case study on family firms. In the 19 firms the researchers examined, the multiple or team successors were comprised of all family members or a mixture of family, existing management, and owners of the business. The individual family, which produced a successor who worked his way to the top position sponsored by the prior owner, had an opportunity to hold the business together and prosper (Carter et al., 2016). These firms had team successors when ownership evolved into multiple owners and, in some cases, manager owners who were given or bought ownership. Carter et al. (2016) also noted single successors are able to act faster than groups and their authority is absolute because groups in any organization must reach a consensus to make changes or introduce new direction.

One of the weak aspects of groups, particularly family team successors, stems from family personality conflicts, which may be handed down through generations. If the most important attributes for successors are integrity and commitment to business success, the business will thrive (Carter et al., 2016). After personalities develop, most businesses will fragment or fail. Successor leadership teams may be a viable alternative to a single successor when there is not a single leader and family ownership has not been diluted. The use of teams allows for the prospect of equal opportunity instead of dividing or selling the business after the termination or death of a strong owner (Carter et al., 2016).

Although family businesses have been described in pre-existing literature as unique, they also face a unique set of problems, especially regarding succession planning

during ownership transfer (Devins & Jones, 2015; Ramadani & Hoy, 2015). Although more than 30% of all family businesses survive the second generation of ownership, the third generation of ownership generally fares far worse, with only 12% of businesses surviving (Ramadani et al., 2017). This number gets substantially smaller in the fourth generation, where only 3% of family businesses continue (Ramadani et al., 2017). Additionally, Ramadani et al. (2017) found within family-owned businesses, 28% of founders were younger than age 40 and 36% of founders were between 40–50 years old. Furthermore, 26% of owners were between 51–60 years old, and only 10% were older than age 60 (Ramadani et al., 2017).

Using a survey, Ramadani et al. (2017) examined succession issues in Albanian family businesses. The researchers sought to understand the conflicts that arose during succession planning. Examining these issues through Rubenson and Gupta's (1996) succession contingency model, Ramadani et al. (2017) asserted conflicts in succession planning result in conflicts in business, which can lead to businesses shutting down. Succession can be an inconsequential event, a disruptive event, or a rational organization adaptation (Rubenson & Gupta, 1996). As such, the issues the researchers found pertained to the business sector, the founder's gender, the founder's age, the business age, the founder's level of education, and the number of the employees in the business. The gender of the owner's first born child, who would inherit the business, the education and the founder's children, the succession planning in place before transition occurred, and announcing the successor without causing family conflict (Ramadani et al., 2017).

Although succession planning keeps a family business thriving, succession plans are often not useful after the first generation of ownership. Eddleston, Kellermanns, Floyd, Crittenden, and Crittenden (2013) asserted the benefits of strategic and succession planning vary depending on the generation managing the privately held family business. Strategic and succession planning are useful in first generation firms, but not in second generation firms (Eddleston et al., 2013). This is sometimes attributed to sibling conflicts in second generation firms, which either cause firm termination or are resolved, allowing the firm to move forward in subsequent generations. Although succession planning is useful in the third generation, it is often viewed negatively in third generation and older firms (Eddleston et al., 2013). Eddleston et al. (2013) found strategic planning was crucial in furthering the continuity of family units, job creation, and economic growth. Plans should develop over time and not be a last-minute decision based on unforeseen events.

Więcek-Janka, Mierzwiak, and Kijewska (2016) presented barriers to the first succession within a family business in Poland. Their research supported traditional succession trends: the first succession was end of many firms and the second succession resulted in roughly one-third of the family firms making it to the third generation. Researchers determined the success of the first succession is often a result of work done by the original owner of the business (Więcek-Janka et al., 2016). Because the succession process usually involves resistance from successor candidates and family members, Więcek-Janka et al. (2016) analyzed these barriers. They conducted research using in-depth group interviews and a survey of family firms. The most prominent barrier that

emerged from the study was fear, including the fear of responsibility, fear of criticism from peers and family, fear of competition, and fear of being successful (Więcek-Janka et al., 2016). In some cases, successor candidates who were not trained in the business realized they lacked experience to run the business, to which the most prominent barrier was fear of responsibility. Within the family unit, the most prevalent fears emanated from fear of criticism from parents and seniors in the firm, and fear of competition within the firm and family. The researchers presented many fear barriers, including fear of being unsuccessful, lack of experience, lack of business perspective, reluctance to run a business, successors being too young, and lack of capital within the firm (Więcek-Janka et al., 2016). Więcek-Janka et al. (2016) concluded a deficiency of research exists regarding successor barriers in Poland. The researchers concluded, at least in Poland, an insufficient preparation of the younger generation to assume the duties of succession exists.

Knowledge Transfer

Knowledge transfer is the process in which two parties exchange both explicit and tacit knowledge with the intent that one of the parties will use the knowledge (Martinez, Galvan, & Palacios, 2016). Although explicit knowledge is learned through experience and must be acquired as the business environment changes, tacit knowledge is key to an organization's entrepreneurial competitive performance and advantage (Martinez et al., 2016). Both sets of knowledge are necessary in the knowledge transfer process, especially for family-owned businesses. Tacit knowledge is best transferred in a similar situation (Martinez et al., 2016). Tacit knowledge is linked to the emotional and intense

interactions of family, producing a historic private language among close knit family members and advancing the entrepreneurial success of the business (Martinez et al., 2016). The lack of a close familial atmosphere results in a lack of knowledge transfer and, in most cases, the failure of the family business (Martinez et al., 2016).

There are four context factors that affect the knowledge transfer mechanisms through which knowledge flows. Relational context defines whether knowledge is interconnected (Darr, Argote, & Epple, 1995). The mental abilities and processes a business owner uses regarding knowledge transfer is the cognitive context factor (Szulanski, 1996). Motivational context varies between business owners because of each person's personal preferences and social influences. This motivational context factor affects the business owner's behavior in indirect and direct knowledge transfer (Quigley, Tesluk, Locke, & Bartol, 2007). Knowledge transfer is affected by the mental state of the business owner, depending on the sense of security the business owner feels about the future of the business. This mental state is the emotional context factor (Elkjaer, 2004).

Transfer of tacit and explicit knowledge in interfamily succession can be difficult. Intrafamily knowledge transfer must address family relationships, trust factors for the predecessor, and the cooperation and willingness of the successor to learn and continue current business practices (Hatak & Roessl, 2015). The SECI model represents socialization, externalization, combination, and internalization (Hatak & Roessl, 2015). The model relates to tacit knowledge regarding socialization and externalization, and relates to explicit knowledge regarding combination and internalization (Hatak & Roessl, 2015). The model shows tacit knowledge transfer and conversion of explicit knowledge

using the SECI model. The predecessor's tacit knowledge can be transferred to the successor by means of shared experience. Using socialization and externalization, the tacit knowledge can become explicit knowledge, which is available to the successor (Hatak & Roessl, 2015). The predecessor must determine how the successor will behave when given the leadership role in the family business. A misappropriation of the knowledge transferred from the predecessor could lead to a diminished value of the business (Hatak & Roessl, 2015). The successor must show relational competence for the predecessor to provide correct information and knowledge transfer.

In succession planning, knowledge transfer is another facet that must be incorporated and managed when passing the business from one generation to another. Competent succession planning and thorough knowledge transfer of resources, values, and innovative competencies developed in prior generations can lead to increased success in family businesses (Csizmadia, Mako, & Heidrich, 2016). Survival of family firms in difficult and different geographical environment depends on the resources they possess, including tangible resources such as land, physical capital, and materials. Intangible resources, such as retained knowledge, can be the most influential assets because they are advantages that cannot be easily imitated (Csizmadia et al., 2016).

Business succession occurs in several ways. Ownership transfer is the most powerful approach, particularly if ownership is passed from one family member to another. However, the involvement of nonfamily members in ownership is debatable because nonmember management is risk-prone and may conflict with family security interests (Csizmadia et al., 2016). Business knowledge transfer and collective learning

within the family are the most beneficial tools for the survival of family-owned businesses. Knowledge transfer of socio-emotional wealth within the family is the second most powerful force for uniting and extending the business to future generations (Csizmadia et al., 2016).

Boyd et al. (2015) asserted industry types and length of business existence were common threads within family businesses. Also, many families had a commitment to their family values and specific business acumens. Intangible business knowledge, which is crucial to business survival, is often transferred from one generation to another within existing family structures. This is more common in Asian family businesses, but European family businesses show the same close family dominance in an atmosphere where contractual relations and seniority are traditionally the norm for choosing a successor (Boyd et al., 2015). In the study, Boyd et al. (2015) used purposeful sampling, which is a nonprobability sampling technique used when there are limited resources available within the study area. The researchers collected data using interviews, a workshop, and various sources with pertinent information about the company (Boyd et al., 2015). The results of the study indicated a focus on internal learning within both organizations. The researchers also noted the transfer of relevant knowledge could not be passed to external resources during the time period in which the study was conducted, and therefore had to remain within the family (Boyd et al., 2015).

These factors also exist in multicultural families, as demonstrated by Ye, Parris, and Waddell (2013), who focused on succession decisions in Chinese-Australian family businesses. Ye et al. (2013) noted although other family members make major decisions

about the business behind the scenes, business founders have the power. In a first-generation Chinese business, success is not always defined by financial gain. Instead, success is defined by social mobility or job security. Ye et al. (2013) showed business owners' main goal was to have security for their family. The researchers noted persistence within the business was a characteristic of all the business owners they interviewed. Strategic planning occurred in most businesses before the owners considered expansion. Although the business owners wanted to see their children take control of the firm, they also wanted their children to have the option to achieve individual independence of their own (Ye et al., 2013). During succession, each the owners told each of their child to bring ideas for the business that would encompass their own skills. This practice brought new ideas into the business, causing growth. Three contextual factors emerged from the study regarding the founder's succession intentions. The first factor was the founder's aspirations and vision (Ye et al., 2013). The second factor was the founder's value of independence and sense of freedom. Finally, the third factor was the options available for succession (Ye et al., 2013).

Summary of Findings

Throughout the studies I reviewed, there were some consistent findings despite variations in the designs, locations, and samples of the studies. For example, multiple researchers determined without effective succession planning in place, the majority of family-owned small businesses do not succeed beyond the first stage of transfer from the original owners to first successors (Abu Bakar et al., 2015; Duh, 2015; Nordqvist et al., 2013). Succession planning is particularly difficult because of the competing interests of

the original owners, who may have one vision for the company, and the successors, who may have an entirely different vision (Ramadani & Hoy, 2015; Sciascia et al., 2014).

Many owners and families experience difficulty implementing business transfers between generational cohorts. Many of these difficulties are rooted in leadership issues, loyalty to the company, the ambitions of the younger generation as they compare to the older generation, and how much knowledge is transferred between the two cohorts (Eddleston et al., 2013; Martinez et al., 2016; Ramadani et al., 2017; Więcek-Janka et al., 2016).

To deal with the various issues that may arise during the period in which an older generation relinquishes control of a business to a younger generation, researchers agreed having an effective succession plan in place was key (Boyd et al., 2015; Carter et al., 2016; Csizmadia et al., 2016; Hatak & Roessl, 2015; Ye et al., 2013). Effective succession planning is instrumental in ensuring the transfer of relevant knowledge to younger generations, so the business remains within the family (Boyd et al., 2015). Succession planning allows a successor to function positively within a family business environment, in which multiple conflicting views exist regarding what is best for the business (Carter et al., 2016). Additionally, researchers determined succession planning is necessary for successors to retain intangible resources that cannot be imitated outside of family firms. Also, succession planning is instrumental in collective learning (Csizmadia et al., 2016). The knowledge transfer aspect of succession planning is the most beneficial for family business survival, because it allows owners to unite and extend the business for future generations (Csizmadia et al., 2016; Hatak & Roessl, 2015; Ye et al., 2013).

Summary and Conclusions

In this chapter, I included a comprehensive literature review of peer-reviewed journal articles from the last five years regarding succession planning, age and succession planning, family business succession, knowledge transfer in family businesses, age and knowledge transfer, knowledge transfer, and leadership. I discussed the key factors and major trends regarding family-owned businesses, knowledge transfer, and succession planning. In the next chapter, I will discuss the research method and design in detail. The design of the present study allowed me to add information to close the gap in current literature.

Chapter 3: Research Method

The purpose of the present quantitative nonexperimental study was to examine the relationships between the subscales of cross-project tacit knowledge transfer and to examine generational differences in cross-project tacit knowledge transfer among small and family-owned businesses. In the following sections, I justify the use of a quantitative nonexperimental design. I describe the population, sampling plan, and data collection procedures. I explain the instrumentation and data analysis plan. The chapter will conclude with the threats to validity and the ethical considerations of the present study.

The target population included participants who held management or ownership positions in small, family businesses at the time of data collection. I collected data using the host website, SurveyMonkey. I used the online survey host to administer the demographic questionnaire and survey instrument. I used Spearman correlations to examine the strength of association subscales of cross-project knowledge transfer among owners in small, family businesses during succession planning. In addition, I used Kruskal-Wallis tests to examine differences in cross-project knowledge transfer between generational cohorts among these owners during succession planning.

Research Design and Rationale

I employed a quantitative, nonexperimental research design. In the social science field, quantitative research is an investigation for observable phenomena. The observable phenomena must be identified and measured by a researcher through computational, mathematical, or statistical techniques. After the researcher identifies phenomena, the next step in quantitative research is to develop mathematical hypotheses, models,

and theories using the data. Quantitative data are comprised of mathematical values in a numerical form and have meaning as a measurement. Numerical data come in two forms: discrete data and continuous data. Discrete data include anything that can be counted, whereas continuous data cannot be counted, but represent measurements. These measurements are defined using intervals on the real number line.

I considered qualitative research inappropriate for the present study because researchers use qualitative research to find the *why* and *how* of an event or situation. Although qualitative methods allow researchers to examine underlying perceptions and beliefs, such studies do not provide the level of statistical evidence present in a quantitative study (Pagano, 2009). Qualitative research leaves the researcher with a complete understanding of a phenomenon, as opposed to the empirical support for the particular research hypotheses (Stake, 1995). Psychologists, anthropologists, and sociologists predominantly use qualitative studies. Understanding a topic through a first-hand experience is a way in which qualitative data are used in these fields. There are several different research approaches qualitative researchers use: activist, auto ethnography, critical social research, ethical inquiry, ethnographic, foundational, grounded theory, historical, phenomenology, philosophical, pragmatic, social science and governmental research, and visual (Bogdan, & Taylor, 1987). I analyzed and rejected the use of a grounded theory study for the present research because these studies allow the researcher to use a single dataset dealing and a single theoretical construct (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). I also rejected ethnographic study because it is appropriate for researchers

focusing on cultural issues, ethnicities, and group behaviors, which I was not concerned with in the present study.

In the present study, I used a survey instrument developed using Landaeta's (2008) work on knowledge transfer across projects. The instrument has a Likert-type format. I calculated a composite score for each participant through an average score of the relevant survey questions. All the variables of interest were quantitatively measurable; therefore, a qualitative approach was not appropriate. Creamer (2017) noted that in mixed methods studies, researchers derive results from the integration of qualitative and quantitative data. Mixed methods were not appropriate for the present study because the survey did not yield both qualitative and quantitative data.

Quantitative research is appropriate for research that incorporates statistical examinations of numerically measurable constructs (Howell, 2013). The use of a quantitative methodology with a survey approach increases the researcher's ability to generalize findings to the larger population and increases the possibility for organizations and employees to benefit from the findings after the data are analyzed (Weber, 1990). In the present research, I examined the data for significant relationships between cross-project knowledge transfer and for potential differences in knowledge transfer between generational cohorts.

I selected a nonexperimental research design to examine for statistically significant relationships and for differences between numerically measurable constructs. A nonexperimental design is appropriate when assessing the relationship between variables without manipulating the variables of interest (Kothari, 2004). Specifically, I

incorporated correlational and comparative designs to address the research questions. A correlational design is appropriate when assessing the strength of association between variables of interest (Howell, 2013). In the present study, I examined the associations between the subscales of cross-project tacit knowledge transfer. A comparative design is appropriate when assessing differences in a naturally occurring independent variable. This design differs from a true experimental or quasiexperimental study in which participants are randomly assigned to treatment and control groups (Bordens & Abbott, 2008). For the present study, I evaluated and rejected an experimental research design. An experimental research design involves a causal relationship and the researcher manipulates one or more variables. I rejected the experimental research design because the purpose of the present study was not to examine the effect of a treatment on an outcome. In the present study, I examined differences for cross-project knowledge between generational cohorts. Longitudinal research was not applicable for the present study because the data were not collected over a period of time. Ex post facto research was not appropriate because I did not examine archival data.

In addition, through quantitative research, researchers can use inferential analyses to statistically confirm or reject a hypothesis (Howell, 2013). I used inferential analyses such as Spearman correlations and Kruskal-Wallis tests to examine the research questions and hypotheses. Researchers use surveys to gather information, determine attitudes from respondents concerning social issues, study environmental effects in populations, measure political choices in elections, determine demographic density in geographical locations, and measure results of scientific applications.

Researchers frequently use online surveys in academic behavioral research. Online surveys provide several benefits compared to paper surveys, including improved efficiency and cost-effectiveness (Tuten, 2010). Standardized questionnaires are useful for categorizing larger populations and allow the researcher to compare answers to the same question based on the participant's gender, ethnicity, age, and demographic placement (Babbie, 2001). When a researcher must analyze several variables in one study, the researcher yields a more in-depth descriptive analysis of groups and subgroups. Standardized questions make measurement more precise by allowing researchers to compare answers to the same question as individuals from different groups answered it (Babbie, 2001).

Methodology

The purpose of the quantitative nonexperimental study was to examine the relationships between the subscales of cross-project tacit knowledge transfer and to examine the generational differences in cross-project tacit knowledge transfer among small and family-owned businesses. In the following section, I include the specifics about the methodology of the present study to allow a future researcher to replicate the study.

Population

I used SurveyMonkey to screen the participants based on one requirement: "participant owns or manages a small-to-medium business or participant does not own or manage a small-to-medium business." Only survey participants who met the inclusion criteria were incorporated into the data collection and analysis.

One of the groups I studied was individuals in Generation X, who were born between 1961 and 1981 (Glass, 2007). Some characteristics of Generation X individuals include seeking a sense of family and being self-reliant (Yang & Guy, 2006). According to the U.S. Census Bureau, there are approximately 61 million individuals who are considered Generation X. The other group I studied were the millennials (also known as Generation Y), who were born between 1982 and 2002 (Glass, 2007). According to the U.S. Census Bureau, there are approximately 86.9 million individuals who are considered Generation Y. Thus, the entire population of individuals who are either Generation X or Generation Y is approximately 148 million people.

Sampling and Sampling Procedures

I used purposive sampling in the present study to target a specific group of participants. Through use of the SurveyMonkey Audience tool, I selected participants who met the inclusion criteria. The inclusion criteria for the present study incorporated only participants who owned or managed a small-to-medium business.

When using the inferential analyses, the researcher must sample from an adequate pool of participants. Among the analyses I originally planned to conduct, the MANOVA had the most stringent sample size requirement used in the power analysis calculation. I applied a medium effect size ($f^2 = .06$) and a generally accepted power of .80 (Cohen, 1992). I completed a two-group comparison (Generation X and Generation Y) and used five dependent variables. Based on this information, I used G*Power 3.1.7 to determine a minimum sample size of 212 participants, or 106 participants from each generational cohort, would be sufficient for the data collection (Faul et al., 2014).

Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection (Primary Data)

After obtaining permission from Walden University's Institutional Review Board (approval no. 11-03-17-0179676), I uploaded the demographic survey and Landaeta's (2008) data collection tool into SurveyMonkey. I used the SurveyMonkey Audience tool to target participants who met the inclusion criteria for the study. Only participants who owned or managed a small-to-medium sized businesses at the time of the survey were included in the data collection process. Every participant was provided a consent form before they began the survey. The consent form describes the purpose of the research and outlines the potential benefits and risks of participation. I notified participants of the voluntary nature of their participation. Each participant had the option to withdraw from the survey or stop answering questions at any time they wished. I did not collect identifying characteristics such as name, phone number, or address. Each of the participants was assigned a confidential numerical identifier. All data were collected by SurveyMonkey and were securely stored on their servers. I downloaded the final data set to my private PC and secured it. I also password protected the data. The PC is password protected and has a valid antivirus and malware program. I am the only person with access to the PC.

Pilot Study

A pilot study was not necessary for the present study because the instrument I used was validated in a prior study. The key source of data for the present study included a self-report survey taken from Landaeta's (2008) work on knowledge transfer across projects. I obtained permission from Landaeta to use the survey tool for the purposes of

the present study project (see Appendix B). Landaeta (2008) proved cross-project knowledge transfer refers to the actions taken to shift available knowledge to another individual. I retested the validity of the instrument in the present study.

Instrumentation and Operationalization of Constructs

The key source of data included a self-report survey taken from Landaeta's (2008) work on knowledge transfer across projects (see Appendix A). I obtained permission to use the survey for the purposes of the present research (see Appendix B). The 34-item survey instrument was hosted on Survey Monkey Audience. The survey consisted of items that measured cross-project knowledge transfer and knowledge assimilation. Cross-project knowledge transfer refers to the actions taken to shift available knowledge to another individual (Landaeta, 2008). I administered participants a survey regarding cross-project knowledge transfer for succession planning in their respective businesses. In the survey, Landaeta (2008) used a Likert-type scale, which allowed for efficient data collection and a high response rate (Sekaran & Bougie, 2010). A Likert-type scale leads to high response rates by creating questions for the participants to answer quickly. Each question can be more specific in nature. The use of a Likert-type scale question also allows the participants to select a button for their answers. Participants do not have to write lengthy responses.

The survey measures five subscales: human formal methods, human informal methods, technology formal methods, technology informal methods, and knowledge assimilation. Computing a mean of respective survey items generates the subscales. The resulting subscales are interval level variables. For the subscales within the cross-project

knowledge transfer construct, each survey item had a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*never*) to 5 (*more than 10 times*). For the knowledge assimilation variable, each survey item had a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). Each of the five scales have been proven valid and reliable through an exploratory factor analysis and Cronbach's alpha tests among a sample of project managers and team members. I conducted a confirmatory factor analysis on each subscale and determined the final set of survey items. The Cronbach's alpha coefficients for the scales ranged from .70–.88 (Landaeta, 2008).

The variables of interest, as measured by Landaeta's (2008) survey, were human formal methods, human informal methods, technology formal methods, technology informal methods, and knowledge assimilation. I treated each of the subscales as interval level variables. I treated generational cohort as a nominal level variable, which corresponded to either Generation X or Generation Y.

Data Analysis Plan

I entered the data collected from the survey process into SPSS version 24.0 for Windows. First, I screened the data for accuracy and completion. I reviewed the distribution of each of the survey responses to ensure the data fell within the theoretical range of possible values. Once the data were reduced, to account for partial responses and nonresponses, I used descriptive statistics to examine the sample. I used frequencies and percentages for the nominal and ordinal level variables. I used means and standard deviations for the continuous level variables. Statistical significance for all inferential analyses were evaluated at the conventional alpha value, $\alpha = .05$.

I used Cronbach's alpha to examine the internal consistency of the scales.

Cronbach's alpha is a calculation of the mean correlation between each pair of survey items comprising the scale (Brace, Kemp, & Snelgar, 2012). I interpreted the degree of the coefficients using the guidelines suggested by George and Mallery (2016) where $\alpha \geq .9$ = excellent, $\alpha \geq .8$ = good, $\alpha \geq .7$ = acceptable, $\alpha \geq .6$ = questionable, $\alpha \geq .5$ = poor, and $\alpha < .5$ = unacceptable.

RQ1: What is the correlation between the subscales of cross-project tacit knowledge transfer among owners in small, family businesses during succession planning?

H₀1: There is not a significant correlation between the subscales of cross-project knowledge tacit transfer among owners in small, family businesses during succession planning.

H_a1: There is a significant correlation between the subscales of cross-project knowledge tacit transfer among owners in small, family businesses during succession planning.

To address RQ1, I proposed to use a Pearson correlation matrix to measure the association between the subscales of cross-project tacit knowledge transfer among individuals in small businesses during succession planning. Due to the assumption of normality not being met, the nonparametric Spearman correlation was conducted instead. I used Cohen's standard to interpret the strength of the correlation coefficients (Cohen, 1988). Applying Cohen's standard, coefficients ranging between .10 –.29 represent a

small association; coefficients ranging between .30 –.49 represent a medium association; and coefficients larger than .50 represent a large association or relationship.

RQ2: What are the differences in cross-project knowledge tacit transfer between generational cohorts (Gen X vs. Gen Y) among owners in small, family businesses during succession planning?

H₀2: There are not significant differences in cross-project knowledge tacit transfer between generational cohorts (Gen X vs. Gen Y) among owners in small, family businesses during succession planning.

H_a2: There are significant differences in cross-project tacit knowledge transfer between generational cohorts (Gen X vs. Gen Y) among owners in small, family businesses during succession planning.

To address RQ2, I originally proposed to use a MANOVA to assess differences in cross-project tacit knowledge transfer between generational cohorts during succession planning. However, due to the assumption of normality not being met, the nonparametric Kruskal-Wallis test was used instead. The independent grouping variable was generational cohort, including two possible levels: Generation X and Generation Y. The dependent variables were human formal methods, human informal methods, technology formal methods, technology informal methods, and knowledge assimilation.

Threats to Validity

External Validity

Threats to external validity affect the generalization of findings to the larger population. Because I used a purposive sampling approach, there was a potential threat of

external validity related to selection bias, which could lower my ability to generalize the findings from the present research to the larger population. I was cautious when interpreting the statistical findings, and did not automatically assume the findings were generalized to the larger population, as noted by Creswell (2014).

Internal Validity

Threats to internal validity are the specific biases that occur within the methodology and data collection process. Using a quantitative methodology limits the researcher in terms of exploring underlying perceptions or experiences of the participants, opposed to a qualitative design. In addition, confounding variables may alter the strength of the statistical relationships or differences between the variables of interest. I acknowledged the potential effects unmeasured covariates could have on the statistical relationships or differences. I suggested additional variables for inclusion in future studies. There are also inherent weaknesses regarding the use of an online survey approach. I had to elicit enough responses to have enough data to analyze; however, this is not always possible. Babbie (2011) cautioned respondents often may not be truthful in their response to personal questions of political or controversial issues. Opposed to observation, researchers using surveys cannot address context and subtlety well. Babbie (2001) stated researchers who design standardized questions may often miss the point and superficially answer questions on complex issues. Researchers using survey research methods have had difficulty addressing the context of social life. Landaeta's (2008) survey has been confirmed to be a reliable and valid tool. There is also a potential threat

for statistical conclusion validity. Parametric assumptions are not met if the sample size is too small, creating potential for a Type II error to occur.

Ethical Procedures

I gave each participant who completed the survey a consent form. I wrote the consent form in plain language that was easy for any layperson to understand. Before beginning the survey, each participant knew the topics covered by the survey and background information on the topic they needed to know. The instructions included information about survey length and the estimated time it would take the participant to finish the survey (Peterson, 2000). The participants had the option to withdraw from the survey or stop answering questions at any time they wished. I informed each participant how the information from the study will be used in the future (Peterson, 2000).

Information the participants provided was anonymous. In the results and the study analysis, all participants were referenced as a number only. I did not use any personal data or identifying information in the results of the study. The data were kept confidential and not distributed to any other parties. I did not use personal participant information for any purposes outside of this research project. I kept data secured with an internal data system with proper passcodes for access, which only I have. I will keep data for a period of at least five years, as required by the university, and then destroy it.

I obtained the necessary Institutional Review Board approval before conducting the survey. All data were anonymous and confidential. SurveyMonkey housed the data storage and dissemination and it will be destroyed according to their documented procedures.

Summary

The purpose of the quantitative nonexperimental study was to examine the relationships between the subscales of cross-project tacit knowledge transfer and to examine the generational differences in cross-project tacit knowledge transfer among small and family-owned businesses. In this chapter, I identified and justified the selection of a quantitative nonexperimental design. I described the population of interest, sampling plan, and data collection procedures using SurveyMonkey. I also identified the instrumentation and data analysis plan. I concluded the chapter with the threats to internal validity, the threats to external validity, and the ethical considerations.

The key source of data included a self-report survey taken from Landaeta's (2008) work on knowledge transfer across projects. The survey included 34 questions on an online questionnaire. In the data collection process, I used purposive sampling. I used frequencies and percentages for the nominal and ordinal level variables. I examined the means and standard deviations for the continuous level variables. I identified threats to validity and carefully monitored these threats throughout the study. I accounted for the ethical considerations, specifically surrounding participant concerns, within the design and implementation of the study.

Chapter 4: Results

The purpose of the quantitative nonexperimental study was to examine the relationships between the subscales of cross-project tacit knowledge transfer and to examine generational differences in cross-project tacit knowledge transfer among small and family-owned business. The primary research questions and hypotheses for this study are as follows:

RQ1: What is the relationship between the subscales of cross-project tacit knowledge transfer among owners in small, family businesses during succession planning?

H₀1: There is not a significant relationship between the subscales of cross-project tacit knowledge transfer among owners in small, family businesses during succession planning.

H_A1: There is a significant relationship between the subscales of cross-project knowledge tacit transfer among owners in small, family businesses during succession planning.

RQ2: What are the differences in cross-project tacit knowledge transfer between generational cohorts (Gen X vs Gen Y) among owners in small, family businesses during succession planning?

H₀2: There are not significant differences in cross-project tacit knowledge transfer between generational cohorts (Gen X vs Gen Y) among owners in small, family businesses during succession planning.

H_{A2}: There are significant differences in cross-project tacit knowledge transfer between generational cohorts (Gen X vs Gen Y) among owners in small, family businesses during succession planning.

In this chapter, I present the findings of the descriptive statistics and inferential analyses proposed for the study. Descriptive statistics consisted of exploring the trends in the nominal and continuous level data. In addition, the internal consistency of the scales was assessed through use of Cronbach's alpha test. Spearman correlations and Kruskal-Wallis tests were the primary statistical analyses proposed to address the two research questions. I evaluated significance at the conventional level, $\alpha = .05$.

Descriptive Statistics

Survey Monkey Audience was used to target prospective participants and host the online survey. The inclusion criteria for the study was based off the screening requirement: participant owns or manages a small-to-medium business. A total of 434 participants were deemed eligible for the study through Survey Monkey Audience. Among these individuals, 62 individuals did not provide consent and 139 did not respond to any portion of the questionnaire. The final sample size consisted of 233 participants leading to a response rate of approximately 54%. I used frequencies and percentages to examine the trends in the nominal level variables. Most of the participants in the sample were women. And most of the participants were part of Generation X. The number of participants in Generation X and Generation Y in this study were not distributed proportionally to the overall population. Approximately 20.5% of the US population is

identified as Generation X, while 24.7% of the population is identified as Generation Y.

In Table 1, I present the frequencies and percentages of the nominal variables.

Table 1

Frequency Table for Nominal Variables

Variable	<i>N</i>	%
Gender		
Female	139	59.7
Male	94	40.3
Generation		
Generation X	136	58.4
Generation Y	90	38.6
Missing	7	3.0

The ages of the participants ranged from 18–91, with $M = 43.20$ and $SD = 16.11$.

The subscales of cross-project tacit knowledge transfer were calculated through means of the respective groups of items that comprised each scale. After calculating the composite subscales, the descriptive statistics of the scales were examined through means and standard deviations. Knowledge assimilation had the highest mean score among the subscales, followed by human formal methods. In Table 2, I present the findings of the descriptive statistic for the interval level variables.

Table 2

Summary Statistics Table for Interval Variables

Variable	Min.	Max.	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Age	18.00	91.00	43.20	16.11
Technology formal methods	1.00	5.00	2.19	1.01
Human formal methods	1.00	5.00	2.49	1.04
Technology informal methods	1.00	5.00	2.17	1.03
Human informal methods	1.00	5.00	2.39	0.99
Knowledge assimilation	1.00	5.00	3.31	0.92

Reliability

I examined Cronbach's alpha values for the items within each of the scales. I interpreted the value of the coefficients through incremental thresholds described by George and Mallery (2016), in which $\alpha \geq .9$ = excellent, $\alpha \geq .8$ = good, $\alpha \geq .7$ = acceptable, $\alpha \geq .6$ = questionable, $\alpha \geq .5$ = poor, and $\alpha < .5$ = unacceptable. The results for technology formal, human formal, and human informal variables had questionable reliability. The technology formal variable had acceptable reliability and knowledge assimilation had excellent reliability. Due to three of the subscales having lower levels of reliability, the findings of the inferential analyses with these variables will need to be interpreted with a level of caution. In Table 3, I report the Cronbach's alpha statistics.

Table 3

Internal Consistency for Scales

Scale	α
Technology Formal Methods	.606
Human Formal Methods	.670
Technology Informal Methods	.797
Human Informal Methods	.645
Knowledge Assimilation	.910

Detailed Analyses

RQ1: What is the relationship between the subscales of cross-project tacit knowledge transfer among owners in small, family businesses during succession planning?

H_{01} : There is not a significant relationship between the subscales of cross-project tacit knowledge transfer among owners in small, family businesses during succession planning.

H_{a1} : There is a significant relationship between the subscales of cross-project knowledge tacit transfer among owners in small, family businesses during succession planning.

To address Research Question 1, I originally proposed to examine a series of Pearson correlations to assess the strength of the associations between the subscales of cross-project tacit knowledge transfer. However, due to the assumption of normality not being met, non-parametric Spearman correlations were conducted instead of the Pearson correlations

The findings from the Spearman correlation indicated a statistically significant association for seven of the 10 correlations. In addition, each relationship was positive, suggesting a direct association between the variables of interest. An incremental criterion was used to interpret the strength of the associations (Cohen, 1988). Four of the Spearman correlations indicated a strong association ($r > .50$). Two of the correlations indicated a medium association ($.30 \leq r \leq .49$). Two of the correlations indicated a small association ($.10 \leq r \leq .29$). Due to a majority of the Spearman correlations indicating significance, I rejected the null hypothesis for Research Question 1. In Table 4, I present the findings of the Spearman correlations.

Table 4

Spearman Correlations Between Subscales of Cross-Project Tacit Knowledge Transfer

Term	Technology Formal	Human Formal	Technology Informal	Human Informal	Knowledge Assimilation
Technology Formal	-				
Human Formal	.510*	-			
Technology Informal	.749*	.382*	-		
Human Informal	.404*	.721*	.502*	-	
Knowledge Assimilation	.035	.159*	.098	.118	-

Note: *Correlation significant at .05 alpha level

RQ2: What are the differences in cross-project tacit knowledge transfer between generational cohorts (Gen X vs. Gen Y) among owners in small, family businesses during succession planning?

H_{02} : There are not significant differences in cross-project tacit knowledge transfer between generational cohorts (Gen X vs. Gen Y) among owners in small, family businesses during succession planning.

H_{a2} : There are significant differences in cross-project tacit knowledge transfer between generational cohorts (Gen X vs. Gen Y) among owners in small, family businesses during succession planning.

To address Research Question 2, I originally proposed to use a MANOVA to determine whether significant differences exist in cross-project tacit knowledge transfer between generational cohorts. Due to the assumption of normality not being met for the dependent variables, the non-parametric Kruskal-Wallis test was instead conducted for each dependent variable. The independent grouping variable was generational cohort: Generation X and Generation Y.

Generation Y individuals had significantly higher mean scores than Generation X individuals for technology formal, human formal, technology informal, and human informal methods. Generation X individuals had higher mean scores than Generation Y individuals for knowledge assimilation. I present the descriptive statistics in Table 5. Bar charts for each of the subscales are presented in Figures 1 – 5.

Table 5

Descriptive Statistics for Cross-Project Knowledge Transfer by Age Cohort

Anxiety	Avoidance	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>
Technology Formal Methods	Generation X	1.96	1.01	136
	Generation Y	2.51	0.94	90
	Total	2.18	1.02	226
Human Formal Methods	Generation X	2.27	1.08	136
	Generation Y	2.82	0.90	90
	Total	2.49	1.05	226
Technology Informal Methods	Generation X	2.04	1.11	136
	Generation Y	2.36	0.88	90
	Total	2.17	1.04	226
Human Informal Methods	Generation X	2.18	1.03	136
	Generation Y	2.71	0.88	90
	Total	2.39	1.00	226
Knowledge Assimilation	Generation X	3.42	1.04	136
	Generation Y	3.18	0.70	90
	Total	3.32	0.92	226

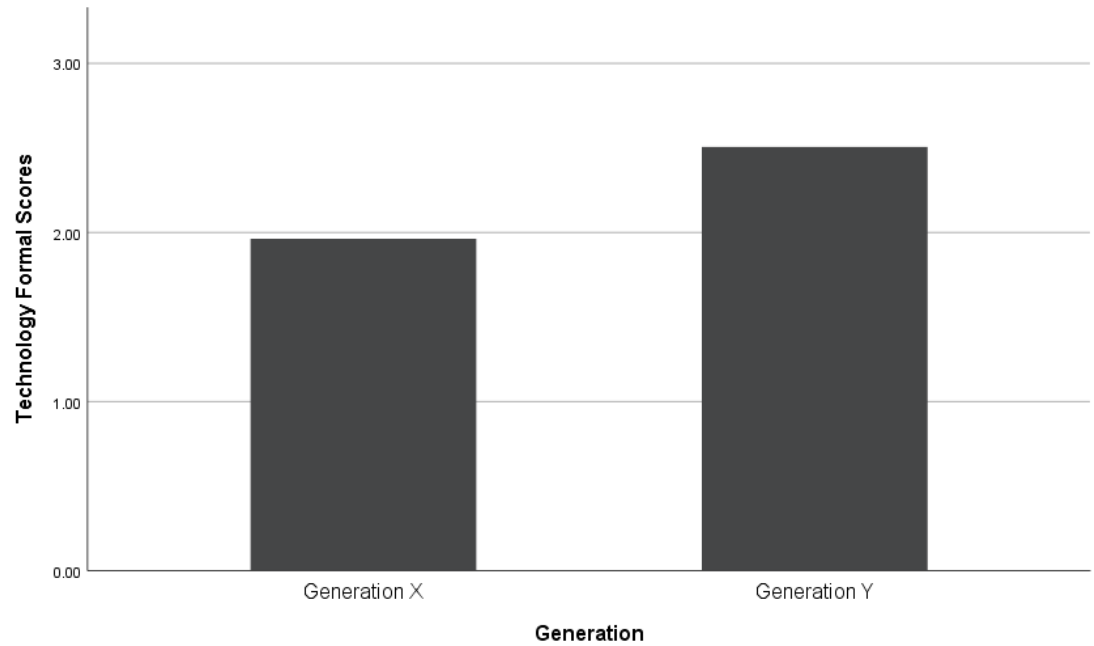


Figure 1. Mean technology formal scores by generation.

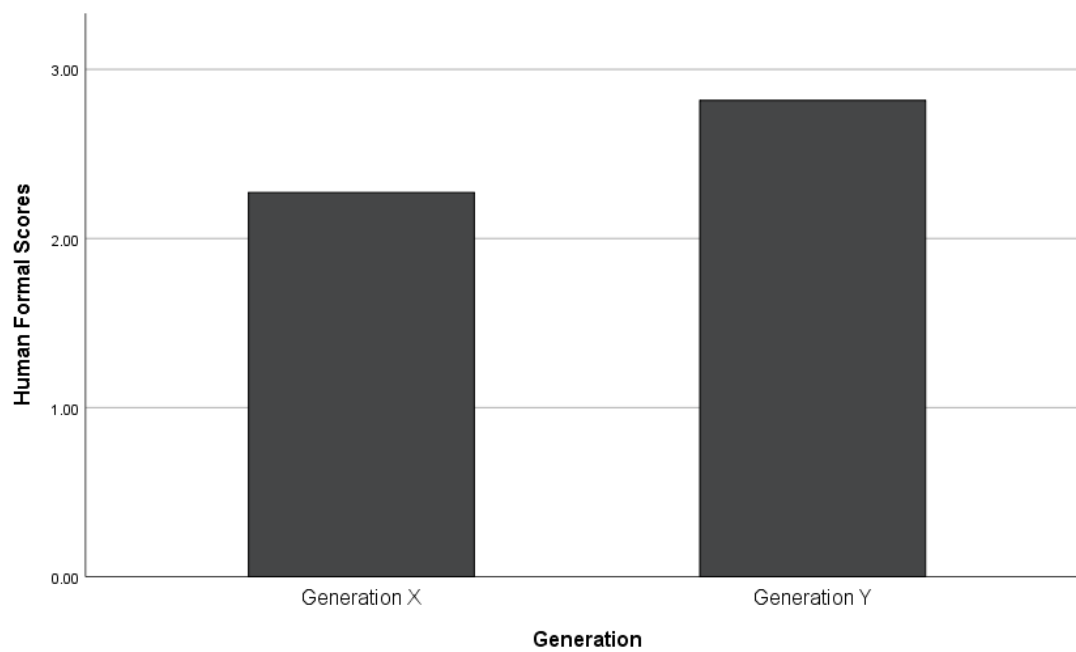


Figure 2. Mean human formal scores by generation.

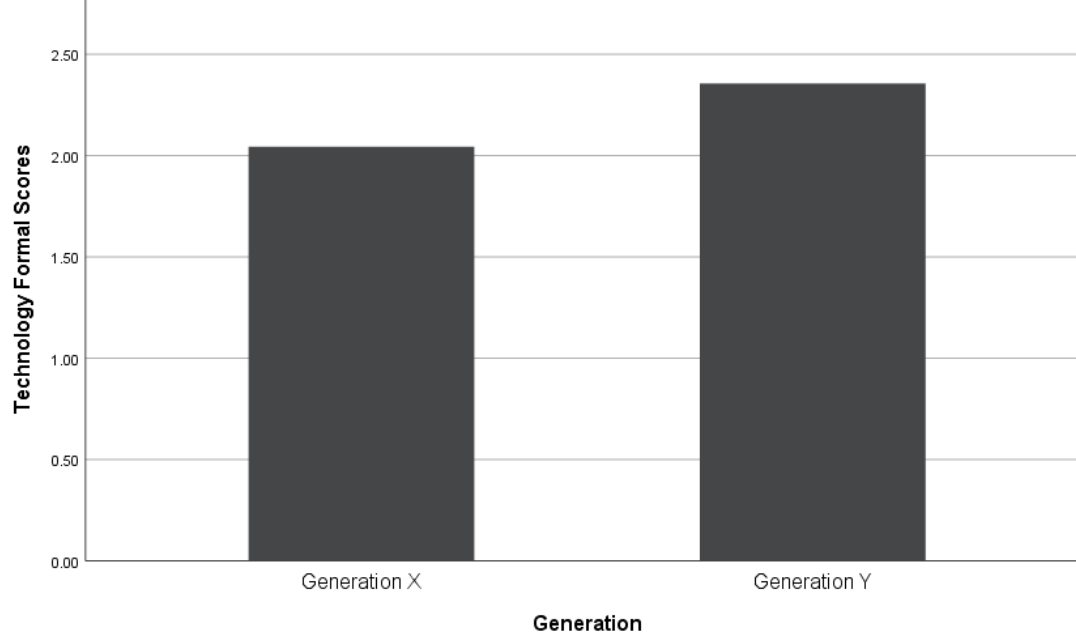


Figure 3. Mean technology formal scores by generation.

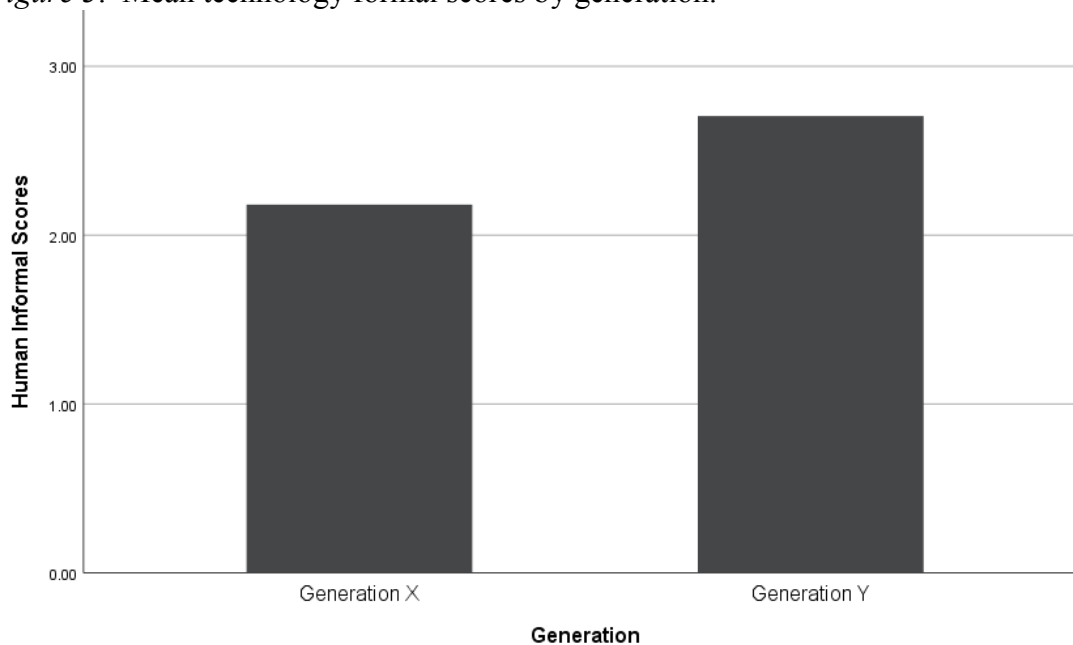


Figure 4. Mean human informal scores by generation.

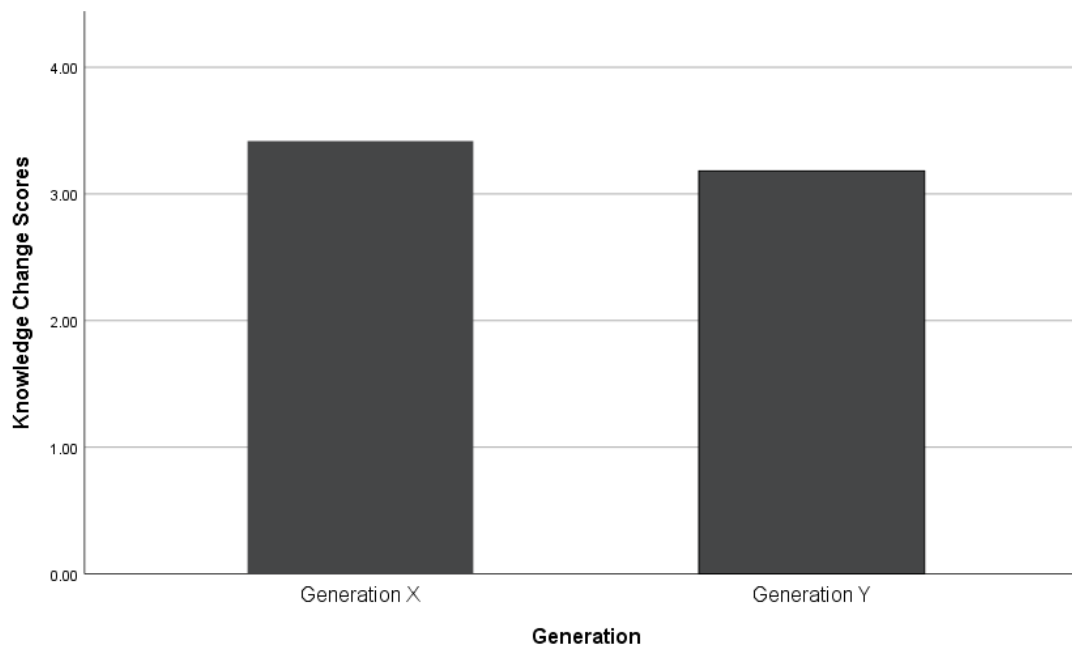


Figure 5. Mean knowledge assimilation scores by generation.

The findings for all five Kruskal-Wallis tests were statistically significant. The mean ranks in the Kruskal Wallis test provided similar disparity to the mean scores. Due to statistically significant differences in all the subscales, I rejected the null hypothesis for research question two. I present the findings of the Kruskal-Wallis tests in Table 6.

Table 6

Kruskal-Wallis Tests for Cross-Project Knowledge Transfer by Age Cohort

Term	Generation X	Generation Y	<i>H</i>	<i>p</i>
	<i>Mean Rank</i>	<i>Mean Rank</i>		
Technology Formal Methods	98.50	136.13	18.51	<.001
Human Formal Methods	98.56	136.08	18.23	<.001
Technology Informal Methods	102.22	130.55	10.49	<.001
Human Informal Methods	98.65	135.94	18.11	<.001
Knowledge Assimilation	125.10	95.97	10.85	.001

Summary

The purpose of the quantitative nonexperimental study was to examine the relationships between the subscales of cross-project tacit knowledge transfer and to examine the generational differences in cross-project tacit knowledge transfer among small and family-owned business. The findings of the Spearman correlations for Research Question 1 indicated significant positive associations for a majority of the pairs of cross-project tacit knowledge transfer. The findings of the Kruskal-Wallis test for Research Question 2 indicated significant differences for all subscales by generation cohort. In the next chapter, I continue to explore the statistical findings and connect the results of the present study to existing literature.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

The purpose of the quantitative nonexperimental study was to examine the relationships between the subscales of cross-project tacit knowledge transfer, and to examine the generational differences in cross-project tacit knowledge transfer among small and family-owned businesses. The unique focus on generational cohort as a variable emerged because of its prevalence in the study of succession planning around the world. The results of the study indicated there were significant positive associations between the subscales of cross-project tacit knowledge transfer and significant differences existed in all subscales by generation cohort, except for knowledge assimilation.

In this chapter, I present the interpretation of the findings, the limitations of the study, and the recommendations for further practice and research. Following this, I present the implications of the study, which include a discussion regarding the relevance of the findings of the present study in the larger field of study. Finally, I end the chapter with the conclusions.

Interpretation of Findings

The first substantial finding of the present study was generational diversity is positively associated with collective decision-making. Through Spearman correlations, I determined a significant association existed between nearly every pair of subscales. In addition, each relationship was positive, suggesting a direct association. The strength of the associations ranged from small to large. The findings from the present study increased

the literature regarding the differences between generational employees in the knowledge transfer that occurs during succession planning.

Other researchers have supported this finding in previous research. Tsai et al. (2017) explained how crucial generational diversity is to family business success. Generational differences in the workplace are becoming more common (Becton et al., 2014; Costanza & Finkelstein, 2015). Individuals from Generation X and Generation Y have experienced a workforce with diversity, widespread layoffs, and a need for employees to continually participate in training (Mencl & Lester, 2014). Generation Y individuals grew up around technology and learned technology skills before entering the workplace (Mencl & Lester, 2014).

Additionally, the present study was similar to previous research in terms of the technology formal and technology informal variables. In the present study, the results indicated significantly higher mean scores for Generation Y individuals compared Generation X individuals in these areas. Because the assumption of normality was not met for all variables, I used nonparametric Kruskal-Wallis tests instead of the originally proposed MANOVA. The findings of the Kruskal-Wallis tests indicated that there were significant differences in all five subscales by generation cohort. As indicated by the mean scores, Generation Y individuals had significantly higher mean scores than Generation X individuals for technology formal, human formal, technology informal, and human informal methods. Generation X individuals had higher mean scores than Generation Y individuals for knowledge assimilation.

Duh and Letonja (2013) asserted tacit and explicit knowledge during the succession planning phase can create stages of knowledge conversion. In the present study, I used Kruskal-Wallis tests, which had a p -value less than .05 for all variables, indicating there was significance and some differences exist based on generational cohort. This coincides with Duh and Letonja's assertions that family-owned businesses do not usually have a written succession plan. Instead, they rely on verbal plans and teaching. In the present study, I determined a solely verbal form of tacit knowledge transfer may not be adequate for transferring knowledge among all generational cohorts.

Current literature shows effective succession planning is crucial to the survival of family-owned businesses within the first generation's transfer and the third generation's transfer; however, this is not as necessary in the transfer in the second generation (Eddleston et al., 2013). The findings from present study support this claim, indicating a significant difference in cross-project knowledge transfer by generational cohort exists.

Becton et al. (2014) described generational differences in the workplace as having a minimal effect on the way managers handle employees; however, Becton et al. noted existing generational differences in some workplace behaviors. With the present study, I increased the available literature on this topic because the data indicated significant differences in cross-project tacit knowledge transfer between generational cohorts. These findings also match the findings of a study by Costanza and Finkelstein (2015), who indicated cross-sectional or cross-temporal designs were used in studies in the existing literature. With the findings from the present study, I added a cross-project aspect to the existing knowledge. The other two designs (cross-sectional and cross-temporal) do not

allow the researcher to remove the effects of generational age from the outcome of the study. Using the findings from the present study, I was able to show significant positive associations between the subscales of cross-project tacit knowledge transfer. Researchers have applied most of the generational research in the preexisting literature to succession planning (Brun de Pontet et al., 2007; Dawson et al., 2014). With the results from the present study, I was able to add to the literature regarding generational differences in cross-project tacit knowledge transfer. Although knowledge transfer can also be applied to succession planning, the findings from the present study added to the depth of the current available literature.

The highest level of entrepreneurial orientation is achieved when two generations work in a family business at the same time (Michael-Tsabari et al., 2014). In the present study, I used generational cohort as a variable to increase the knowledge in the relevant literature because age plays a large role in succession planning. In the current literature, researchers have stated an organization's entrepreneurial advantage and competitive performance come from tacit knowledge (Martinez et al., 2016). The findings from the present study will help family-owned business owners know the correct routes for transferring knowledge between generations. Hatak and Roessl (2015) noted how difficult transferring tacit knowledge can be with interfamily succession. The findings from the present study alleviate this issue by helping business owners present the information in a form that individuals in the younger generation will be willing to accept and understand. Researchers have shown competent succession planning leads to longer life cycles in family businesses (Csizmadia et al., 2016).

Limitations of the Study

There were several limitations in the present study. The time restriction was a factor in determining the sample size. It also led to a reduction in the time participants had to complete the survey. An additional limitation existed in that this research had a nonexperimental design. Using a nonexperimental design there is no way for controlling or manipulating participants through randomization or treatments. Therefore, I could not measure or infer causality from any significant relationships or differences. If the survey was a face-to-face interview, I could have asked for clarification if the participant gave a short or vague answer. A face-to-face interview would have allowed me to interpret body language and the diction the participant used when providing the answer.

Another limitation of the study was the scope I evaluated. Because I did not have access to a large database with business owners' e-mail addresses, I had to use the SurveyMonkey audience tool. Although SurveyMonkey's audience tool had the database of business owners, there was no randomization regarding the selection of surveyed business owners because the audience tool comprised people who opted into being sent surveys. This essentially limited the study by placing the sample pool in the hands of SurveyMonkey instead of me. Therefore, I was limited in that I could not contact the participants.

Further limitations existed in the demographics of the survey respondents. The first of these limitations was a disproportionate number of female survey respondents compared to male survey respondents. Because of this difference, I cannot rule out gender bias. The gender distribution was larger for women because 59.7% of participants

were female and the remaining 40.3% of participants were male. Regarding age, the participants ranged in age from 18–91. There was an uneven response rate between the two surveyed generational groups because 58.4% of participants were from Generation X. There were 50 more Generation X participants than Generation Y participants, which introduced the potential for Generation X individuals to skew the outcome of the study. Fifty more participants in one category was a significant factor when I determined the statistical rates.

Another limit to the study pertains to the survey responses from participants. Some people who answer surveys are not always truthful in their responses. There is also an added error factor because participants may intend to be truthful, but they do not remember information from their past accurately. There are weaknesses to using the survey instrumentation.

Three of the reliability coefficients were between .60 and .70. This could be attributed to participants not answering consistently on the questionnaire for these specific survey items. Therefore, the findings of these scales should be interpreted with a level of caution. If the reliability coefficients were higher a lot of the findings may have not been significant. I had to elicit a sufficient number of responses to have enough data to analyze.

Obtaining a sufficient number of respondents is not always possible. In the present study, there were not enough respondents from one particular state, so I had to open the study to include individuals from anywhere in the country. This limited my ability to obtain a narrow sample. This broad participant inclusion criteria may have had

a limiting effect on the outcomes of the study because of varying geographic business ethics. The same business ethics may not exist in a west coast family business as in an east coast family business.

Recommendations

There are multiple recommendations that stemmed from the present study, pertaining to research and practice. I included these recommendations to help researchers and practitioners address the limitations I experienced during the present study.

Regarding future research, I have multiple recommendations that address the aforementioned limitations and have the potential to expand the existing body of knowledge on the topic of study.

The first set of recommendations concern future research because the recommendations are directly linked with the limitations experienced during the present study. I recommend researchers conduct another version of the present study using a wider audience of business owners to increase the sample size. This will give future researchers more data to use when analyzing the results. As the population increases, so does the number of statistical variations a researcher can use. For the present study, the required G power was 212. However, a larger population through randomly selecting participants would allow for other statistical evaluations. Using a different instrument with a higher internal consistency reliability could also have increased the population and allowed for other statistical evaluations. I also recommend the researcher conduct the study with a longer time frame, to allow for more participants to take part in the study. This increase in time frame would allow each participant to have a longer period of time

to complete the study. If a participant does not feel rushed, they may provide better answers to the questions. Also, if the participants have a longer time frame to answer the questions, they may be more likely to schedule time to take the study for a later day, and choose to complete the study instead of declining to participate.

Because some of the study limitations pertained to demographics and scope, future researchers should take these into account when expanding the present study. For demographics, I recommend the study take place where the demographics are narrowed because it would be easier to pinpoint more specifics about the demographics of individuals needed to complete the survey. The goal of the present study was to have an even distribution of male and female participants. However, there was a disproportionate number of female participants compared to male participants. An even distribution of demographics with the participants prevents demographic bias from affecting the conclusions. I recommend completing further research in a smaller geographical region to ensure the participants have similar work environments, which could potentially eliminate bias in their responses. This would also help ensure the participants have similar work ethics, which would help future researchers evaluate the differences in responses to questions regarding attitudes toward work.

I would also recommend conducting a future study using in-person interviews instead of the online survey method. This would give the researcher a better depth of understanding of the participants' responses. This would also eliminate the inability to measure or infer causality. Additionally, I recommend researchers conduct another study with an expanded scope, which would allow for different assumptions. Using probability

sampling and instruments with better internal consistency reliability might have generated data that were normally distributed. Thus, replicating the study with probability sampling and an improved instrument might reveal different results. If future researchers performed another study in which the assumptions were met, it would strengthen the validity of the hypothesis.

Lastly, I recommend future researchers complete another study in which the researcher has access to a large database of owners who run family businesses. This would allow for a larger sample size and eliminate the bias of participants who complete surveys for some other gain. Also, it would open the survey opportunity to all family-owned business owners within the targeted geographical region.

I have a number of recommendations for practice, as well. Family-owned business owners can use the results of the present study to practice new methods of succession planning. Based on the generational cohort of the individual who is the next successor in the family business, the owner can see which of the cross-project tacit knowledge transfer methods would work best for their needs. Another recommendation for practice is for family business owners to understand the importance of cross-project tacit knowledge. The findings of the present study indicate each of the five subscale variables directly affect each other; any type of increase in cross-project tacit knowledge the business owner implements will have significant effects on the other four aspects of the cross-project tacit knowledge. Lastly, the family-owned business owner should understand the best route to disseminate the knowledge they are passing on. The business

owner cannot achieve a successful transfer to the next generation without knowing how to effectively pass on the knowledge they have in their heads.

Implications

The present study has the possibility of creating positive social change within the small to medium size family owned business industry. Using the findings from this study a small to medium size family owned business has the ability to implement a successful succession plan based on generational differences. A transference of business ownership from one generation to the next is essential to keeping the business open and contributing to society. Transferring the tacit knowledge from one generation to the next ensures the business will continue to contribute to the positive growth of society. Allowing the next generation to own and manage the business of the old family generation can create positive social change.

The findings of the present study may confirm aspects of Argyris and Schön's (1978) organizational learning theory. In the present study, I applied organizational learning theory to the family business model, which was noticeably absent in the current literature. In the present study, I expanded the theory into the family-owned business field of study, highlighting the differences in cross-project tacit knowledge transfer between generational cohorts. Now data exist regarding the five types of cross-project tacit knowledge, which include technology formal methods, human formal methods, technology informal methods, human informal methods, and knowledge assimilation. Because I determined a significant difference between individuals of different generational cohorts, the findings may allow owners and operators of family-owned

businesses to pick the correct form of knowledge transfer for the next generation. Depending on the generational cohort of the individual taking control of the family business, the owner would use either a technology or a human method, which would allow more knowledge to flow effectively from the current owner or operator of the family-owned business to the successor. In the present study, I demonstrated the key tenets of the theory may change when implemented within family-owned businesses.

The findings of the present study enhanced the information available regarding knowledge transfer. In the present study, I examined how owners apply tacit knowledge transfer within family-owned businesses between generational cohorts. After the owner knows the best route to disseminate the knowledge, they can share more of their unwritten knowledge with the successor. Perhaps the owner has a daily routine the successor should follow. In that case, knowing how to transfer this undocumented knowledge is crucial for the continued success of the business. Another example of this tacit knowledge transfer could be contacts at outside businesses who the owner knows to contact when certain situations arise. Knowing how to pass along the information about these contacts could be vital to the successor's success in the business.

The results of the present study will assist family business owners in understanding how to pass business knowledge to younger successors. Because researchers who contributed to the pre-existing literature demonstrated younger successors need to be given the chance to take control of family-owned business at a younger age, the results of the present study give the older generation owners the knowledge of how to pass information along easier. The faster and easier individuals pass

along information allows the successor to take control of the operations of the business faster. The results of present study confirmed what previous researchers have determined: the longer the older generation postpones the necessary knowledge transfer, the less likely the business is to remain successful (Carter et al., 2016).

Additionally, the results of the present study reinforce Helin and Jabri's (2015) concept of early succession planning as necessary for a business to remain competitive and profitable. As such, the information from the present study contributed to the breadth and depth of the pre-existing literature regarding knowledge transfer through succession planning. In the present study, I detailed the differences in how individuals from different generational cohorts transfer knowledge. This knowledge will help a family-owned business owner determine the type of succession plan to execute. It will also give business owners an idea of how to present the successor with information for them to retain and understand the information.

Conclusions

By providing business owners the tools to succeed in succession planning, the business will exist for many generations. The continued success of the business allows the owners to contribute to the local economy, help the community prosper, and create positive social change. Owners can accomplish this through proactive planning. Because the purpose of the study was to examine the relationships between the subscales of cross-project tacit knowledge transfer and generational differences in cross-project tacit knowledge transfer among small and family-owned businesses, the results have the potential to contribute to multi-generational success of family-owned businesses. I

determined generational diversity is positively associated with collective decision-making, which means business owners should strive to begin their succession planning early with individuals from the younger generational cohort, thereby ensuring a smooth transition when predecessor retires. Additionally, I found technology formal and technology informal methods had significantly higher mean scores from Generation Y individuals compared to Generation X individuals. Therefore, I assumed future generations of business owners will cope with increasing technology in the workplace and retain the hard and soft skills inherited from previous generations. With this knowledge, owners of family businesses can implement succession planning and ensure their business will continue to thrive in the control of future generations.

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Appendix A: Landaeta's Cross-Project Knowledge Transfer Tool

Knowledge Transfer Across Project

1. During the course of your last project, approximately how many times did you formally review other project actions:

	Never	1 to 2 times	3 to 5 times	6 to 10 times	More than 10 times
--	-------	-----------------	-----------------	------------------	--------------------------

a. Using online communication tools such as Intranet, teleconference, video-conference, chat and Social Networks (Skype, Viber, Facebook, LinkedIn, etc.) professional websites, weblogs and internet forums

b. Using e-mail and/or hard-copy correspondence

c. In person (direct face-to-face meeting or telephone conversation)

d. Using other review method as:

2. During the course of your last project, approximately how many times did you informally review other projects' actions:

	Never	1 to 2 times	3 to 5 times	6 to 10 times	More than 10 times
--	-------	-----------------	-----------------	------------------	--------------------------

a. Using online communication tools such as Intranet, teleconference, video-conference, chat and Social Networks (Skype, Viber, Facebook, LinkedIn, etc.) professional websites, weblogs and internet forums

b. Using e-mail and/or hard-copy correspondence

c. In person (direct face-to-face meeting or telephone conversation)

d. Using other review method as:

3. During the course of your last project, approximately how many times did the team members of other projects review your project's actions formally?

Never	1 to 2 times	3 to 5 times	6 to 10 times	More than 10 times
-------	-----------------	-----------------	------------------	--------------------------

a. Using online communication tools such as Intranet, teleconference, video-conference, chat and Social Networks (Skype, Viber, Facebook, LinkedIn, etc.) professional websites, weblogs and internet forums

b. Using e-mail and/or hard-copy correspondence

c. In person (direct face-to-face meeting or telephone conversation)

d. Using other review method as:

4. During the course of your last project, approximately how many times did the team members of other projects review your project's actions informally?

Never	1 to 2 times	3 to 5 times	6 to 10 times	More than 10 times
-------	-----------------	-----------------	------------------	--------------------------

a. Using online communication tools such as Intranet, teleconference, video-conference, chat and Social Networks (Skype, Viber, Facebook, LinkedIn, etc.) professional websites, weblogs and internet forums

b. Using e-mail and/or hard-copy correspondence

c. In person (direct face-to-face meeting or telephone conversation)

d. Using other review method as:

5. During the course of your last project, approximately how many times did you recruit members from other projects to work on your project

	Never	1 to 2 times	3 to 5 times	6 to 10 times	More than 10 times
Temporarily					
Permanently					

6. During the course of your last project, approximately how many times did you participate in any company's Quick Response and Crisis Management

	Never	1 to 2 times	3 to 5 times	6 to 10 times	More than 10 times
a. Using online communication tools such as Intranet, teleconference, video-conference, chat and Social Networks (Skype, Viber, Facebook, LinkedIn, etc.) professional websites, weblogs and internet forums					
b. Using e-mail and/or hard-copy correspondence					
c. In person (direct face-to-face meeting or telephone conversation)					
d. Using other review method as:					

7. During the course of your last project, approximately how many times did you attend project review meetings for other projects

	Never	1 to 2 times	3 to 5 times	6 to 10 times	More than 10 times
a. Using online communication tools such as Intranet, teleconference, video-conference, chat and Social Networks (Skype, Viber, Facebook, LinkedIn, etc.)					

b. In person (direct face-to-face meeting or telephone conversation)

c. Using other participation method as:

8. During the course of your last project, approximately how many times did you provide formal mentoring to members of other projects

Never	1 to 2 times	3 to 5 times	6 to 10 times	More than 10 times
-------	--------------	--------------	---------------	--------------------

a. Using online communication tools such as Intranet, teleconference, video-conference, chat and Social Networks (Skype, Viber, Facebook, LinkedIn, etc.)

b. In person (direct face-to-face meeting or telephone conversation)

c. Using other participation method as:

d. Using other review method as:

9. During the course of your last project, approximately how many times did you provide informal mentoring to members of other projects

Never	1 to 2 times	3 to 5 times	6 to 10 times	More than 10 times
-------	--------------	--------------	---------------	--------------------

a. Using online communication tools such as Intranet, teleconference, video-conference, chat and Social Networks (Skype, Viber, Facebook, LinkedIn, etc.) professional websites, weblogs and internet forums

b. Using e-mail and/or hard-copy correspondence

c. In person (direct face-to-face meeting or telephone conversation)

d. Using other mentoring method as:

10. During the course of your last project, approximately how many times did you analyze the outputs of other project reviews:

Never	1 to 2 times	3 to 5 times	6 to 10 times	More than 10 times
-------	-----------------	-----------------	------------------	--------------------------

- a. Using other projects' electronic documents.
- b. Using other projects' paper documents.
- c. Using other projects' documentation as:
-

11. During the course of your last project, approximately how many times did you analyze the plan of other projects

Never	1 to 2 times	3 to 5 times	6 to 10 times	More than 10 times
-------	-----------------	-----------------	------------------	--------------------------

- a. Using other projects' electronic documents
- b. Using other projects' paper documents
- c. Using other projects' documentation as:
-

12. During the course of your last project, approximately how many times did you analyze the journal/diary of other projects

Never	1 to 2 times	3 to 5 times	6 to 10 times	More than 10 times
-------	-----------------	-----------------	------------------	--------------------------

- a. Using other projects' electronic documents
- b. Using other projects' paper documents
- c. Using other projects' documentation as:
-

13. During the course of your last project, approximately how many times did you analyze the documents of the deliverables of other projects

Never	1 to 2 times	3 to 5 times	6 to 10 times	More than 10 times
-------	-----------------	-----------------	------------------	--------------------------

- a. Using other projects' electronic documents
- b. Using other projects' paper documents
- c. Using other projects' documentation as:
-

14. During the course of your last project, approximately how many times did you observe the execution of other projects

Never	1 to 2 times	3 to 5 times	6 to 10 times	More than 10 times
-------	-----------------	-----------------	------------------	--------------------------

- a. Using videotapes, CD-ROMs, or internet video (Recorded reports - NOT real-time)"
- b. Using videoconferences or on-line (web) cameras (Real-Time observation)"
- c. In person (directly at project site)
- d. Using other method as:
-

14. During the course of your last project, approximately how many times did you observe the execution of other projects

Never	1 to 2 times	3 to 5 times	6 to 10 times	More than 10 times
-------	-----------------	-----------------	------------------	--------------------------

- a. Using videotapes, CD-ROMs, or internet video (Recorded reports - NOT real-time)"
- b. Using

- videoconferences or on-line (web)
cameras (Real-Time observation)
c. In person (directly at project site)
d. Using other method as:
-

15. During the course of your last project, approximately how many times did you observe the quality attributes of the other projects

Never	1 to 2 times	3 to 5 times	6 to 10 times	More than 10 times
-------	-----------------	-----------------	------------------	--------------------------

- a. Using videotapes,
CD-ROMs, or internet video (Recorded
reports - NOT real-time)
b. Using
videoconferences or on-line (web)
cameras (Real-Time observation)
c. In person (directly at project site)
d. Using other method as:
-

Knowledge Change

The following statements describe the outputs that your last project obtained after you received information and experience from other projects. Please indicate to what extent each statement describes the outputs obtained by your last project.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
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I identified the actions I needed to execute my last project through other projects' experiences.
During my last project, I identified the projects that could provide knowledge to me through other projects' experiences.
The knowledge that I used to execute actions in my last project was gained from other projects.

The knowledge that I used to solve problems in my last project's actions was gained from other projects.

The knowledge that I used to improve the execution of my last project's actions was gained from other projects.

During my last project, I verified the usefulness of the knowledge obtained from other projects through the information and experiences of additional projects.

	Very late	Late	On Time	Early	Very early
--	-----------	------	---------	-------	------------

My last project was completed

	Modified several times	Modified few times	Almost never modified	Never modified
--	------------------------	--------------------	-----------------------	----------------

During the execution of my last project the scope of the project was

	Much more over the budget	Somewhat over the budget	On budget	Somewhat below the budget	Much more below the budget
--	---------------------------	--------------------------	-----------	---------------------------	----------------------------

My last project was completed

	Very unlikely	Unlikely	Neutral	Likely	Very unlikely
--	---------------	----------	---------	--------	---------------

How likely is that your

company is
going to obtain
from new
customers
projects
similar to your
last project?

Very unlikely	Unlikely	Neutral	Likely	Very unlikely
------------------	----------	---------	--------	------------------

How likely is
that the
customer
of your last
project keeps
assigning new
projects to
your
company?

Years

The time my corporation has been operating is approximately:

No. of
employees

The number of employees that my organization has is approximately:

Years Months

The approximate time in which my organization has been
managing knowledge in projects is:

My corporation can be classified as:

Education	Sector 1
Manufacturing	Sector 2
Information Technology	Sector 3
Construction	Sector 4
Consulting	Sector 5
Health Care	Sector 6
Law Enforcement	Sector 7
Service	Sector 8
Entertainment	Sector 9
Aerospace	Sector 10
Other sector (please specify)	Sector 11

Demographics

My age is approximately (in years):

The approximate number of years that I have been present in this organization is:

The approximate number of years that I have worked in project is:

My gender is:

My education diplomas include

My primary role in my last project was

Appendix B: Permission to Use Instrumentation

5/27/2017

Print

Subject: Re: Permission for survey tool usage
From: Landaeta, Rafael E. (RLandaet@odu.edu)
To: amdsphd2009@yahoo.com;
Cc: RLandaet@odu.edu;
Date: Saturday, April 15, 2017 6:53 PM

Hi Kristina,

Absolutely. I will send you the survey in another email.

Where are you getting your degree from?

Best,

Rafael

Rafael E. Landaeta, Ph.D.
Associate Dean, Frank Batten College of Engineering & Technology
Associate Professor, Engineering Management & Systems Engineering
Old Dominion University
Norfolk, VA 23529
Office: 757.683.4478
Mobile: +1-757-412-7171
Fax: 757.683.4898
Email: rlandaet@odu.edu

On Apr 15, 2017, at 6:10 PM, Kristina McCarthy <amdsphd2009@yahoo.com> wrote:

Hi,

I am a PhD student working on my dissertation in cross project knowledge transfer. I read your article: Landaeta, R. E. (2008). Evaluating benefits and challenges of knowledge transfer across projects. *Engineering Management Journal*, 20(1), 29-37. doi:10.2753/MIS07421222230311

I was hoping to gain your permission to use your survey tool method in my study:

"The key source of data will include a self-report survey taken from Landaeta's (2008) work on knowledge transfer across projects. This study will conduct a survey where the instrument will consist of 34 questions that measure cross-project knowledge transfer and knowledge assimilation. Cross-project knowledge transfer refers to the actions taken in order to shift available knowledge to another individual (Landaeta, 2008)."